

WOMENSST 220: *Gender, the Global Environment, and Sustainability*

Weekly Class times: MW 10:10-11:00am

Meets in: South College W245

Instructor: Professor K. Asher (kasher@umass.edu)

Office: South College W467

Walk-in Office Hours: M 11:00am-1:00pm, or by appointment (Always check Moodle for changes or updates to office hours)

Course mailing list: wgss-220-01-spr17@courses.umass.edu

Course Description: Gender, the environment and sustainability are key terms in debates about economic globalization and social justice. While not new, they are reemerging as part of the [post-2015 sustainable development agenda](#). This course will introduce students to the perceived and existing links between women, gender, and the global environment as they appear in 21st century discussions about sustainable development. Through readings, lectures and discussions will explore the following questions:

- ❖ When did the environment and sustainability emerge as key biological and social issues on global agendas?
- ❖ What are their connections to economic globalization? To colonialism and capitalism?
- ❖ How did women and gender become part of these discussions?
- ❖ How did governments, multilateral institutions (e.g. the United Nations, the World Bank), and development policies target third world women? Was it to meet their needs and address gender equality? Or was it for more efficient and effective environmental and sustainability outcomes?
- ❖ What were the results and implications of these interventions?
- ❖ In what guise are these interventions reemerging in the context of the “green economy”, food security, and population and reproductive rights?
- ❖ How have women across the world organized to address concerns about the environment and sustainability?
- ❖ How have feminists engaged with issues of gender, the global environment and sustainability?

Discussions and assignments will enable students to familiarize themselves with gender and sustainability concerns around the world in a way that will enable them to participate in 21st century discussions in informed, critical and self-reflexive ways.

Course Outcomes: This course will stretch your mind and fulfill two [General Education](#) designations (Social World, “SB” and Global Diversity, “G”) in a variety of ways.

Specifically, it will help you to:

- ❖ Become conversant with a range of theories and methods to understand of the dynamic nature of individuals and societies and the processes by which they change. Specifically, how and why gender, the environmental and sustainability are key

concerns in the 21st century and need to be understood within a transnational context. (SB)

- ❖ Develop a “transnational” sensibility, i.e. learn how the West and the Rest, the local and the global, tradition and modernity, the environment and economy, culture and nature emerge in relation to other peoples, places, genders, and sexualities across histories and geographies. (SB)
- ❖ An ability to be able to examine how struggles for sustainability, the environment and gender justice are linked to other struggles such as anti-racist, anti-imperialist, anti-sexist, feminist, developmental and environmental struggles. (SB)
- ❖ This course will facilitate your exploration of yourself through your connections to others. With that in mind the course material is not simply about other people and places, but will require and enable you to think about how you and your world emerge in relation to other peoples and worlds, and how you are always already in relation to others. (SB and G)
- ❖ The course material will focus on cases and issues from different parts of the world and different groups of people (farmers, women, indigenous and black communities, workers, etc.). It includes readings about and FROM the Caribbean, India, Brazil, Colombia, the United States and other places. As per the course’s focus, the readings and approach emphasize the connections between places and people. For example, Jamaica Kincaid’s novel is not just about the Caribbean but about the relationship between Antiguan and the tourists who visit it now (compared to the colonialists who arrived there). So the course material and assignments are social and global in essence and substance. (G)

Required Readings

- ❖ Available at Amherst Books (because buying at Amazon is not sustainable <http://www.indiebound.org/spotlightamazon>)
- ❖ Additional Readings on Moodle and via hyperlinks below

Assignments, Grades, and Ground Rules:

- ❖ Attendance and Participation (in class and discussion sections) 20%
- ❖ Reading Forms/quizzes (5 of 8, in-class or on Moodle) 10%
- ❖ Three exams (Weeks 5, 9, 13) 30%
 - ❖ Bonus points: Each reading form and exam will contain bonus questions
- ❖ **Written work (10-12 double-spaced pages total)**
 - ❖ Two reviews of UMass or Five College talks or recent domestic and global news, (by March 2, April 21) 10%
 - ❖ Three essays (due by Mar 10, Apr 14, and May 3) 30%

Attendance: You must be registered for *both* the lecture and a discussion section (details below). Attendance at *both* is required and mandatory. The success of the class depends on instructors and students being physically and intellectual present in class.

Absences and responsibility for missed material: Being a little late occasionally is understandable. However, if you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be marked absent. If you have to miss class or a discussion because of legitimate reasons (illness, injury, death of a loved one), excuse your absence in writing within a week of the missed session. Over three absences will result in the lowering of your overall grade, as even excused absences will affect your participation grade. So try not to miss class. If you have to, it is your responsibility to catch up on what you missed. Set up two “study buddies” with whom you can exchange notes, review material, prepare for classes, etc.

Study Buddy 1: _____

Study Buddy 2: _____

Discussion sections: Discussions sections are **NOT** optional or add-ons. They are designed to be an integral part of the course and to provide an opportunity to clarify issues in your readings, films and lectures, as well as to debate and discuss various issues. In addition to the **weekly lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays**, you **must** attend the **Friday discussion section** for which you are registered. There may also be informal writing exercises during discussion sections as part of your learning on how to think critically about these given issues. We expect you to have **completed and thought about** all of the readings for that week before your section meets and to be ready to engage in meaningful dialogue and in class writing. In addition to their strictly academic function, sections are also places where students may talk about the ways in which the topics we address in this course may have touched their lives. **Engagement in discussion sections accounts for almost a fifth of the course grade.** Details about the discussion sections (including locations and instructor office hours) will be posted on Moodle.

Participation: Good participation means active and mindful engagement with the course material and class participants, including your peers. Active and mindful engagement goes beyond agreements and disagreements to foster collective learning through critical dialogues about the topics and ideas generated by the course material. Critical dialogues entail listening, thinking, talking, and asking questions of the material and of each other. The best classrooms conversations are ones that expand your knowledge and understanding, and bring the intense pleasure of critical intellectual inquiry. It is a skill that requires practice and like other academic skills it is useful far beyond the classroom. So if you are a talker, learn to moderate yourself. If you are reserved, practice talking – keeping your thoughts to yourself deprives us the chance to learn from you.

Preparation and Reading: Good participation and great conversations rest on good preparation. So do the assigned work, including the readings, **before coming to class.**

Develop a practice of [reading closely](#) to identify main theme(s) and examine the premise of an argument critically. Close reading fosters critical dialogues.

Notes: Learn to keep notes (digitally or in paper notebooks) on what you read, highlight key quotes (if you write the quotes in your notes, make sure you write down the full citation with page numbers), on how an author makes an argument, how the terms of one article relate to the broader course themes. If you don't understand something or are confused, make notes to prompt you to ask questions about them in class. Bring your readings and notes to class! **And don't forget to set up two study buddies.**

Using smart phones in class is decidedly un-smart as it invites us to fail you. When in class **turn OFF your mobile devices**. You may seek permission to use your computer in class to refer to readings and notes, and to take notes. However, please **do not** connect to the Internet or use your cell phone. Such activities are distracting and disrespectful.

Noise: Similarly, in a large lecture class the noise of talking, even whispering, when there are so many people in the room is *very disruptive to both the lecturer and other students*. This class is *50 minutes* and we expect you to remain for the entire period. We will start on time and end on time so please refrain from *packing your things before the end of class*. Any kind of rustling can be very disturbing.

Moodle and online communications: Instructions, study questions, and updates about the course will be posted on **Moodle** and/or sent through the class list (**wgss-220-01-spr17@courses.umass.edu**). Once you register for the course, you will automatically be added to the course on Moodle. **You are responsible for this information.** You will use your OIT username and password to sign into the course Moodle and access course information. Make sure that your university email (yourname@umass.edu) is functional, and check Moodle regularly. Please contact OIT if you have any problems.

Email etiquette: We welcome appropriate email queries and will respond to them within a reasonable amount of time (24-48 hours is normal). For a distinction between appropriate and inappropriate email, familiarize yourself with [Emails as Professional Correspondences or Email Etiquette](#).

Office Hours are listed above and updated on Moodle. We strongly encourage you to stop by with questions about class material, brainstorm research ideas, talk about topics that sparked your intellectual curiosity, or discuss your performance in class. However, keep in mind that, office hours are not the space to review course material you missed or entertain inquiry such as "I was absent, what did I miss?" Talk to your study buddies first and then follow up with us to discuss specific queries.

Reading Forms: There will be eight opportunities over the course of the semester to fill out reading forms (*in-class or on Moodle*). Students **must complete any five** to receive

full credit. Reading forms will test your knowledge of course material through true/false questions, short identification prompts, and matching key terms.

Exams: There will be three exams including a culminating final. All exams will consist of brief identifications and definitions (3-5 sentences) based on the key terms in the assigned readings or discussed in class. There will be choices. The final exam will be comprehensive. That means that students must review material from the entire semester. You **cannot make up an exam** unless you have extenuating circumstances. If you miss or cannot take the exam on the designated day or time period, you must provide documentation of a medical or family emergency. Please discuss your situation with your TA and/or professor at the earliest possible time

Writing is a crucial tool for learning and an invaluable skill for communicating what you learn. This course fulfills a general education requirement (SB) and you will be expected to write at least 10 double-spaced pages of critical work. We will pay particular attention to your writing, so learn to write well. Let us know (early in the semester) if you have special learning or writing needs.

Essays: As part of the course assignments you will write three short essays (600-750 words, approx. 3 double-spaced pages excluding the reference list). Prompts for the essays and other details will be posted 5-6 days before the essays are due. In your essays you will be asked to be self-reflexive about the material we cover and your learning goals (see the learning goals assignment listed for Week 1 of classes).

Review and analysis of talks or recent events: There will be many relevant and interesting a talks and events related to gender, the environment, and sustainability at UMass and in the Five Colleges. We will inform you of those. You are welcome to bring events and talks of interest and relevance to the class to our attention. Plan to attend one or more of those, and write a short review and analysis (**200-250 words**) of each by **drawing on at least two assigned readings**. If you cannot attend campus talks or events, you may choose to write about recent national or global events related to the course themes. Detailed prompts are below and on Moodle. **You may post the first one at any time but no later than March 2, and the second one no later than Apr 21.**

Prompts for review and analysis of talks or recent events

1. Indicate the title of the talk and other details (date, location, sponsoring organization) of the talk/event you attended. If a multi-day event, indicate what part of the event you attended and in what capacity. If you write on a recent news item, indicate your source and give full citations at the end of your post.
2. What was the central goal of the event or the main point of the talk? State in your own words in a sentence or two. This is the review part of your assignment.

3. Why did you attend the talk or event? General curiosity? Required for another class? Specific interest in the theme?
4. Analyze the event or talk based on at least two assigned readings. For this answer you will need to clarify the main goal of the assigned readings and how they helped you understand or engage with the outside event or talk.
5. Give the full citation of the assigned readings using the ayp (author-year-page style) http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Writing resources: Check out some of the excellent resources available to you, including <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> (one of the most extensive lists of handouts on writing and research help). You can also get free writing help at the [Writing Center](#), and from the WGSS writing advisor Elise Swinford, eswinfor@umass.edu (W414 South College, Drop-in hours: Tues 12-4, Weds 9:30-12, and by appointment ([Check Moodle for updates](#))). Take a copy of the assignment instructions and your draft response to your session. Engage your editing process by articulating what you want the tutor to focus on in addressing your work.

All written assignments:

- ❖ May be discussed with your peers, TAs, or writing advisors
- ❖ Must be submitted **by the stated deadlines and in the stated form (hardcopy or via Moodle)**. By handing in assignments late you forfeit your right to comments and lose half a letter grade for every day that your work is late.
- ❖ Will be graded according to the criteria below
- ❖ Follow all my **writing guidelines** (see below).

CRITERIA FOR GRADING WRITTEN WORK

- A = a well organized, lucidly written paper free of mechanical errors (or oral argument) that indicates your thorough understanding of the material and your interesting insights or critical responses to it. In a phrase, an A paper is a “perfect 10” paper.
- B = a paper (or presentation) that offers evidence of your understanding of the material, but in which your points are obscured due to mechanical errors, lack of organization, inadequate evidence and/or insufficiently developed arguments.
- C = a paper in which the student’s understanding and response to the material is unclear or largely obscured due to any one or more factors listed under B.
- D, F = indicate that students are submitting unacceptable work.

GRADE CHART

	Out of 10	Out of 5	GPA
A	9.3 - 10	4.7 - 5	4
A-	8.6 - 9.2	4.3 - 4.6	3.7

B+	7.9 - 8.5	4.0 - 4.2	3.3
B	7.2 - 7.8	3.6 - 3.9	3.0
B-	6.5 - 7.1	3.3 - 3.5	2.7
C+	5.8 - 6.4	3.0 - 3.2	2.3
C	5.1 - 5.7	2.6 - 2.9	2.0
C-	4.4 - 5.0	2.3 - 2.5	1.7
D+	3.7 - 4.3	2.0 - 2.2	1.7
D	3.0 - 3.6	1.9 - 1.7	1.0
F	2.7 - 2.9		0.0

Incompletes will not be given except in unusual circumstances.

Academic Honesty Statement: Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at UMass. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible.

Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

Accommodation Statement: UMass, Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify us within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements: <http://www.umass.edu/disability/procedures.pdf>

Pronoun Statement: We will gladly address you by the name you prefer and use gender pronouns that correspond to your gender identity. Please advise the class and us on your name and pronoun preference, and the proper pronunciation of your name.

BRING YOUR SYLLABUS TO CLASS AT EACH SESSION

SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES:

Checklist for Written Work for Prof Asher, AKA her 20 COMMANDMENTS!

1. I have a central argument or a main point and I state it clearly.
2. I define the key terms on which my argument is based.
3. I have developed my argument systematically and organized my points clearly. That is, my points follow from each other and speak to my central argument.
4. I substantiate my claims with supporting evidence, and cite relevant sources using a correct and consistent format. Prof Asher prefers the author-date style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
5. By the middle of my paper, I have lost neither clarity nor focus.
6. I make clear transitions between my points and between paragraphs and sections.
7. The passive voice has not been used by me. Instead, I use the active voice.
8. I have edited my paper and it is free from repeated errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, and I have used short sentences and made sure that my sentences do not run on like this one does.
9. My sources are formatted correctly and consistently, as is my Reference List.
10. In my introductory and concluding remarks, I neither over generalize nor make banal claims. Rather, I begin and conclude with insightful remarks about my topic.

Logistical and Mechanical details checklist

1. My paper has a title. It tells my reader what my paper is about.
2. My name, course name and number, type and number of the assignment, and the date of this paper appear single-spaced in the upper left hand corner of the first page.
3. I have used a legible font, double-spaced my writing, and used 1.25-inch margins.
4. There are NO double-returns between my paragraphs.
5. I have numbered all the pages of my assignment
6. I have STAPLED all the pages of my assignment. Prof Asher will not accept paper clipped papers.
7. As per Prof. Asher's instructions, I am NOT including a cover page or a report cover with my assignments.
8. I have submitted my paper on time and in the format indicated on the assignment. I know that late papers lose half a letter grade for each day the paper is late.
9. I understand what plagiarism (<http://www.umass.edu/writingprogram/geninfo/plagiarism.html>) means and have avoided it.
10. I have conferenced this assignment at the Writing Center (<http://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/>) if necessary, or at the very least I have read and addressed the issues in Section V of Strunk and White's The Elements of Style.

Course Schedule: This is a working course schedule and is subject to change. For example, readings may be added or substituted at the professor's discretion. The readings listed under each week are for that week. That is, please read the listed material before coming to class. **Check Moodle for updates**

Week 1: Introduction to course themes and approaches

M, Jan 23

- ❖ In-class discussion on course themes facilitated by the following questions:
What do you understand by sustainability? Gender? The environment?
- ❖ http://wecaninternational.org/uploads/cke_images/WCJMarchonWashington-ToolkitFINAL.pdf
- ❖ Introduction to class topic, structure and content

W, Jan 25: **Women, Gender, International Development and the Environment**

- ❖ Film: Hands-On: Women, Climate, Change <http://redlizardmedia.com/climateandgender/>

Fri, Jan 27: **Discussion Sections begin. Address the following questions in writing (1 double-spaced page) and bring hardcopies of your responses to the discussion section.** Make sure your name, and other details are listed on your response.

- ❖ What are your learning goals for the course?
- ❖ How do you expect the class to help you meet your learning goals and how do you expect to contribute to the class? Make sure you **read** the course description and outcomes listed on this syllabus and respond as specifically as you can. You may be more familiar with some topics than with others.

Week 2: Global Connects and Disconnects: Colonial History and Imperial Ghosts

M, Jan 30

- ❖ Kincaid, *A Small Place* (entire book)
- ❖ Black, No-Nonsense guide to International Development, Introduction and Chpt 1

W, Feb 1: What is Development? Whither Environment and Social Justice?

- ❖ Carson, Rachel. 1962. *Silent Spring*. (selections on Moodle)
- ❖ http://www.kit.nl/gender/wp-content/uploads/publications/1321_GSD%206%20Introduction%20Gender%20environment%20and%20sustainable%20development%20%20understanding%20the%20linkages.pdf

Week 3: What is Sustainability? What is Sustainable Development?

M, Feb 6: Guest lecture by Ezra Small, UMass Sustainability Coordinator

- ❖ www.umass.edu/sustainability and

- ❖ Do the “categories” listed under the resources link at UMass’s sustainability site (www.umass.edu/sustainability) connect to the concerns and questions in the course description (please read them carefully)? What issues from the course description are missing from UMass’ initiative? What issues from the UMass initiative missing from the course description?

W, Feb 8

- ❖ Black, *No-Nonsense guide to International Development*, Chpt 3, 5
- ❖ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>
- ❖ UNEP. 2004. [Women, environment and sustainable development: making the links](#), Chapter 2 in *Women and the Environment*. UNEP, WEDO, and UN Foundation.
- ❖ Overview of pedagogical approach, and course rules and assignments

Week 4: Development and its effects

M, Feb 13

- ❖ Black, Chapter 4
- ❖ Magdoff and Foster, Chapter 1, skim Chapter 5

W, Feb 15:

- ❖ Chapters 1 and 2 of the UN [World Survey on the role of women in development 2014](#) (Report on Gender Equality and Sustainable Development)

Week 5: Environmentalism as Economic Globalization or Social Justice?

M, Feb 20: President’s Day holiday – No class

W, Feb 22:

- ❖ Magdoff and Foster *What Every Environmentalist Needs To Know about Capitalism (WEENAC)* Chpts 1-3
- ❖ <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/>
- ❖ <https://www.weact.org/2016/11/863/>

EXAM 1 this week

Week 6: The Contradictions of Development and their gendered impact

M, Feb 27

- ❖ Black, chapter 6 and 7

W, Mar 1: Guest lecture by Avanti Mukherjee

- ❖ <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/environment>

- ❖ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/7/lakshmi-puri-oped-on-women-and-the-environment>
- ❖ <http://www.unep.org/gender/>

Week 7: Women, Gender, Population Control and Environmental Struggles

M, Mar 6

- ❖ [Ten Reasons to Rethink “Overpopulation”](#) (also browse through the other excellent resources of Hampshire’s PopDev site: <http://popdev.hampshire.edu/different-takes>)
- ❖ Hartmann, B. 2016. Preface to *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The global politics of population control*. 3rd edition. Haymarket Books. (Moodle)

W, Mar 8 (International Women’s Day): Guest lecture by Betsy Hartmann

- ❖ Hartmann, B. 1997. Women, Population and the Environment: Whose Consensus? Whose Empowerment? Pp. 295-301 (excerpt) in N. Visvanathan et al, eds. *The Women, Gender, and Development Reader*. Zed Books. (Moodle)

MIDTERM Essay DUE ON MARCH 10

SPRING BREAK (March 13-19)

Week 8: Sustainability, Environment, and Capitalism

M, Mar 20

- ❖ Reread Chpt 5 from *The No Nonsense Guide to International development*
- ❖ Magdoff and Foster. *What Every Environmentalist Needs To Know about Capitalism (WEENAC)* Chpts 1-3

W, Mar 22

- ❖ 2014 Summit on Women and Climate. <http://www.greengrants.org/programs/areas-of-focus/women/announcing-the-2014-summit-on-women-climate/>.
- ❖ Other readings and films: TBA

Week 9: Climate Change and Climate Justice

M, Mar 27

- ❖ Bruno, Kenny, Joshua Karliner and China Brotsky. 1999. [Greenhouse gangsters or Climate Justice?](#) San Francisco, CA: Transnational Resource & Action Center.

W, Mar 29:

- ❖ Other readings and films: TBA

Exam 2 this week

Week 10: Agriculture and Food Security on campus and around the world

M, Apr 3

- ❖ Guest lecture by Brittany Florio, UMass Green Initiative

W, Apr 5:

- ❖ <http://rajpatel.org/2009/11/02/food-sovereignty-a-brief-introduction/> (hyperlink)
- ❖ <http://foodfirst.org/>

Week 11: Forests, Fodder, and Fuel: Revisiting Global/Local Connections

M, Apr 10:

- ❖ Mendes, Chico (with Tony Gross). Fight for the Forest. Pp. 94-98, and Kenya's Green Militant: An Interview with Wangari Muta Maathai. Pp. 99-105 in *Green Planet Blues: Four Decades of Global Environmental Politics*. Ken Conca and Geoffrey D. Dabelko, eds. Westview Press. (Moodle)

W, Apr 12

- ❖ Big Dams and The Narmada Movement (Readings TBA)

Essay 2 due this week

Week 12: Economy, Ecology, and Race: Revisiting Global/Local Connections

Tu, Apr 18: Note that we are meeting on Tuesdays instead of **Monday**

- ❖ Indigenous struggles in the US and Canada

W, Apr 19

- ❖ Other readings and films: TBA
- ❖ Ana Del Conde, indigenous struggles in Mexico

Week 13: Alternatives Visions of Sustainability and Social Justice

M, Apr 24

- ❖ Black, Chpts 4-7
- ❖ Magdoff and Foster, Chpts 5-6

W, Apr 26:

- ❖ Sasser, Jade. 2011. Justice for All? Youth Environmental Activism and the New Framings of Social Justice. *Different Takes* 72. <http://popdev.hampshire.edu/projects/dt/72>
- ❖ <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/>

Week 14:

M, May 1: Last class TBA