

## Aalto MUO-E8018 / Sustainability Politics / Autumn 2019

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Thursdays 09:15 -12:00, R028/Q202, Väre.

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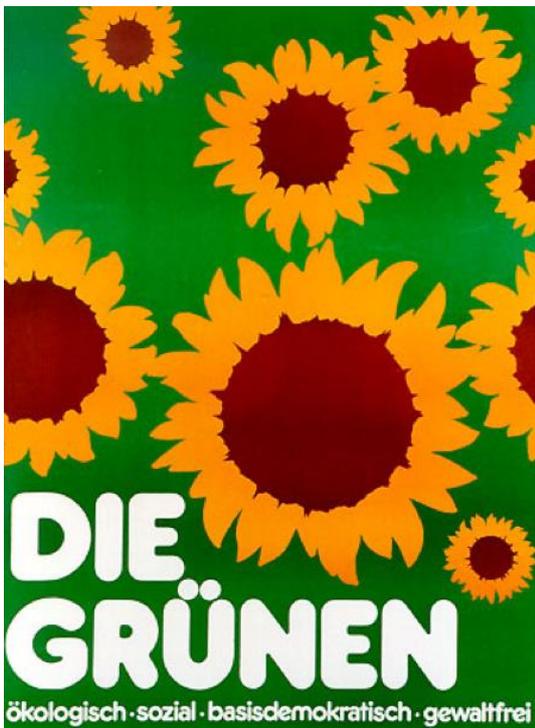
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The best way to contact us is face to face. If you send email, give us at least 36 hours to reply.

Office hours will be held as needed in slots of 30 minutes, dates and times to be confirmed.

5 ECTS taught in English. Workload: 18h course sessions; 117h Preparing course assignments including reading. Grading scale: 0 - 5 where the full spectrum of grades is in use. **Note:** All students who submit the first two commentaries are expected to complete all the required assignments and will receive a grade.

### OVERVIEW OF COURSE CONTENT



This is a reading seminar with lectures, posing critical questions about sustainability and environmental management. Through a selection of texts written for different audiences, the course will help students to

develop a sense that sustainability is a political issue and to understand the implications of how environmental problems are framed in public and academic life.

**Key themes:** the political nature of environmental problems and solutions; sociotechnical systems and social change; the environment in government and policy.

The **format** of the sessions vary but will usually include an introduction to the topic, student discussions and exercises plus an overview of the following week's readings.

The course relies on doing substantial and careful reading (make notes). Texts should be read before the relevant lecture session.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course will help students to understand the political dimensions of environmental concerns and interventions, and provide

analytical tools to discuss the role of different organizations and other actors in the field.

On successful completion of the course students should:

- be familiar with the main institutions of environmental governance
- have a sense of environmentalism as something historical and context-dependent
- understand the key terms in studying political life
- be familiar with vocabularies for discussing complex and 'hybrid' problems and linking politics to sustainability issues

The course also develops students' critical reading and writing skills, and enhances their capacity to discuss environmental issues in a critical, creative and professional way.

## ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Successful completion of the course requires:

1. Active participation in teaching sessions. Regular attendance is required. Notify staff in advance if you have a problem with this.
2. Writing weekly reaction papers. Submit at least 5 reaction papers to receive credit. Your texts are shared with everyone via MyCourses. Submit your text by 12:00 (noon) the day before each session.
3. An essay of about 2000 words. Due 22.10. Further instructions will be provided.

As part of course participation, each student will be expected to lead one short discussion on the texts, take notes and moderate discussion on the set readings.

Guidance on how to do reaction papers (point 2 above) will be given in the first

lecture and details of the essay (point 3) in lecture 3 (26.9.2018).

Marks are given from 1 - 5 (0 indicates fail).

Assessment criteria follow typical expectations for masters level study as follows:

**Topic and research:** Knowledge of the issue, evidence and illustrations provided, and appropriate uses of sources. Ensure that you include materials from this course. (40%)

**Analysis and argumentation:** Ability to analyze and synthesize in order to make an argument; interpretation and critical thought. (40%)

**Communication:** Language, quality of writing and care with referencing and formatting. (Visual materials are less important) (20%).

Marking is based on the overall quality of the submission.

You will receive feedback through interaction in the classroom and some written individual comments on reaction papers. This will also help you to develop analytical and writing skills.

## PLEASE NOTE

All reaction papers are shared with all participants through the MyCourses platform. Essays and any other personal coursework are not shared. You need not prepare any power-points, the focus is on spoken and written work.

In your written work DO NOT copy and paste, i.e. PLAGIARISE (see Aalto code of conduct).

## WEEKLY PROGRAMME

Week 1	12.09.2018	Introduction: sustainability and development are political
Week 2	19.09.2018	Politics and narratives
Week 3	26.09.2018	Policy and governance
Week 4	03.10.2018	Nature and design
Week 5	10.10.2018	Difference and justice
Week 6	17.10.2018	A new political landscape



Each week there will be lecturing and in-class discussion with possible small group exercises. Make sure you read the required texts marked (R) and as much of the others (supplementary texts) as you have time for and find interesting. Your weekly reading workload should be around 7 - 10 hours and the writing a little less. I recommend you start working on your essay around week 3.

When there are two texts marked as required, comment on both. Do them separately and indicate clearly on your submission which text you are working with. If only one text is required, choose one of the others.

## READINGS

**NOTE:** THERE WILL BE ADDITIONS TO THE READING LIST AS THE COURSE PROGRESSES. THESE WILL BE CIRCULATED ON MYCOURSES AS WELL AS ANNOUNCED IN CLASS. LECTURE SLIDES WILL ALSO BE MADE AVAILABLE, BUT YOU ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO MAKE YOUR **OWN** LECTURE NOTES.

### **Week 1 12.09.2018 Introduction: sustainability and development are political issues**

(R pre-reading) Scoones, I., M. Leach and P. Newell, eds (2015) *The Politics of Green Transformation*. Chapter 1. *The 'Politics of Green Transformations'*.

Hess, David J (2009) *Localist movements in a global economy: sustainability, justice, and urban development in the United States*.

van Renssen, A. (2018) 'The inconvenient truth of failed climate policies', *Nature Climate Change*, Vol.8: 355-358.

Loorbach, Derk; Niki Frantzeskaki and Flor Avelino. (2017) "Sustainability transitions research: transforming science and practice for societal change." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 42 (2017): 599-626.

Sachs, Wolfgang (1999) *Planet dialectics*, pp. 1-23.

Escobar, Arturo (1998) 'Power and visibility: Development and the invention and management of the Third World', *Cultural Anthropology* Vol.3(4): 428-443 also available online via <http://aescobar.web.unc.edu/written-texts/>

### **Week 2 19.09.2018 Politics and narratives**

(R) White, Damian F, Alan Rudy, Brian J. Gareau (2016) *Environments, Natures and Social Theory*, Introduction: the socio-ecological imagination and chapter 1. (I recommend that you also read chapters 1 to 3, if not now, at some point over the course).

(R) Beck, Ulrich (1998) 'Politics of Risk Society' in Jane Franklin, ed. *The Politics of Risk Society*.

Stirling, Andy (2019) 'Politics in the language of uncertainty', STEPS Centre blogpost, <https://steps-centre.org/blog/politics-in-the-language-of-uncertainty/>

Hajer, Maarten & Wytske Versteeg (2005) 'A decade of discourse analysis of environmental politics: Achievements, challenges, perspectives'. *Jrl of Envl Policy and Planning*, 7:3, 175-184.

Peltomaa, Juha (2018) 'Drumming the barrels of hope? Bioeconomy narratives in the media', *Sustainability*, 10, 4278; doi:10.3390/su10114278.

Berglund, Eeva (2015) 'Anthropocene horizons in Helsinki/Antroposeeni on myös Helsingissä', in *Human Era - Ihmisen aika*, LARU ART RY / LARU ART Association, Exhibition catalogue, A. Miettinen, M. Kallio & P. Anttonen (eds) pp. 13-16 & 110-112.

Ingold, T. (2000) 'Globes and Spheres: The topology of environmentalism', in *The Perception of the Environment* and in K. Milton ed. *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology* (1993).

Sachs, Wolfgang (1999). *Planet dialectics*. Chapter 7, 'The Blue Planet: On the Ambiguity of a Modern Icon'.

### **Week 3 26.09.2018 Policy and governance**

(R) White, Damian F, Alan Rudy, Brian J. Gareau (2016) *Environments, Natures and Social Theory*, chapter 8.

Buckminster Fuller, R. (2010 [1969]) 'Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth', Lees-Maffei, Grace & R. Houze (eds) *The Design History Reader*, Berg.

Rootes, C; A. Zito & J. Barry 2012. 'Climate change, national politics and grassroots action', *Environmental Politics*, 21:5, 677-690.

Kopnina, H. (2016) 'Half the earth for people (or more)? Addressing ethical questions in conservation', *Biological Conservation*, Vol.203: 176-185.

Bregje Van Veelen (2018): Negotiating energy democracy in practice: governance processes in community energy projects, *Environmental Politics*, DOI: 10.1080/09644016.2018.1427824

Also see: Latour, B. (1987) *Science in Action*, especially chapter 6 'Centres of calculation'.

[Film clips - *All watched over by machines of loving grace*, Adam Curtis, BBC 2011]

### **Week 4 03.10.2018 Nature and design**

(R) Schlosberg D and Coles R (2016) 'The New Environmentalism of Everyday Life: Sustainability, Material Flows and Movements', *Contemporary Political Theory* 15 (2): 160–81.

Haraway, D. (1985) 'Manifesto for cyborgs: science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980s'. *Socialist Review*, no. 80 (1985): 65–108.

Latour, B. (2011) 'Un Prométhée circonspect? A Cautious Prometheus?', *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. No. 381. 2011: 109-119

Gibson-Graham JK (2008) 'Diverse Economies: performative practices for 'other worlds'', *Progress in Human Geography* 32(5): 613-632.

Manzini, Ezio. *Design, when everybody designs: An introduction to design for social innovation*. MIT press, 2015. (Also, Manzini, Ezio. "Design culture and dialogic design." *Design Issues* 32.1 (2016): 52-59.)

Berglund E and Kohtala C 'Collaborative Confusion among Makers: Ethnography and expertise in creating knowledge for environmental sustainability', *Science and Technology Studies* (forthcoming, 2019).

### **Week 5 10.10.2018 Difference and justice**

(R) White, Damian F, Alan Rudy, Brian J. Gareau (2016) *Environments, Natures and Social Theory*, chapters 6 and 7.

Malm, A. and A. Hornborg (2014) 'The geology of mankind? A critique of the Anthropocene narrative', *The Anthropocene Review*, Vol.1(1).

Patel, Raj and Jason W. Moore (2017) *A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet*, especially chapters 6 and 7, 'Cheap food', 'Cheap lives'

Martinez-Alier, Joan. "The environmentalism of the poor." *Geoforum* 54 (2014): 239-241.

Checker, Melissa. "Wiped out by the "greenwave": Environmental gentrification and the paradoxical politics of urban sustainability." *City & Society* 23.2 (2011): 210-229.

### **Week 6 17.10.2018 A new political landscape**

Blühdorn, I.; Deflorian, M. The Collaborative Management of Sustained Unsustainability: On the Performance of Participatory Forms of Environmental Governance. *Sustainability* **2019**, *11*, 1189.

Gabrys, J. (2016). *Program earth: Environmental sensing technology and the making of a computational planet*.

Kallis, G (2015) The degrowth alternative, *Great Transition Initiative* (February 2015).

Demaria, Federico, and Ashish Kothari. "The Post-Development Dictionary agenda: paths to the pluriverse." *Third World Quarterly* 38.12 (2017): 2588-2599.

Hickel, Jason (2018) 'The contradiction of the sustainable development goals: Growth versus ecology on a finite planet', *Sustainable Development*, 2019: 1-12. DOI: 10.1002/sd.1947

Hardin, G (1968) 'The Tragedy of the Commons', *Science*, New Series, Vol. 162, No. 3859: 1243-1248.

Lockwood, Matthew (2018) 'Right-wing populism and the climate change agenda: exploring the linkages', *Environmental Politics*, 27:4, 712-732, DOI:10.1080/09644016.2018.1458411 (not in Aalto resources)

Berglund, Eeva. "Troubled landscapes of change: Limits and natures in grassroots urbanism."  
*Dwelling in Political Landscapes: Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives 4* (2019):  
196-212.

[film clips *Jukajoki* by Prettygoodproductions 2016]