



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Political Ecology: Perspectives Themes Applications - 59517*

*Last update 10-09-2024*

*HU Credits:* 2

*Degree/Cycle:* 2nd degree (Master)

*Responsible Department:* Glocal International Development

*Academic year:* 0

*Semester:* 1st Semester

*Teaching Languages:* English

*Campus:* Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator:* Dr. Shira Bukchin - Peles

*Coordinator Email:* [shira.peles@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:shira.peles@mail.huji.ac.il)

*Coordinator Office Hours:* By appointment

---

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Shira Bukchin - Peles

Course/Module description:

Joint course between Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI)

*This course offers an exploration of Political Ecology, addressing global environmental issues through a critical social theory lens. Students will engage with both digital and empirical learning methods to understand the social impacts of environmental change in concrete local settings, particularly on marginalized communities, and develop intercultural teamwork skills. The course is structured in four blocks:*

*1. The introductory block will cover origins, theoretical foundations, and classical and new perspectives of Political Ecology. The introduction will be wrapped up with a lecture by an international expert in the field of Political Ecology*

*2. The second block is dedicated to the empirical application of the political-ecological approach. In this framework, two consecutive reciprocal visits by the applicants will take place, during which they will present their own research in hybrid sessions and emphasize how it relates to Political Ecology. In the following sessions, students prepare their own presentations or reports on specific issues in their own surroundings that can be analyzed from a political-ecological perspective. Possible topics can be, for example, land use conflicts, unequal access to water and urban green spaces, the problem of waste or issues of air pollution, etc. Specific cases will be selected in consultation with the course lecturers.*

*3. The third block consists of site visits during which students observe the previously identified issues by applying a political-ecological perspective, analyze collected data, as well as develop preliminary findings.*

*4. The fourth block of the course is dedicated to presenting and analyzing the findings from the site visits. Based on the literature studies, research results, and empirical glimpses, students prepare a term paper or a presentation.*

Course/Module aims:

---

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Grasp key concepts and theories within Political Ecology.
- Analyze environmental issues with an emphasis on social contexts and marginalized groups.
- Apply theoretical knowledge in empirical settings through site visits and project work.
- Enhance skills in teamwork, international cooperation, and audiovisual communication.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

- Course Introduction and Political Ecology Overview
  - Theoretical Foundations of Political Ecology
- Guest lecture: Contemporary Perspectives in Political Ecology (Working title)
- Lecture I: A Political Ecology of Pasture Utilization in Kyrgyzstan
- Lecture II: Positive Orientation and Environmental Policy: General Insights and Applications to Small-Scale Farming in Senegal
- Introduction to Empirical Methods
  - Preparation for site visits
  - Empirical Research, Data Analysis and Development of Findings
  - Audiovisual Presentation Preparation
  - Presentation and Analysis of Results

Required Reading:

Material

Batterbury S. (2015): *Doing Political Ecology Inside and Outside the Academy*. In: Bryant R. L. (Ed.): *The International Handbook of Political Ecology*. Cheltenham, Northampton, MA, Edward Elgar: 27-43.

Blaikie P. (1999): *A Review of Political Ecology. Issues, Epistemology and Analytical Narratives*. *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie* 43(3/4): 131-147.

Bues A. (2018): *Planning, Protest, and Contentious Politics. The Governance of Wind Energy in Brandenburg and Ontario*. *disP - The Planning Review* 54(4): 34-45.

---

Bukchin-Peles, S., & Kerret, D. (2021). Sustainable technology adoption by smallholder farmers and goal-oriented hope. *Climate and Development*, 13(10), 922-931.

Cooke P. (2020): Gigafactory Logistics in Space and Time: Tesla's Fourth Gigafactory and Its Rivals. *Sustainability* 12(5): 2044.

Doolittle A. (2015): The Best of Many Worlds: Methodological Pluralism in Political Ecology. In: Bryant R. L. (Ed.): *The International Handbook of Political Ecology*. Cheltenham, Northampton, MA, Edward Elgar: 515-529.

Dörre A. (2015): Promises and Realities of Community-based Pasture Management Approaches: Observations from Kyrgyzstan. *Pastoralism: Research, Policy and Practice* 5(1): 15.

Eichenhauer E. (2023): Planungskonflikte und Gerechtigkeit: Konzeptionelle Überlegungen am Beispiel des Ausbaus der Windenergie im Nordosten Deutschlands. *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 81(5): 509-522. (unfortunately, only in German)

Kallis G. (2013): Research Design and Methods in Political Ecology. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlukM2VejHQ>

Kallis G. (2015): What is Political Ecology? Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLVE69QZt5w>

Kühn M. (2023): Planungskonflikte und Partizipation: Die Gigafactory Tesla. *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 81(5): 538-556. (unfortunately only in German)

Morrison, M. (2019). How to Create a Better Research Poster in Less Time (#betterposter Generation 1). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RwJbkhCA58>

Neumann R.P. (2009): Political Ecology. In: Kitchin R. & N. Thrift (Eds.): *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. Amsterdam a.o., Elsevier: 8:228-233.

Robbins P. (2012): Chapter 1 "Political versus Apolitical Ecologies". *Ibid.: Political Ecology. A Critical Introduction*. Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell: 11-24.

Sander H. & S. Weißermel (2023): Urban Heat Transition in Berlin: Corporate Strategies, Political Conflicts, and Just Solutions. *Urban planning* 8(1): 361-371.

Schmidt M. (2008): Political Ecology in High Mountains: the Web of Actors, Interests and Institutions in Kyrgyzstan's Mountains. In: Löffler J. & J. Stadelbauer (Eds.): *Diversity in Mountain Systems*. St. Augustin, Asgard: 139-153.

---

*Goulden S., Kerret D. (2021) From indirectly to directly positive: the contribution of a positive orientation to environmental policy, Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning, 23:6, 837-851, DOI: 10.1080/1523908X.2021.1935223*

*Sultana F. (2021): Political Ecology 1: From Margins to Center. Progress in Human Geography 45(1): 156-165.*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Grading Scheme:*

*Other 100 %*

*Additional information:*

*Final Project: Term Paper (approx. 4.000 words) or Presentation (approx. 30 minutes) -> 100%*

*Please note that, as this is an international class, the lecturers reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as necessary to accommodate diverse needs.*