

**POLS\*4170**  
**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS**

**Course Outline**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**University of Guelph**

**Winter 2026**  
**Professor Craig Johnson**

**Classes:** ALEX 309 Wednesdays, 11:30am-2:20pm  
**Office:** MacKinnon 514  
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**Office hours:** By appointment

**COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course explores the political, economic, and environmental dimensions of governing resource extraction for a just and sustainable energy transition. A central theme concerns the securitization of critical minerals, renewable energy technologies, and new mining frontiers, whose communities, landscapes, and ecosystems are often sacrificed for the purposes of decarbonization, geopolitical competition, and corporate profit. By the end of this 12-week course, students should be able to:

- Understand the factors and forces that are driving – and resisting – the contemporary energy transition;
- Evaluate the role that multilateral institutions and agreements have played in governing decarbonization, resource extraction, and climate change;
- Understand the political economy of resource governance, including the securitization of critical minerals, the expansion of mining for renewable energy, and the rise of resource nationalism;
- Develop a critical understanding of the political, economic, and environmental trade-offs between decarbonization and competing development pathways;
- Consider alternative ways of valuing and thinking about environmental politics, human-environment relationships, and environmental justice.

Students are reminded that this is a 1.0 credit course, and the expectation is that they take a leading role in preparing class discussions, completing the required readings, and undertaking substantive writing assignments.