



## Green Political Thought (PGT) Course Descriptor

Course Title	Green Political Thought (PGT)	Faculty	Politics and IR
Course code	NCHPIR775	Course Leader	Dr Callum Barrell
Credit points	15	Teaching Period	Either
FHEQ level	7	Date approved	January 2021
Compulsory/ Optional	Compulsory		
Pre-requisites	None		
Co-requisites	None		

### COURSE SUMMARY

While the history of political thought has arguably always addressed nature and the environment (Forrester and Smith 2018), the emergence of green political thought as a distinct field is relatively recent (Barry 1999; Goodin 1992; Vanderheiden 2020). The deepening environmental crisis has forced some political theorists to reconsider the inheritances - methodological, epistemological, ontological, and linguistic - with which we theorise and do politics; to generate new critical perspectives of the state and interstate relations; and to place sustainability at the heart of normative political theory. Many of these theorists (see Vanderheiden 2020) emphasise ideas' and discourses' emancipatory potential in the face of the ecological crisis. Students will draw on environmental history; the history of political thought; green political theory; political science; and theories and practices of international relations (IR) to understand sustainability as both a domestic and international problem. They will explore ways in which sustainability affects other political concepts and practices, from democracy and cosmopolitanism to regionalism and co-operation. They will think about the intersection between political theory and practice, as well as the methodological implications of doing so. Finally, they will hone the necessary critical, analytical, written, and oral skills with which to explore this timely and exciting field.

### COURSE AIMS

- Understand and critically engage different approaches to, and theories of, green political thought.
- Explore ways in which sustainability, ecologism, and environmental crisis unsettle established political ideas and practices.
- Address green political thought to complex problems within IR.

- Reflect methodologically on the relationship between theory and practice.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- K1d Deepen their knowledge of green political thought, ecologism, and sustainability.
- K2d Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the construction and green reconstruction of political thought.
- K3d Situate green political thought within a global context.
- K4d Apply green political theory to fundamental political concepts.

### SUBJECT SPECIFIC SKILLS

- S1d Critically evaluate green political thought and theories of sustainability.
- S2d Apply hermeneutic, exegetical, and analytical techniques to texts.
- S3d Appreciate and adopt interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches.
- S4d Think methodologically about political theory and IR and be able to sustain a complex and convincing line of argument.

### TRANSFERABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- T1d Gather, closely read, and critically engage complex information.
- T2d Organise and deploy a range of sources and texts.
- T3d Synthesise sources into a persuasive oral or written argument.
- T4d Consistently apply an excellent level of technical proficiency in written English, using an advanced application of scholarly terminology, that demonstrates the ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and with sophistication.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning strategies for this course will include:

- Full-cohort lectures
- Full-cohort seminars
- Office hours

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students are required to attend and participate in all the formal and timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

## EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

- Work independently, creatively, and to deadlines
- Conduct independent research and explore relevant existing knowledge
- Synthesise and evaluate information against a backdrop of uncertainty
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Present findings and opinions in a clear, structured manner, whether orally or in writing
- Engage in collaborative and constructive discussion

## ASSESSMENT

### FORMATIVE

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback.

### SUMMATIVE

AE	Assessment Activity	Weighting (%)	Online submission	Duration	Length
1	Report (article review)	35%	Yes		1500 words
2	Essay	65%	Yes		3500 words

All assignments will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

## FEEDBACK

Students will receive formal feedback in a variety of ways: written (including via email correspondence); oral on an *ad hoc* basis) and indirectly through discussion during group tutorials. Student's will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance.

Feedback is provided on summative written assignments which will be handed back to the students.

## INDICATIVE READING

Note: comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Syllabus or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

## BOOKS

Barry, J., *Rethinking Green Politics: Nature, Virtue, and Progress* (London: Sage, 1999).

Biermann, F. and Lövbrand, E. (eds.), *Anthropocene Encounters. New Directions in Green Political Thinking* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Carter, A., *A Radical Green Political Theory* (London: Routledge, 1999).

Dobson, A. and Lucardie, P. (eds.), *The Politics of Nature. Explorations in Green Political Theory* (London: Routledge, 1993).

Dobson, A., *Green Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1990).

Eckersley, R., *The Green State: Rethinking Democracy and Sovereignty* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004).

Forester, K. and Smith, S. (eds.), *Nature, Action, and the Future. Political Thought and the Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Goodin, R.E., *Green Political Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

Newell, P., *Global Green Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Robbins, P., *Political Ecology. A Critical Introduction* (London: Wiley, 2020).

Vanderheiden, S., *Environmental Political Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020).

## **JOURNALS**

Barnhart, M.G., 'Ideas of Nature in an Asian Context', *Philosophy East and West* 47.3 (1997), pp. 417-432.

Chakrabarty, D., 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009), 197–222.

McNeill, J.R., 'Observations on the Nature and Culture of Environmental History', *History and Theory* 42 (2003), pp. 5–43.

Symmons, J. and Karlsson, R., 'Ecomodernist Citizenship: Rethinking Political Obligations in a Climate-Changed World', *Citizenship Studies* 22.7 (2008), pp. 685-704.

Symmons, J. and Karlsson, R., 'Green Political Theory in a Climate-Changed World: Between Innovation and Restraint', *Environmental Politics* 24.2 (2015), pp. 173-192.

## **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

College's VLE

## **INDICATIVE TOPICS**

Students will study the following topics:

- Methods and concepts of environmentalism
- Green political thought
- Mainstream and critical International Relations (IR)
- Sustainability and development
- Activism and resistance
- Environmental history
- Democratic theory
- Green cosmopolitanism and global citizenship

<b>Title: NCHPIR775 Green Political Thought</b>					
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>					
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Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Proposed next review date	Modification (As per AQF4) & category number
2.0	May 2022	May 2022	Dr Callum Barrell	January 2026	Category 3: Changes to Course Learning Outcomes  Category 2: Change to summative assessment
1.0	January 2021	May 2021	Dr Callum Barrell	January 2026	