

Land, power, and resistance

PCS – 3900 - 001
Fall 2023, 3 Credits
T/Th, 10:45-12:05, CTIHB 201

Dr Tara Quinn
Office: International Studies office (CTIHB)
email: tara.quinn@utah.edu

Course Description: This course is designed to help students understand and explain the way we use land, how it came about, and what current challenges this creates. How do modern states handle the distribution of land... and is this fair? How have clashes between governments, corporations and indigenous 'land defenders' come about? Last not least, how is this exacerbated by processes of global development, resource extraction, and even tourism? To answer these questions, we will study the history of the commodification of land and enclosure (including readings by economist Karl Polanyi and ecofeminist Vandana Shiva), alternative (and mostly indigenous) conceptualizations of land, and a selection of contemporary topics relating to conflicts over land that cross cultures and international borders. This course is primarily concerned with the human consequences of access to land and the protest movements emerging from that, so it emphasizes history, political protest, gender, and class against a backdrop of broader themes of justice and inequality.

Course Learning Outcomes By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Outline how the commodification of land came about, alternative conceptions of land, and how these are used in modern states.
2. Use appropriate vocabulary to compare approaches to peacebuilding and human rights, gender and intersectionality, and political protest and resistance, among others.
3. Explain current land rights movements, including indigenous protests (#landback, etc.) and also contemporary conflict around the world over land.
4. Discuss how different ideas about how land is conceptualized in different cultures (and among diverse communities) impacts on how struggles over land are perceived.
5. Use your understanding of land rights and historical underpinnings to analyze issues facing political leaders, nations, and societies today.

Peace and Conflict Studies Program Learning Outcomes You will:

1. Gain a broad interdisciplinary knowledge of international, transnational, and global issues with regards to land, peacebuilding, and human rights.
2. Learn to critically examine transnational questions within the context of the course, including contemporary issues, topics, and themes.
3. Learn to effectively engage within cultural contexts that are not your own.
4. Develop skills to support continued learning and serve communities and organizations at home and abroad.

Things You Need to Do to Succeed:

Come to class. **Do the readings and watch the videos.** Participate in discussions.

Turn off your cellphone. If you choose to use a computer in class, choose also not to be distracted by it. No reddit, no insta, no games, no nonsense. Consider taking notes by hand, on paper (they say it helps your memory).

Read this syllabus.

I hope and expect you to **keep yourself informed on world events, especially pertaining to conflict over land and resources, and regularly read world news** e.g., the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Financial Times*, the *Economist*, *Die Zeit*, *Le Monde diplomatique*, or another publication with comparable international news. (Some of these publications lean left, some lean right, some are domestic, and some are foreign. You may take your pick. Certainly you do not need to read the opinion pages of these publications, and neither are you required to agree with them.) **Basic knowledge about contemporary international politics and conflict is very helpful background for this course**, though you can always look up anything unfamiliar to you as we get to it in class.

Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation:

This is a mixed lecture and discussion course. Many classes will be structured around a lecture, but you will be assigned a topic (contemporary conflict over land) to lead discussion on and we will often break for activities and debates.

Quizzes and exams may draw equally from class discussion, readings, videos, and lectures. You are responsible for readings even if we don't cover them in detail in class.

You will be graded on a short (1500 word) paper (25%), a take-home midterm exam (25%), participation (including a presentation, quizzes, attendance, and discussion participation, 30%), and a final exam (20%).

Please familiarize yourself with the University's Student Code that can be found online at www.saff.utah.edu/code.html. **I will not tolerate any form of academic misconduct.** In particular, if I discover that you have plagiarized, cheated, or misrepresented your work to me in any way, **you will fail this course.** (Note that I run exams and other written work through a ChatGPT and AI filter in addition to usual anti-plagiarism databases.) I am also required to enter the incident into the University's Academic Misconduct Database, which will record your details for the remainder of your time at the University of Utah. Do not cheat. *Do not cheat.* It is immoral, it cheapens your work, it commits theft and fraud at the same time, and it also happens to be **extremely stupid.**

SYLLABUS

Week 1

Aug 22nd Course introduction.

Introduction to how this course will run, approaches to 'decolonizing the classroom' that we'll try to put in place, and an overview of land rights and different approaches which we will cover.

Aug 24th *The Great Transformation*, by Karl Polanyi (Foreword and ch.3)

Read the foreword by renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz and chapter 3 for a history of land enclosures in the nineteenth century. If you have time, the introduction and chapter 1 are also relevant to our discussion.

Week 2

Aug 29th A history of enclosure in other countries

We will explore some writing by Rosa Luxemburg on the agrarian basis of resistance to capitalist-led dispossession, supplementing with some Marx and Engels (on land), and Rousseau on private property.

Aug 31st The Tragedy of the Commons

Read "The Tragedy of the Commons" by Garrett Hardin and come prepared to discuss the central ideas of the text with regards to the history of enclosure we have just examined.

Week 3

Sept 5th Conservation – part 1

A look at Thoreau (On Walden Pond) and Leopold (The Land Ethic)

Sept 7th Conservation – part 2

A continuation of part 1, and a turn to other conservationist writers (Carson, Emerson, and Muir)

Week 4

Sept 12th Post-colonial approaches to land

A look at post-colonial land approaches, including *uti possidetis* in African countries and partition in India (focus on the role of foreign powers and the impact on land/territory).

Sept 14th Local approaches to post-colonial land use and gendered access to land

The work of two prominent Indian scholars: Vandana Shiva and Bina Agarwal.

Week 5

Sept 19th Indigenous approaches to land – part 1

Sept 21st Indigenous approaches to land – part 2

Week 6

Sept 26th Different ways of knowing w/r/t land: race, class, and ethnicity.

Sept 28th Different ways of knowing w/r/t land: gender and intersectionality.

Week 7

Oct 3rd A summary of different conceptualizations of land.

Oct 5th Paper due.

We'll spend the last class before fall break looking at the next section of the course, as well as assigning discussion topics for presentations.

Week 8 FALL BREAK

(During fall break, you'll have the opportunity to pull together some materials for your discussion topic on a particular land conflict. You're also welcome to just take a break!)

Week 9

Oct 17th No class. Watch a video lecture on a contemporary case of land rights and resistance in Sri Lanka. Midterm questions become available.

Oct 19th No class. Please work on your take-home midterm (due Sunday night).

Week 10

Oct 24th Conflict management, resolution and transformation.

Different approaches to addressing conflict, and land, with an institutional focus.

Oct 26th Two approaches to peacebuilding and structural justice.

An exploration of the work of Lederach and Galtung and how they address the structural causes for conflict.

Week 11

Oct 31st Transitional justice and transformative justice: the case for a land rights procedure.

With examples from various transitional justice processes: South Africa, Kenya, Colombia.

Nov 2nd Are there any territorial solutions to armed conflict?

A look at some examples from the Balkans: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo.

Week 12

Nov 7th Postwar movements for land restitution.

A more legal perspective on postwar land rights for victims.

Nov 9th Resistance and post-conflict land rights: the case of Sri Lanka.

A look at the protest movements in postwar Sri Lanka, with a focus on how land grabs can stand in for other ideologies, including nationalism, neocolonialism, patriarchal dominance.

Week 13

Nov 14th Land restitution movements in action: Israel/Palestine, Cyprus, Serbia/Kosovo.

Nov 16th Local alternative examples to state-led land restitution: Colombia, Rwanda.

Week 14

Nov 21st Transitional justice and indigenous land defenders in Canada

Nov 23rd NO CLASS. THANKSGIVING.

Week 15

Nov 28th The #landback movement: North American examples

Nov 30th Land acknowledgements and other indigenous-led awareness raising campaigns.

Week 16

Dec 5th Indigenous land protest movements in Utah. Activism and solidarity.

Dec 7th A summary of key land rights cases

From international conflict zones to Bear's Knees: what have we learned?

Dec 15th Take-home exam due.

Important Information about this course, the University, and its services:

The Americans with Disabilities Act. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

University Safety Statement. The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

Diversity Statement. A diversity of ideas, opinions, and life experiences makes every classroom richer. No matter who you are, this is a class for you. I hope that you will learn something about people who are unlike you in this course – and I hope that you will participate fully, bringing your own perspective to others, too. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of our great diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, life experience, and culture. If any of our class meetings conflict with your holy days please let me know and I will work to make arrangements for you.

Veterans Statement For student veterans, the University of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Visit their website for information about what support they offer and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need additional support in this class.

Undocumented Student Support Statement. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be requested from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from mixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801.213.3697 or visit dream.utah.edu.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct. Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).