Introduction to Women's Roles in Sustainable Development and Environmental Stewardship

Dr. Cathy A. Rakowski
292-6447 (office) rakowski.1@osu.edu  The best way to reach me is through email
414C Kottman, Office hours T 4-5 or by appointment

Course Description
This course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of women’s roles in sustainable development and as environmental stewards, farmers, and activists, among others. The course brings together theories of women, environment, and development with attention to the role of gender in policy making as illustrated through case studies. Case studies examine women’s and men’s agency and struggles as well as the growing importance of gender differences for specific issues such as forest conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable agricultural production, disaster recovery, toxic waste movements, resistance to construction of dams and the privatization of water, etc.

This is the first course ever to be offered jointly by both Environment and Natural Resources and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Objectives:
When students complete the course, they should have a basic understanding of:
- The importance of “gender” as a variable for promoting sustainable development and environmental stewardship
- Why women have been leaders of some groundbreaking movements
- Why environmental issues have been “women’s” issues
- The relative strengths and shortcomings of the theoretical approaches known as “ecofeminism” and “feminist political ecology”
- Diverse approaches to gendering development policies, projects, and programs that have influenced major international policies on agriculture and environmental sustainability

Grading and Requirements
- participate actively in discussions, “HW comments,” special assignments - 25%
- 3 exams = 60%
  Midterm 1, in class – 20%
  Midterm 2, in class – 20%
  Final exam, take home – 20%
- final short paper/essay on a topic of your choice – 15%

Readings and Other Course Materials
We will use book chapters, journal articles, policy reports, news items, and video materials. Some items will be posted to our Carmen “content” page. Others can be downloaded through the Library’s online journal service and still others can be accessed through online web addresses that I will provide. Some videos will be shown in class while others can be viewed through Vimeo or Youtube or another online source. I also will post reports and materials used in development programs that may interest some of you.

**Participation**

You start out with an A. It is up to you to keep it. Participation includes attendance, in-class workshops and discussions, and homework assignments.

I reserve the right to call on students randomly to facilitate fairness in participation opportunities for class discussion. We also will break down into small groups now and then for discussion.

A seating chart will be prepared to help identify students and to record participation and attendance. Participation and assignments are 25% of your grade. Don’t waste it!

**Homework Assignments**

Each student should plan on submitting a total of 5 “homework assignments” (HW on syllabus). There are 8 HW options spread out over the semester and you can choose 4 from 7 of the options (HW 1 is mandatory for everyone). Two should be handed in before Midterm exam 1, 2 are due before Midterm exam 2, and the final one is due before the last day of class. They are designed to help you prepare for class discussion and engage with course materials. You hand them in at the end of the assigned class and I will provide feedback. They will be marked U, S-, S, S+ to let you know how you are doing. They count toward your participation grade.

Each assignment should consist of a statement of about 200-300 words (printed, not hand written) for the designated topic. Doing 5 out of 8 options provides you with considerable freedom for preparing yourself for class discussion and budgeting your time. Note: each assignment should be handed in on the day for which it was assigned. Do not send by email.

**Special Assignments**

Weeks 8 and 13 there will be “special assignments” that involve students doing research on assigned gender and environment issues and reporting on them in class. Further instructions will be discussed in class once our semester gets underway. Your participation in special assignments can be important to your participation grade—and they are meant to be fun too!

“Want to read more?” The readings under this heading are there for students who really do want to explore the topic more and for whom the subject matter is of broader interest. There is NO requirement that you read any of them or view any recommended videos; they will not be covered on exams. However, I may refer to some of these materials during class discussion.

**Exams:** There will be two in-class midterm exams (Sept 26 & Oct 24) and a final exam (take home exam due on Dec 13). Midterm questions will be short answer, short essay, and 1 longer essay. You will receive a study guide the week before each midterm exam; the final exam will be delivered to you the last week of class. The final will be all essay (some short, others a bit longer) and will be more comprehensive in the sense that you may be asked to use some foundational ideas (theories, concepts) introduced early in the course and apply them to your discussion of cases that we covered in the final third of the course. We will discuss this beforehand and are likely to “practice” doing this during our in-class discussions.

**Final paper**

The final paper/essay should be about **1200 words**. Give your essay a title that fits its focus and make your objective or argument clear in the opening paragraph. **Give the word count (excluding references) at the end of the paper.** Choose a topic of your choice that is related to the course’s subject matter but use resources NOT used already in class. Grading is based on clarity, logic, strength of arguments and analysis, and relevance of the essay to the course subject matter. Since students’ majors vary, so will style of writing and interests and I will take this into account in the interest of fairness. It helps if your paper is interesting and thought provoking and “flows” from beginning to end! Write in a style relevant to your major and use consistent formatting for reference materials. You need not list the entire reference for course materials that you use--just put author name and part of the title. Be sure to cite page numbers whenever you are discussing an idea from your sources. Correct grammar and spelling are a must! It is due the last day of class.
**Policies**

All deadlines should be met and no late papers will be accepted unless you and I have agreed on this beforehand. If an emergency comes up, please notify me immediately.

In principle, there will be no makeup exams and no early exams. However, life happens. If you have a verifiable emergency or urgent matter, a make-up exam will be administered at the instructor’s convenience and questions will not be the same as the original exam. Be sure to notify me or have someone else notify me of any emergency that may come up.

Any plagiarism on written assignments will result in referral to the proper university authorities--no exceptions. The university’s policy is to give an F for the course if plagiarism is proven on even just one assignment.

Any student who has special needs should let me know and may wish to seek the assistance of Disability Services at 150 Pomerene Hall. I will work with Disability Services to meet your needs.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

@ indicates the reading is on electronic reserve (posted to Carmen “content” page)

### Week 1, Aug 27-29: Introduction to the Course: What is “women, environment and development”?

**Wednesday**
Introduction to the subject matter and discussion on how we will conduct the course; discussion of syllabus and course materials

**Friday**
Environmental issues in the public arena

**Shared readings:**


**Want more?**

@ Check out AGENDA 21, the non-binding international agreement forged at the United Nations Conference on Environment & Development held in Rio de Janeiro, the “Earth Summit,” 3-14 June 1992
**Week 2, Sept 3-5:** In the beginning there was “development” and then they added women and environment and “stirred”

**Wednesday**
From “add and stir” to “empowerment”

**Shared readings:**
Handout: development timeline and priorities

**Want to read more?**

**Friday**
Introducing environment and sustainable development into the development equation

**Shared readings:**

**Want to read more?**

**Week 3, Sept 10-12:** WED (the view from the “Third World”) and Ecofeminism (the view from the “First World”)

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT 1 – everyone does this one**
How do the DAWN authors conceptualize the links between “women,” “environment,” and “development”? There are lots of ideas to choose from. Discuss what most interests you from the book.

**Wednesday** HW 1 due today
The DAWN collective and the book they produced in preparation for the “Earth Summit”-- the World Conference on Environment held in 1992 (and this is the book referred to in Mellor read last Friday)

**Shared readings:**

**Friday**
What kind of alternative visions do “ecofeminist” approaches bring to the discussion?

**Shared readings:**
Continue discussion of Sen and Grown book
Review Mellor from last week

**Want to read more?**

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**Week 4, Sept 17-19:** The feminist political ecology framework

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 2**

How does the feminist political ecology perspective differ from an ecofeminist perspective? That is, what does it encourage us to focus on to understand how & why women relate to the environment?

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**Wednesday**  Hand in HW Option 2 today
The feminist political ecology alternative

**Shared readings:**

**Want to read more?**

**Friday**
Case study: Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement
Video: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQU7JOxkGvo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQU7JOxkGvo) [we will view this video in class, 8:52]

**Shared reading**
View this video before class: Documentary: Wangari Muta Maathai (1940 - 2011). It provides historical background behind the Green Belt Movement and the personal and political events that led Maathai to found it [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW5qdeNKfs0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW5qdeNKfs0) [47:46] Be ready to discuss in class.
Week 5, Sept 24-26: Forest preservation and the Chipko movement

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 3

Of the many reasons why gender matters for preserving forest resources in India, which do you find the most compelling or interesting and why?

Wednesday  Hand in HW Option 3 today

Case study: The Chipko movement (legend and reality)

Shared readings:
Video to watch outside of class: "ON THE FENCE: Chipko Movement Re-visited" [video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlooQxBTrL8) [29:14] (film provides history and close look at contemporary situation; we will discuss this in class)

Read one of the following articles. Note: there is overlap between Haigh and Bhatt, but each also provides some different useful information.

Want to read more?

Friday
Midterm exam 1

Week 6, Oct 1-3: Gender and food security as a development issue

Wednesday
Women as farmers and environmental managers in the “global south/third world”

Shared readings:
Want to read more?

Friday
Women, gender and food security: a policy approach

Shared readings:

Want to read more?

Week 7, Oct 8-10: Gender and water management
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 4
Why is water considered to be a “women’s issue”?

Wednesday  Hand in HW 4 today
Women and water management

Shared readings:

Want to read more?
**Friday**
The fight against Coca Cola in Plachimada, Kerala, India

Video we will view in class: Indians Protest Coca Cola Plant [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyFsodVUd-o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyFsodVUd-o) [1:31]

**Shared video and readings:**

Video to watch before class: Always Coca-Cola - India [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWSjWWsFy9g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWSjWWsFy9g) [28:56] uses Coca Cola link to Fifa sports as a way to begin critiques of how Coca Cola operates and to discuss the conflict over depletion/pollution of water resources by Coca Cola plants in countries like India


**Want to read more?**


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**Week 8, Oct 15-17: Dams: Development? What kind? At what cost?**

**Special assignments this week**

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 5**

Should human rights and environmental impacts be taken into account when deciding on big, expensive dam projects?

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**Wednesday**

Dams versus people and environment

View video in class: Video, 1 of a series on the displacement of people in the Narmada River Valley [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rexfjg0xGek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rexfjg0xGek) [12:30]

**Shared readings:**


**Want more?**


Video, 3rd in a series on the displacement of people in the Narmada River Valley [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=totnc4fw7Ms](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=totnc4fw7Ms) [13:13]

Russo, Christina. “A Kenyan woman stands up against massive dam project.” Environment 360 (Yale University). 4 pp. [http://e360.yale.edu/content/print.msp?id=2520](http://e360.yale.edu/content/print.msp?id=2520)
**Friday  Hand in HW Option 5 today**
Before class, students will choose one of the two topics, then will do the research and discuss them in class, guided by the HW questions.

**Everyone watches these 2 videos before class to familiarize themselves with both cases:**

Video: Is the Three Gorges Dam a Ticking Time Bomb? 19:30 min. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3z9K82ZVdMA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3z9K82ZVdMA)

Video: Brazil’s Belo Monte Dam: Conflict in the Amazon. 13 min. [http://e360.yale.edu/feature/video_belo_monte_dam_conflict_in_the_brazilian_amazon/2536/](http://e360.yale.edu/feature/video_belo_monte_dam_conflict_in_the_brazilian_amazon/2536/)

**Choice 1: Three Gorges Dam – China**

Some resources: (you choose which to read)


Aird, Sarah. “China’s Three Gorges: The impact of dam construction on emerging human rights.” Human Rights Brief, 2001. [http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1490&context=hrbrief&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fhl%3D%26q%3Dgender%26tbi%3D%26tbs%3D6%26b%26g%26d%26gender%2Bimpacts%2Bchina%2Bthree%2Bgorges%2Bdam%26tnbG%26as%26sdtp%3Dsearch=22gender%20impacts%20china%20three%20gorges%20dam%22](http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1490&context=hrbrief&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fhl%3D%26q%3Dgender%26tbi%3D%26tbs%3D6%26b%26g%26d%26gender%2Bimpacts%2Bchina%2Bthree%2Bgorges%2Bdam%26tnbG%26as%26sdtp%3Dsearch=22gender%20impacts%20china%20three%20gorges%20dam%22)

**Choice 2: Belo Monte Dam – Brazil**

Some possible resources: (you choose which to read)


Week 9, Oct 22 – 24

Wednesday
Making sense of it all…a stop, breathe and reflect discussion

Friday
Midterm exam 2

Week 10, Oct 29 - 31: Toxic waste movements

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 6
How would you describe the relationship between race, class and/or gender in toxic waste issues?

Wednesday
Love Canal
Video we will view in class: Love Canal by lexiolou1461 [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azNR-hvmzJM][9:29]

Shared readings:

Want more?
Newman, Rich. “Making environmental politics: Women and love canal activism.” Women’s Studies Quarterly 1&2, 2001:65-84. [this one has a lot of historical detail and interview info]
Video: Love Canal 01, History Channel, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzwacZZe5yk][7:10] (this film discusses aspects of the clean up as well as the origin of the problem; terrible editing but great facts here)

Friday Hand in HW option 6
Race, class, gender and environmental injustice

Shared readings:

Want to read more?
**Week 1, Nov 5 - 7: Gender and disasters**

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 7**

Prepare notes for discussion on either the Red River Valley or Katrina and **hand your HW in on the day we discuss your chosen topic**

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**Wednesday**

Gender and class in chronic flood situations

**Shared readings:**

**Want more?**

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**Friday**

Gender, class, race and Hurricane Katrina

**Shared readings:**

**Want more?**

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**Week 12, Nov 12 - 14: Gender and climate change, the environmental challenge**

**Wednesday**

**Shared readings:**
Nelson, V. and T. Stathers. “Resilience, power, culture, and climate: A case study from semi-arid Tanzania, and
new research directions.” Gender & Development 17, 1, 2009:81-94.
@Spitzner, Meike. “How global warming is gendered: A view from the EU.” Pp. 218-29 in Eco-Sufficiency &
**Video to watch before class:** Adapting to climate change in Eastern and Southern Africa 20:42
min. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlp2RkDQBMg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlp2RkDQBMg)

**Want more?**
Video: “When the Water Ends: Africa’s Climate Conflicts” produced by Yale University Environment 360 project.
16 min. [http://e360.yale.edu/feature/when_the_water_ends_africas_climate_conflicts/2331/](http://e360.yale.edu/feature/when_the_water_ends_africas_climate_conflicts/2331/)
Nelson, Valerie et al. “Uncertain predictions, invisible impacts, and the need to mainstream gender in climate
Dankelman, Irene. “Climate change: Learning from gender analysis and women’s experiences of organizing for
Denton, Fatma. “Climate change vulnerability, impacts, and adaptation: Why does gender matter?” Gender &
Video: Weathering Change - Stories About Climate and Family from Around the
World [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPy3pLBJvuE] [13:58]

**Friday**
Gendering policy and actions

**Shared readings:**
Nampinga, R. “Emerging issues panel: Gender Perspectives on Climate Change.” Paper presented to the
Commission on the Status of Women, UN, 2008. 7
ation.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw52/panels/climatechangepanel/R_Nampinga%20Present
ation.pdf)
forward.” Gender & Development 17, 1, 2009:19-32.

**Want to read more?**
@Gender and Climate Change: Toolkit for women on climate change. ISIS International. No
Makahbane, Tieho. “Promoting the role of women in sustainable energy development in Africa: Networking and
BRIDGE. “Gender and climate change: Mapping the linkages. A scoping study on knowledge and gaps.”
ate_Change.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/DFID_Gender_Clim
ate_Change.pdf)
Video: Africa’s Climate Change Challenge [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqbRSkw9gZs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqbRSkw9gZs) [9:10] considers
policy discussions and some strategies
Week 13, Nov 19 - 21: Land rights and land grabs in Africa – environmental and social issues

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT Option 8

In the film on land grabs (Planet for Sale), what environmental or social consequences do you see?

Wednesday
Women and land rights
Watch video in class: Dignity: Women and Land Rights in Burundi 11:25 min. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWA8huETXoA

Shared video and reading:

Watch this film before class. We will discuss the issues both days this week: Video: Food crisis and the global land grab documentary - Planet for Sale? http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IU1-Ppxqezc [54:22] The first part of this film focuses on the economic rationale behind “land grabs.” The second half follows an investor and the impact of his take over of land on local people and ecosystem.

Friday
Continue discussion of land land grabs
Video we will watch in class, 1:20 min: Tanzanian women talking about land grabs. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5DTFziHsa8

Shared readings:

Week 14: THANKSGIVING WEEK. NO CLASS. Take Tuesday to work on your final essay.

Week 15, Dec 3-5: Pulling it all together
Final exam (a take home) will be emailed to you this week.
Final Essay due Friday

Wednesday
We will go back over key concepts and frameworks and revisit case studies and issues as you wish.

Friday Hand in your essays/papers today
Discuss student papers & final exam

FINAL EXAM: Take home exam due on Saturday, December 13 by 9 pm. SEND TO ME AS AN EMAIL ATTACHMENT. I will acknowledge receipt.