

To help protect Aggieland and stop the spread of COVID-19, Texas A&M University urges students to be vaccinated and to wear masks in classrooms and all other academic facilities on campus, including labs. Doing so exemplifies the Aggie Core Values of respect, leadership, integrity, and selfless service by putting community concerns above individual preferences. COVID-19 vaccines and masking — regardless of vaccination status — have been shown to be safe and effective at reducing spread to others, infection, hospitalization, and death.

---

## Geography 330: Resources & the Environment

2022 Spring Term, Tu & Th, 2:20 pm – 3:35 pm  
HALB 101

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen O'Reilly  
Office: NA  
Office Hours: Thursdays after class or by appointment  
Email: [koreilly@tamu.edu](mailto:koreilly@tamu.edu)

Teaching Assistant: Lidia Mezei  
Office: Zoom  
Office Hours: <https://calendly.com/lmezei>  
Email: [lmezei@tamu.edu](mailto:lmezei@tamu.edu)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This 3 credit course focuses on natural resource systems, emphasizing economic, social and political processes that shape society's use of natural resources. We will examine themes such as population-resources interactions, discourses of nature, institutions and environmental governance, ethics, political economy, public lands, and conservation. Students will learn key explanations and frameworks, and apply these approaches to examine some key resource systems (**wolves, water, agribusiness, energy and rare earth minerals**). Students will also improve their reading of scholarly literature pertaining to human-environment issues.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to (1) analyze scholarly literature pertaining to human-environment interactions, (2) evaluate the drivers of natural resource use and environmental degradation, (3) compare and contrast types of resource use, (4) evaluate the efficacy of environmental conservation and resource policy, (5) recognize varying social constructions of nature, and (6) offer solutions to overcoming key environmental issues.

### COURSE FORMAT

This course will be conducted at an intermediate undergraduate level. You are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared to discuss the readings in depth. Lectures will include student participation in the form of discussion. Additionally, some days will be more discussion focused, when students will investigate topics more closely, based on a readings, podcasts or films accessed before class. The course itself is divided into two components: (1) an investigation of key ideas and theories underpinning how we understand resources and the environment, and (2) an application of those ideas to resource systems (e.g., lawns). You will be tested over each course component.

**Keep up to date! Check Canvas daily for announcements on readings, films, etc.**

### Primary Text:

1. Robbins, P., John Hintz, Sarah A. Moore, (2013) *Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York: Wiley-Blackwell. (\*available online for free through the library)

### Additional Readings

- Godfray et al. 2010. Food Security: The challenge of feeding 9 billion people. *Science* 327: 812-81
- Klinger, R. (2018) *Rare Earth Frontiers*. Ithaca, Cornell Press
- O'Reilly, K. (2006). 'Traditional' women, 'modern' water: Linking gender and commodification in Rajasthan, India. *Geoforum* 37: 958-972.
- Price, M. (1999) *Flight Maps: Adventures with Nature in Modern America*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schoenberger, E. (2015) *Nature, Choice, and Social Power*.

- Simon, G. and Alagona. (2013). Contradictions at the confluence of commerce, consumption and conservation; or, an REI shopper camps in the forest, does anyone notice? *Geoforum* 45: 325-336
- Steffen, et al. (2007). The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature? *Ambio* 36(8): 614–21

***\* I reserve the right to make minor alternations to assigned readings and topics during the semester. I will inform you in advance of any changes.\****

**Films/Videos**

Films and videos can be found through <https://library.tamu.edu> or are streaming free online.

**ASSESSMENT:**

In-class Quizzes	70 pts	17.5%
Online Quizzes	280 pts	70%
<u>Assignment 1</u>	<u>50 pts</u>	<u>12.5%</u>
TOTAL	400 pts	100%

**Grading System:**

Final letter marks are determined through the following scheme:

A - 100 – 90%    B – 89 – 80%    C – 79 - 70%    D – 69 – 60%    F – Below 60%

**In-class quizzes:**

There will be 7 in-class quizzes that will cover the readings and/or materials assigned for that class day. Each quiz is worth 10 points. These are rapid, know-it-or-you-don’t quizzes. Full credit for the correct answer. Half credit for incorrect answers.

**Quizzes:**

There will be 12 online, weekly quizzes that will cover all assigned readings and material covered in class. Each question is worth 2 points. Points assigned per quiz vary; please make a note of this! Quizzes will be timed at 1 minute per question. They begin Thursday after class and are due at 11:59pm each Friday. Once begun, the quiz must be completed in the allotted time. Students will not be able to backtrack.

Besides assessment, the purpose of this exercise is to strengthen student skills in critical thinking and increase student confidence in their ability to summarize ideas, thoughtfully maneuver through issues, recognize implications, envision alternatives, and think creatively. Quizzes will draw from reading assignments, films, discussions and lectures—anything covered as part of assignments or class lectures, etc.

**Assignments:**

The assignment “The Great Outdoors” involves students planning a backpacking trip and researching the gear that they will need. Assignment instructions will be distributed and discussed during class time.

I have high expectations of my students. First and foremost is a conducive environment for learning, which involves:

- behave respectfully towards others, whether that is at moments of disagreement about topics discussed, or keeping distractions out of view of your computer camera, audio, etc.
- arrive on time and stay through class
- ask questions and listen to answers

In addition to normal high standards of courtesy and respect expected in any university classroom, please take note of the following: **Send all emails to Dr. O’Reilly at the address above. An email is not a text, and I expect an appropriate level of formality. Include GEOG 330 in the subject line,** as all emails are filtered and read from that folder. You can expect a reply from me within 24 hours.

**University Policies**

**Attendance Policy**

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

## Attendance Policy

As we return to pre-COVID modalities for instruction, students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class (including students isolating or quarantining due to COVID-19 protocols) qualify for an excused absence (See [Student Rule 7, Section 7.2.2.](#)) To receive an excused absence, students must comply with the documentation and notification guidelines outlined in Student Rule 7.

Students may share information from the reporting portal as proof they are quarantining as they await test results or isolating after testing positive for COVID-19 (including antigen tests). Such information during a pandemic is an excused absence and will satisfy the documentation required in Student Rule 7. Students who furnish false information may be found in violation of Student Rule 24.4.1 and the Aggie Code of Honor.

## Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

## Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, because it destroys trust among student cohorts, scholars, and colleagues. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest issue of the Texas A&M University Student Rules, <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty."

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit [disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

## Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University’s goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University’s [Title IX webpage](#).

## Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student’s academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

## Copyrights

All course materials are copyrighted. These materials include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these materials are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless permission is expressly granted. Taping and reproducing of course material for other than personal use will be regarded as copyright infringement and referred to University lawyers for action. Before recording, ask me first. Professional note-takers must be enrolled in this course (university policy) and receive my permission prior to any commercial transaction involving course notes (state law).

## SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Tuesday	Thursday	Assessment Due
1	Jan 18, 20	<b>Introduction to Course: The history of hemp in America</b>	<b>Introduction to Course: “Y'all Queda, Yee-hadists, Vanilla Isis”</b>	Friday at 11:59pm
2	Jan 25, 27	<b>Resources: The Anthropocene</b> 1. <i>Read: Steffen, et al. (2007)</i>	<b>Resources: What is a Resource?</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 1</i>	Quiz 1 Resources (20 pts)

3	Feb 1, 3	<b>Population and Resources</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 2</i> 2. <i>Ted Talk: Hans Rosling:</i> <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_global_population_growth_box_by_box">https://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_global_population_growth_box_by_box</a>	<b>Population and Resources</b> 1. <i>Film: Population Boom (Located on Kanopy)</i> <a href="https://texasam.kanopy.com/product/population-boom">https://texasam.kanopy.com/product/population-boom</a>	Quiz 2 Population and Resources (20 pts)
4	Feb 8, 10	<b>Environmental Governance: Tragedy of the Commons?</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 4</i>	<b>Environmental Governance: collaborative forestry:</b> 1. <i>Podcast: Timber Wars episode 7: "A way forward:</i> <a href="https://www.opb.org/article/2020/10/03/environmentalist-loggers-common-ground">https://www.opb.org/article/2020/10/03/environmentalist-loggers-common-ground</a>	Quiz 3 Environmental Governance (30 pts)
5	Feb 15, 17	<b>Culture: How Culture Shapes our View of Nature</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 8</i>	<b>Culture: How we think about wolves</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 11</i>	Quiz 4 Culture (24 pts)
6	Feb 22, 24	<b>Commodification of Nature: Markets</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 3</i>	<b>NO CLASS</b>	<i>No assessment</i>
7	Mar 1, 3	<b>Commodification of Nature: Consumption</b> 1. <i>Read: Price (1999), "Looking for Nature at the Mall"</i>	<b>Commodification of Nature: Gender</b> 1. <i>Read: O'Reilly (2006), "Traditional Women, Modern Water"</i>	Quiz 5 Commodification of Nature (30 pts)
8	Mar 8, 10	<b>Communicating about Nature: How Discourse Shapes our View of Nature</b> 1. <i>Ted Talk: Marris: How Do We Embrace All Kinds of Nature?</i> <a href="https://www.npr.org/programs/ted-radio-hour/494774287/anthropocene">https://www.npr.org/programs/ted-radio-hour/494774287/anthropocene</a>	<b>Communicating about Nature: Climate Change</b> 1. <i>Film: Climate of Doubt (2012)</i> <a href="https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-climate-doubt/">https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline-climate-doubt/</a>	Quiz 6 Communicating about Nature (24 pts)
9	Mar 15, 17	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<i>No assessment</i>
10	Mar 22, 24	<b>Environmental Ethics: What is your environmental ethic?</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 5</i>	<b>Environmental Ethics: Leave No Trace Principles</b> 1. <i>Read: Simon and Alagona</i> <i>Assignment: The Great Outdoors</i>	Quiz 7 Environmental Ethics (24 pts)
11	Mar 29, 31	<b>Production of Nature: Labor</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 7</i>	<b>Production of Nature: the American Lawn</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 14</i>	Quiz 8 Production of Nature (24 pts)
12	Apr 5, 7	<b>Agrobusiness: Food Security</b> 1. <i>Read: Godfray et al. (2010)</i>	<b>NO CLASS</b> <b>DUE:</b> <b>Assignment: The Great Outdoors</b>	Quiz 9 Agrobusiness (10 pts)
13	Apr 12, 14	<b>Water: Privatization</b> 1. <i>Film: World Without Wate</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlfMBQGZUvQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlfMBQGZUvQ</a>	<b>Water: The Rise of Bottled Water</b> 1. <i>Read: Robbins, Ch. 15</i>	Quiz 10 Water (24 pts)
14	Apr 19, 21	<b>Energy: the Resource Curse</b> 1. <i>Film: Sweet Crude</i>	<b>Energy: the Combustible Engine</b> 1. <i>Read: Schoenberger (2015), pp 111-174</i>	Quiz 11 Energy (30 pts)

		<a href="https://video-alexanderstreet-com.srv-proxy2.library.tamu.edu/watch/sweet-crude">https://video-alexanderstreet-com.srv-proxy2.library.tamu.edu/watch/sweet-crude</a>		
15	Apr 26, 28	<b>Rare Earth Elements: What are they?</b> 1. <i>Read: Klinger (2018), Chapter 1 pp 41-54</i>	<b>Rare Earth Elements: Necessity v. Pollution</b> 1. <i>Read: Klinger (2018), Chapter 1 pp 54-66</i>	Quiz 12 Rare Earth Minerals (20 pts)
16	May 3	<b>REDEFINED AS FRI</b>		
		NO FINAL EXAM	NO FINAL EXAM	NO FINAL EXAM