

INTL 407/507: Innovative Alternatives in a Globalizing World

Winter 2020

Professor Derrick Hindery

Class location: 16 PAC

Meeting time: MW 10-11:20

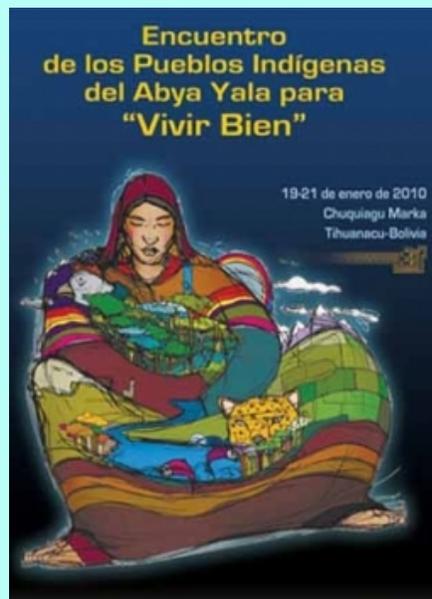
Office hours: MW 1:45-2:45, 345 Prince Lucien Campbell Hall (PLC), 346-6106

Course webpage: course materials will be posted on Canvas,
including all readings

dhindery@uoregon.edu (Please minimize email. Meeting in person at office hours or after class preferred)



China's Loess Plateau: degraded on the left, and under restoration on the right. Photo Credit: Kasima Weber Liu, EEMP. From the free online documentary "[Green Gold](#)"



CAPTION: Flier from a continental meeting of indigenous peoples from Latin America and the Caribbean. During the meeting the indigenous concept of "[Vivir Bien](#)" was put forth as an organizing philosophy that the world could adopt as an alternative to capitalist development. The idea is based on the concepts of social justice, harmony with the earth and "Living Well" not at the expense of others or the earth.

Course Description

Students often tell me they wish that courses were more about solutions, about positive stories, about alternative forms of living that will safeguard the planet and improve peoples livelihoods. This course is meant to heed such requests by systematically reviewing a number of

alternative approaches to environment and development. We'll do this in a way that does not naively accept "alternatives," but which critically analyzes them in their social and historical context. We'll look at cases close to home and from around the world, drawing on experiences from your own studies abroad as well. Although we'll draw substantially from academic literature, we'll also rely on other forms of information, ranging from indigenous knowledge to alternative media outlets. You'll produce a service-learning paper or project in which you'll do something that makes a positive contribution to humanity and simultaneously enriches your educational pursuits. This could entail, for instance volunteering at a local community garden and producing a report that is both useful for the sponsoring organization and meets the academic requirements established in this course. Or it might entail contributing to a website of an indigenous or community-based organization abroad that you already have contact with. There are many possibilities, and we'll meet in person to determine what option is most viable.

Learning Objectives

- Various paradigms on environment and development (e.g. neoliberal, state-interventionist, political ecology, ecofeminist etc.)
- Distinguishing reformist and radical change, with concrete examples of social change across different geographic scales and historical periods
- Definitions and critiques of indigenous models of "eco-development" such as "Ahupuaa" (Hawaii), "Buen Vivir" (Latin America)
- How indigenous knowledge and ways of living can serve as a model for living more harmoniously with fellow human-beings and the earth
- Key findings from a key UN report on agroecology, including evidence how it can be more environmentally friendly, productive and socially just than industrial agriculture.
- Critical examination of tactics and strategies used in various social mobilizations (e.g. the Peoples Climate March, the Zapatistas, Idle No More and Bolivian and Ecuadorean indigenous groups)
- Key ingredients in social mobilization for urban equity and sustainability, e.g. the \$15 an hour minimum wage campaign
- "Profit and Loss" associated with tar sands extraction in Alberta, Canada and other hydrocarbon projects
- Lessons about building resilience (e.g. building skills, local self-sufficiency, local food processing, decentralized energy systems, adaptation)
- How building resilience is interconnected with different models of development, climate change and peak oil
- What peak oil is, its criticisms, and its consequences
- "Sustainable urban development," including specific examples of cities that are "greening" (e.g Eugene, Belo Horizonte)
- Lessons from Transition Towns and how they address peak oil, climate change and other issues (e.g. increasing community bonds, civic engagement)
- Debates on how to make cities more resilient, biodiverse and supportive of human and non-human life (e.g. through regenerative design), greening transit
- "Sustainable happiness," including science on happiness and criticisms of materialism as a path to happiness

Course Requirements and Grading:

The success of this course depends on your attendance and participation. The following is the breakdown for your course grade:

Undergraduate Students

- 25% Attendance and participation, including one 5 minute "current event" presentation per student during the term
- 25% Weekly 1 page summary and analysis of readings (based on 1 reading per week. You can skip 2 weeks). See below for details (credit/no-credit)
- 50% Service Learning paper or project (80% paper, 20% presentation)
A detailed description will be posted on the course website.

Graduate Students

- 25% Attendance and participation, including one 5 minute "current event" presentation per student during the term
- 25% Weekly summary and analysis of readings (based on 1 reading per week. You can skip 2 weeks). See below for details (credit/no-credit)
- 50% Service learning paper or project (tailored towards developing your thesis or dissertation, incorporating course readings, 80% paper, 20% presentation). A detailed description will be posted on the course website.

There will be various discussions and debates that will help you develop a critical understanding of disparate viewpoints. Since we will be discussing the readings each week, you will need to have done them prior to class (readings are listed in the course schedule below). This will work to your own benefit, because you will get more out of the lecture, and will divide your workload evenly throughout the quarter, thereby avoiding “surprises” when we discuss the readings. Please focus on major concepts. You might skim each reading rapidly, extract the major points, and then read the piece more carefully with the major points in mind. The class suffers if you’re not prepared and don’t participate to your fullest. In addition, you’ll understand lectures and discussions better.

In addition to the required readings, I encourage you to keep informed of current affairs so as to further ground the knowledge you gain through this class. A variety of resources are listed at the end of the syllabus. Throughout the course, please feel free to express your ideas and enter into dialogue with myself and your fellow students. Although I do not want to discourage you from expressing your view, I expect that you will be courteous to others, respect different views, and refrain from personal attacks. Through this dialogue, you will encounter perspectives that are different from your own, which will enable you to explore new ideas, challenge your own assumptions, and develop a well-informed position. As a result of such discussion and assignments, you will improve your critical thinking and writing skills--tools that you will carry with you beyond this class.

I prefer that you come to office hours or see me after class rather than emailing me.

I look forward to working with all of you throughout the course, and encourage you to give me feedback at any time. We will do our best to incorporate your suggestions.

Research Paper

- **Please visit me in office hours within the first three weeks to finalize a topic for your research paper. I will meet with all graduate students. Undergraduates may meet with me.**
- **Come prepared having done some preliminary research and having re-read the research paper guidelines.**
- **Prior to the meeting submit on Canvas a rough outline of your paper, with a clear central research question, what you plan to do for your primary research and a list of at least 3 academic sources you’ve perused (in the section in Modules under “Assignments”).**

Write-ups

- Weekly write-ups are always **due prior to the first class meeting of each week**, except for the first write-up, which is due by Friday of week 1.
- However, during the first week please complete the week’s readings by the second class meeting.
 - For week 2, for example, you should have done all the readings and finished your write-up on them by the first day of class of week 2, before class meets.
- The idea is to have you read the readings before we discuss them.
- Please **submit your write-ups through the link in Canvas** for that week.
- Bring a printed copy of your writeup and notes on other readings for the week when we discuss them. That will help discussions
- Label your write-up according to the week # of the write-up, e.g. “Week 1 Write-up”
- Formatting is not critical, just content.
- Please keep them to a **maximum of 1 page, single spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins, and a minimum of 300 words.**
- **Each week choose at least one of the week’s readings for your write-up.**
 - This does not imply that you are to gloss over readings you don’t choose, but simply gives you a chance to focus on one.
- Detailed written feedback will be provided to undergraduates on their first write-up. Graduate students: please meet with me at office hours or after class and I will provide you detailed feedback in person. Undergraduates may opt for this as well, and all students are welcome to come to office hours for feedback on subsequent write-ups.

Please use the following structure for your write-ups:

1. **First section: Summary**

Simply write a short summary of the key points raised in the readings you selected. Don't get lost in the details. Think big picture. This can be essay format or in understandable bullet points.

2. **Second section: Critical analysis and your own assumptions**

Critically analyze the readings. The easiest way to do this is to re-read what you wrote for the summary, and then ask yourself whether or not you agree with arguments put forth, and why. Base your analysis on facts. Consider the authors' deeper, underlying assumptions. These are usually unstated, and implicit. A good way of getting at these deeper assumptions is by figuring out the author(s)' approach, or paradigm. Include a sentence describing your own underlying (deeper) assumptions. As with the summary paragraph, this can be essay format or in understandable bullet points.

Course Policies:

- **Course Expectations:** As mentioned, I expect each of you to do assigned readings before class, and turn in all writeups on time (you will not be permitted to work on them during class).
- **Attendance Policy:** I expect you to attend class regularly and participate in the class discussion. If you miss a class it is *your responsibility* to obtain notes from a fellow student. Credit for missed classes will only be granted if documented and if you do an additional writeup on a reading of your choice for the topic of that day.
- **Academic Integrity:** Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. You may check the University Catalog and/or the Schedule of Classes for definitions and examples of, and penalties for academic dishonesty. Plagiarism software "SafeAssign," provided by University of Oregon, will be used to ensure compliance.
- **Due Dates/Make Up Work:** Make-ups will be allowed only if you have contacted me **before** the scheduled date, with a documented serious excuse.

Required Materials:

- All readings will be posted to the course website on Canvas, under "Course Documents": canvas.uoregon.edu

Online Collaboration Tools

Using Canvas you can set up a group and invite specific members. It allows you to collaborate online with one another, hold meetings, and share files.

Laptop and Texting Policy:

It is fine to bring laptops, just please be courteous to me and classmates and refrain from non-class use. No checking social media websites like Facebook. No texting etc.

Classroom Etiquette:

- Please treat our class as you would a small seminar. Talking, texting, Facebooking, etc are very visible and distracting for the other students, the professor and us. It's an hour and 20 minutes, twice a week. Please just be present in the class.
- Cell phones should be tucked away, not laying out on the desk in front of you.
- If you need to leave lecture early, please tell us before class. It should be a rare occurrence if ever.
- Packing up before class ends sends the message that you've stopped listening, and it also creates a lot of noise and distraction. Your notebook should be open until the class is over.

Students with Special Needs:

Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office (346-1155; <http://ds.uoregon.edu/>) as early in the quarter as possible. Students with physical or learning disabilities should see me to discuss what modifications are necessary.

Additional Resources

Also, always feel free to come to office hours if you need additional help. That said, I do expect that you attempt to learn the material on your own first and come prepared to office hours.

Below, I have pasted a number of online resources to help you keep informed. Beyond this, I encourage you to peruse the library's physical and online holdings related to the course. In addition there are also some excellent multimedia resources available at the Library as well (videos, DVDs, and CDs).

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

-once again, all readings will be posted on Canvas under "Modules": canvas.uoregon.edu You are expected to have done the readings for each week prior to our first class meeting (except for Week 1, by our second class meeting).

Weekly discussion groups are indicated by G1, G2 etc. listed in front of the reading in the Modules section of Canvas.

- These are NOT the same as the debate groups.
- We will divide the class into discussion groups that will be used for small group activities throughout the course.
- You are expected to pay extra attention to the reading that appears next to your discussion group each week.
- You can choose to do your weekly write-up on the same reading, although you do not have to. This makes for more substantive discussions.
- YOU MUST bring notes from the readings your discussion group is assigned to in order to jog your memory.
- Also, each time you meet in discussion groups YOU MUST appoint a spokesperson(s) to report what your group comes up with, and decide who will say what when the group reports their findings back to the class.
- Please note that you are expected to do all readings each week.

WEEK 1: Introduction; Alternative Paradigms/Approaches to Understanding Environment and Development

WEEK 2: Cooperatives

WEEK 3: Indigenous Models or Lifeways

WEEK 4: Alternative models of Agriculture (Agroecology, Agroforestry, Aquaponics, Permaculture)

WEEK 5: Organizing Tactics and Strategies: from Direct Actions to Electoral Politics

WEEK 6: Building Resilient Communities

WEEK 7: Carbon Neutral Cities and Transition Towns

WEEK 8: Sustainable Happiness

WEEK 9: Alternative Models of Education (environmental and in general)

WEEK 10: Presentations

Online Resources

-an interesting project documenting and mapping short video clips about stories of positive change www.RespectfulRevolution.org (a national, not-for-profit advocacy project seeking to document positive action and inspire change.)

-University of Oregon guide to International Studies resources (subject dictionaries and encyclopedias; yearbooks; directories of organizations; finding articles; finding books and government publications; statistics; news and analysis; web resources):

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/general.html>

UD Latin American Studies guide <https://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/intlstudies/latinamericanguide3.html>

Jobs/Internships

<http://www.idealists.org/>

<http://people.emich.edu/rstahler/>

Community economies: www.communityeconomies.org "*The Community Economies project is a place where new visions of community and economy can be theorized, discussed, represented and enacted. The project grew out of J.K. Gibson-Graham's feminist critique of political economy that focused upon the limiting effects of representing economies as dominantly capitalist. Central to the project is the idea that economies are always diverse and always in the process of becoming. This project developed as a way of documenting the multiple ways in which people are making economies of difference and in the process building new forms of community. The project involves an ongoing collaboration between academic and community researchers and activists in Australia, North America, and South East Asia.*"

International News

-You're probably familiar with mainstream media outlets, such as the New York Times or BBC. Here are a few others:

YES! Magazine

Manchester Guardian Weekly (international news): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

National Public Radio: www.npr.org

Pacific Network News: www.kpfk.org

World News Network: <http://www.wn.com/>

The Nation: www.thenation.com

Common Dreams Newscenter: <http://www.commondreams.org/>

IRC Americas Program <http://americas.irc-online.org>

The Ecologist: www.ecologist.org (provides broad analysis on politics and economics, as well as social and environmental issues worldwide)

Directory of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

<http://www.wanqa.org/resources.aspx?section=ngodir>

Non-governmental organizations

New Seed (Grassroots sustainable agricultural community development, Guatemala) <http://www.semillanueva.org/>

IFOAM, the International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements. <http://www.ifoam.org/>

The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems at UCSC (where Steve Gliessman and Miguel Altieri are based:

<http://www.agroecology.org/>

Maitreya Ecovillage (5 minute bike ride from Eugene city-center): www.maitreyaecovillage.org

EcoLogic Development Fund (sustainable community development in Latin America) <http://ecologic.org/en/who-we-are/results>

Rare: Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (does Oregon community dev. projects) rare.uoregon.edu

Aprovecho: non-profit based in Cottage Grove, OR; does appropriate technology, sustainable forestry, organic agriculture, permaculture:

<http://www.aprovecho.net/>

CISCAP-Committee in Solidarity with Central American People (now LASC). There are also links on this page to country-specific solidarity groups and news links: <http://www.efn.org/~ciscap/>

Flowers of Hope (Eugene, OR): non-profit dedicated to community development in 5 communities in Esteli, Nicaragua, led by local women:

www.flowersofhope.org

Partners in Solidarity - A Eugene-based nonprofit doing work in Guatemala: <http://www.partnersinsolidarity.com/>

Grupo Fenix - A nonprofit working with land mine survivors and renewable energy in northern Nicaragua.

<http://www.grupofenix.org/>

Centro Latino Americano (Eugene): <http://www.clal.org/abouteng.htm>

Amazon Watch www.amazonwatch.org

Communities for a Better Environment (Environmental Justice): <http://www.cbecal.org/>

Green for All: national organization dedicated to building an inclusive *green* economy strong enough to lift people out of poverty:

www.greenforall.org

The Guide to Going Local:

http://startsomegood.com/Venture/center_for_a_new_american_dream/Campaigns/Show/the_guide_to_going_local

South Central Farmers (Los Angeles urban farm/env. justice): <http://www.southcentralfarmers.org/story.html>

Mobility International (Eugene, OR): Empowering people with disabilities around the world to achieve their human rights through international exchange and international development: www.miusa.org/

Bring Recycling (Eugene, OR): non-profit organizations dedicated to reuse, reduction and recycling: www.bringrecycling.org

Oregon Toxics Alliance <http://www.oregontoxics.org/>

Indigenous Environment Network: <http://www.ienearth.org/nativeenergy.html>

International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs: <http://www.iwgia.org>

Technical Resources

EPA Environmental Justice Mapping Tool <http://www.epa.gov/enviro/ej/>

EnviroAtlas is an online decision support web-based tool that communities can use to help inform their policy and planning decisions.

Decision Analysis for a Sustainable Environment, Economy, and Society (DASEES) is a web-based decision analysis application that helps decision-makers and stakeholders evaluate science and technical information with an economic and societal values context to support sustainable decision making.

National Stormwater Calculator and Climate Adjustment Tool

Watershed Management Optimization Support Tool (WMOST)

Green Infrastructure Wizard (GIWiz)

Managing and Transforming Waste Streams -- A Tool for Communities

Village Green Stations are real-time air monitoring stations designed to increase community awareness of local air quality conditions.