

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Colombia

Course Code/Title: (CA / GEOG 310) Environmental Conflicts, Territorialities, and Ethnic Groups in Colombia.

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Geography, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, and Economics

Language of Instruction: English.

Prerequisites/Requirements: None.

Description

The purpose of this course is to examine the main dynamics and debates about environmental and territorial conflicts in Colombia. Although the orienting approach is geographic with material from political ecology and environmental geography, the course encourages an interdisciplinary discussion and communicates extensively with the broad social sciences. It is open to students from different backgrounds, providing them with tools to analyze the main environmental and territorial conflicts that have taken shape in Colombia over the last few decades.

This course has three modules. The first one has a theoretical emphasis and explores relevant research to introduce the students to the topic, making sporadic references to the Colombian case. The second module focuses not only on the impact of armed conflict on the territories of ethnic minorities, but also on the evolution of illegal economies and their associated environmental conflicts. The third and final module presents relevant cases of territorial, environmental and gender/identity-based collective actions from below.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students will have:

- Learned some of the basic notions of human geography, such as environment, conflict, and territory, with an emphasis on the Colombian context. These concepts will be developed from a geographical perspective, although, a conversation with other fields such as sociology and anthropology will be stimulated.
- Built a historical overview of the civil war in Colombia and its impacts on the configuration of territories for minorities and ethnic groups.
- Discussed the main environmental conflicts that have emerged during the last decades and their relationship with the different illicit economies in this country, developed with strength in the countryside (our emphasis).
- Analyzed different journalistic sources that will put into context the central components of the transnational chain of illicit economy, especially coca and illegal mining.

Course Requirements

The course consists of class lectures, open discussions, and field visits to organizations, communities, and government offices. This course examines issues that are present in rural

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communities and the implementation of both territorial policies for ethnic groups and environmental agendas. Students are expected to actively participate in all lectures and out-of-classroom activities, and to read 30 pages, on average, per week to prepare for each lecture. Each student is required to write five 2-page short critical essays that summarize and analyze the main aspects of the literature assigned for each of the weeks selected. One midterm is scheduled at week 9. Students are expected to write a final 6-page paper resulting from extensive analysis of both the required and optional reading. The final manuscript draws attention to the relationships between environmental conflicts, illicit economies, and the evolution of territorialities for minority and ethnic groups.

Students are expected to attend each class and field-based course component, as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy.

Grading

- Short critical essays (5) – 50%
- Midterm (1) – 20%
- Final paper (1) – 30%

Readings

Borras, Saturnino Jr., Ruth Hall, Ian Scoones, Ben White, and Wendy Wolford. (eds). "Governing global land deals: the role of the state in the rush for land. Special Issue." *Development and Change*, 2013.

Borras Saturnino. Jr., Jennifer Franco, Cristobal Kay, and Max Spoor. *Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean viewed from broader international perspectives. The Latin America and Caribbean seminar: 'Dinámicas en el mercado de la tierra en América Latina y el Caribe'*, 14-15 November, FAO Regional Office, Santiago, Chile, 2011.

Ballvé, Teo. "Everyday state formation: territory, decentralization, and the narco landgrab in Colombia." *Environment and Planning D* 30 (4):603-622, 2012.

Courtwright, David. *Forces of Habit. Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*, 2001

Cresswell, Thomas. *Geographic Thought: A Critical Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2013

Cutter, Susan L., Reginald Golledge and William L. Graf. "The big questions in geography." *The Professional Geographer*, 54(3): 305-317, 2002.

Fergusson, Leopoldo, Darío Romero and Juan Vargas. *The Environmental Impact of Civil Conflict: The Deforestation Effect of Paramilitary Expansion in Colombia. Working Paper Series WP 59 – Latin American and the Caribbean Environmental Economics Program*, 2013.

Grajales, Jacobo. "The rifle and the title: paramilitary violence, land grabbing and land control in Colombia." *Journal of Peasant Studies* Vol 38 n°4, p. 771–791, 2011

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- Hamilton, K. *The Golden Age of Drug Trafficking: How Meth, Cocaine, and Heroin Move Around the World*. Vice, 2016.
- Massé, Frédéric, and Phillippe Le Billon. "Gold mining in Colombia, post-war crime and the peace agreement with the FARC." *Third World Thematics*, 2018.
- Legrand, Catherine. *Frontier expansion and peasant protest in Colombia, 1850-1936*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986.
- Lemaitre, Juliana. "After the War: Displaced Women, Ordinary Ethics, and Grassroots Reconstruction in Colombia." *Social & Legal Studies* 25(5), 2016.
- Lugo, Diego. "Peace and the Conquest of the Last Agricultural Frontier in Colombia? Ceasefire Economies, Segmented Development, and Titling of Wastelands in Vichada." In *Sociología de la paz: Comprensiones Sociales y Enfoques Territoriales*. Edited by Ginneth Nárvaez. Bogotá: Editorial Universidad Santo Tomás, 2019.
- Lugo, Diego. "After a Storm Comes a Calm? Coercive Conservation, Land Use Change, and (Post?) Conflict Economies in the Contested Colombian Frontier, 2000-2016." *Journal of Land Use Science – Transdisciplinary perspectives on current transformations at extractive and agrarian frontiers in Latin America*, Special Issue, Taylor and Francis, 2019.
- Luna, Adriana. "Modernidad y drogas desde una perspectiva histórica." *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales*, Año LX, 225 septiembre-diciembre, Pp. 21-44, 2015.
- Meertens, Donny. "Uprooted lives: Gender, violence and displacement in Colombia." *Journal of Tropical Geography* 17(2):165 – 178, 2006.
- Meertens, Donny and Margarita Zambrano. "Citizenship Deferred: The Politics of Victimhood, Land Restitution and Gender Justice in the Colombian (Post?) Conflict." *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 4(2), 2010.
- Ojeda, Diana. "Green pretexts: Ecotourism, neoliberal conservation and land grabbing in Tayrona National Natural Park, Colombia" *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Volume 39, Issue 2, 2012.
- Potter, Lesley. *Managing oil palm landscapes: A seven-country survey of the modern palm oil industry in Southeast Asia, Latin America and West Africa*. Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), 2015.
- Ramírez, María Clemencia. *Between Guerillas and the State: The Cocalero Movement, Citizenship, and Identity in the Colombian Amazon*. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Reyes, Jesus. "Despojo de territorios o reconocimiento de la tierra: coca, palma y poder en el Consejo Comunitario de Alto Mira y Frontera, Tumaco". *Conflictos y procesos de paz: el*

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caso de Colombia <http://www.unilim.fr/trahs>. Pp, 33-47, 2017

Richani, Nazih. *Systems of Violence, The Political Economy of War and Peace in Colombia* (Second Edition). New York: State University of New York Press, 2013.

Richani, Nazih. "Multinational Corporations, Rentier Capitalism, and the War System in Colombia." *Latin American Politics and Society*, 47 -3, pp. 113-144, 2005.

Vergara, Aurora. *Afrodescendant Resistance to Deracination in Colombia. Massacre at Bellavista-Bojayá Chocó*. Palgrave, 2018

Wickham-Crowley, Timothy. *Guerrillas and Revolutions in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes since 1956*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Outline of Course Content

Topic 1: Course overview

- Environmental conflicts
- Territorialities
- Ethnic groups

Topic 2: Introduction to human geography

- Notions of Space
- Place
- Environment

Topic 3: Geographic research on conflict

- Diasporas in Africa
- Rwanda
- Genocide
- Final solutions

Topic 4: Environments in Latin America

- Conflict and violence in comparative perspective
- Colonization in the frontier
- Insurgencies in contemporary history

Topic 5: The new rush for land in Latin America

- Extractive economies
- Land grabbing and concentration
- Flex crops
- Conservation, forestry, and green grabbing

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Topic 6: The armed conflict in Colombia

- History of violent colonization
- Territorially differentiated settlement
- Armed confrontation

Topic 7: Deracination in Chocó

- Violent dispossession
- Afro-descendant diasporas
- Community Councils in Colombia and Choco

Topic 8: Land structure in the new century

- Violence as a territorialization strategy
- Palm and Banana in Urabá
- Curvaradó and Jiguamiandó
- Agribusiness actors and the armed conflict

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Topic 10: The system of war in Colombia

- Rentier capitalism
- The system of war
- The resource curse in Colombia

Topic 11: Illicit economies

- Coca and cocaine in Colombia
- The war on drugs
- Psychoactive substances

Topic 12: Illegal mining in the Pacific

- Illegal mining
- Deforestation
- Paradoxes of development

Topic 13: Women as “violated objects” in the Colombian context

- Everyday land dispossession based on gender
- Land restitution
- Territories of violation