

Report on an Environmental Controversy

Grade Value: 25% of final grade

Due date: Thursday, November 15, by 11:59pm

Submission Method: Students are required to upload their paper to the CourseLink dropbox as a PDF file.

Save the file as: 'your last name'_Geog 1220 report (as in: Dupej_Geog 1220 report). Students are responsible for double-checking that their file has successfully uploaded to CourseLink.

Late Essays: Late essays will be penalized 5% per day, including Saturdays and Sundays. Under extenuating circumstances, students can request an extension from the instructor (not TAs).

Description: You have been hired by a consulting company to produce a report on an environmental controversy. *An environmental controversy is an environmental issue caused by a human activity impacting the environment, which has been in the news recently because of public dispute over the issue, usually concerning conflicting points of view.* The report will be used to brief important clients about environmental issues in which they might want to invest their money in helping find a solution. You are to select a human activity or development that has impacted the environment anywhere in the world and has generated a controversy.

You are to write a report consisting of two parts: Part 1 and Part 2. **Part 1** is divided into three sections: (a) identifying and describing the controversy; (b) identifying and explaining the social and environmental impacts; and (c) identifying and explaining the solutions. Part 1 will summarize information from different sources by drawing together and organizing material around the impacts of the activity/development, as well as the potential solutions that are recommended and/or used to manage the impacts. Another way to think about Part 1 is as an exercise in summarizing the state of the research on your issue.

In **Part 2**, you will interpret the environmental controversy through the 'economic' and 'ecological' worldviews discussed in lecture. What does each 'lens' say about the environmental issue? How does each worldview interpret the environmental issue, differently? Think of Part 2 as a reflection on the broader socio-economic, cultural and political contexts out of which the environmental controversy emerged, and from which solutions will come.

Objectives:

- To develop research skills and become familiar with academic sources (e.g. peer-reviewed journals, books, edited books);

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- To assess, summarize, organize and present relevant knowledge on environmental impacts of interest to you;
- To draw from course material in making broader connections to, and thinking more deeply about, the environment's social dimensions;
- To learn to provide evidence by using references (in-text citations).

Report Structure (with approximate page length guidelines):

Part 1 a): Identify and Describe the Controversy (0.5-1 page)

You will be graded on how well you:

- Identify and describe the controversy: What is the controversy? What is the human activity/development creating the controversy? Why is it controversial? What is the resource/environment impacted by the human activity/development and where is it taking place (i.e. specific location)? The more specific the controversy, the better your report will likely be. The purpose of this section is to provide basic background information on the environmental issue before you go into greater detail in the rest of the report.
- Explain the significance of the controversy. Why should the reader care about the issue?

Part 1 b): Identify and Explain the Impacts (1-1.5 pages)

You will be graded on how well you:

- Identify and explain how the human activity/development impacts the biophysical environment and social, cultural and economic circumstances. What damage is being/has been done to the environment? To people? What is the extent of the impacts? What does science say about the impacts? How do people experience the impacts? What are the major components, trends and relationships between the human activity and the resource?
- Present evidence (i.e. use references) to prove the impacts explained. References tell the reader from where the information used in the report came.

Part 1 c): Identify and Explain the Solutions (1 page)

You will be graded on how well you:

- Identify and describe relevant policies, technologies or other solutions that are currently being used to manage the human impact on the resource. Have they worked? Why or why not?

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Part 2: Viewpoint Interpretations (1-1.5 pages)

You will be graded on how well you:

- Interpret the environmental issue from the ‘economic worldview’. Another way to think about it is: what perspectives and ways of thinking about the environment have enabled the controversy to emerge/continue?
- Interpret the environmental issue from ‘ecological worldview’. Another way to think about it is: what perspectives and ways of thinking about the environment have lead to concern or protest over the activity?
- Highlight the differences between the worldviews.
- Think more deeply about human-environment relationships by drawing from course material to help with your interpretations.

Bibliography

- Include all references cited in the paper.
- A minimum of five (5) references is required. **Three (3) must be from peer reviewed journals. One (1) of the three (3) peer reviewed journals must be from GEOGRAPHY.**
- You can use other academic sources (e.g. books, edited collection of chapters) in addition to the required three (3) peer reviewed journal articles.
- Where appropriate, you can use other non-academic references such as websites, brochures, magazines, newspapers or press releases.
- You can use the sources from your proposal (but are not required to).
- At least one of the sources must be from 2015-2018.
- There is no limit to the number of total references you use (within reason).
- Follow APA formatting (or equivalent) for bibliography.

Essay Formatting:

- The essay is to be 1200-1300 words (approx. 5 pages double-spaced. Rule of thumb: 250ish words per double spaced page).
- Title page, titles, headings, figures (e.g. images, maps, graphs, etc.) and bibliography are not included in the word count or page count.
- The essay must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman, Ariel) on 8½ x 11 inch white paper with one-inch margins.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, sentence structure and paragraph construction.
- Headings can be used to organize the essay (but are not required).

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- Graphs, charts and other images can be included, but are not required. Make sure they are labeled and the source is identified. These are not included in the page count.
- Number the pages.
- On the first page, include the appropriate information: *essay title, your name, student number, class name and number, TA's name, date of hand in*. You do not need to include a title page.

Citation Guidelines:

- In the text of your essay, use citations when relaying facts, direct quotations or presenting ideas that come from someone else (i.e., when facts or ideas are not your own).
- Use bracketed citations throughout the paper (e.g. Smith, 2014; Harris and Jones, 2017, p. 5).
- Please see University of Guelph Learning Commons, the library help desk or librarians for further assistance on bibliography and citation formats. This website is helpful: <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/get-assistance/writing/citations>

****See the grading rubric below for evaluation criteria****

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Grading Rubric

	Marks	Missing/ Not Acceptable (0-1)	Poor (D - D+) (2-2.5)	Requires Work (C - C+) (3)	Satisfactory (B - B+) (3.5)	Well Done (A) (4)	Excellent (A+) (4.5-5)
Part 1 a): Identify and Describe the Controversy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly identifies a specific controversy, human activity, resource, country and its significance (i.e. why it is controversial) 	5						
Part 1 b): Identify and Explain the Impacts i) Clearly identifies and describes specific environmental impacts	5						
ii) Clearly identifies and describes specific social, cultural and economic impacts	5						
iii) Provides evidence/uses references to support claims about the impacts	5						
Part 1 c): Identify and Explain the Solutions i) Clearly identifies and explains relevant policies, technologies or other solutions	5						
ii) Provides evidence/uses references to support claims about the solutions.	5						
Part 2: Viewpoint Interpretations i) Provides a thoughtful interpretation of the issue using the 'economic worldview'	5						
ii) Provides a thoughtful interpretation of the issue using the 'ecological worldview'	5						
iii) Connections are made to course material	5						
Bibliography i) Properly and consistently formatted.	5						
ii) Includes at least 5 references. Three (3) must be from peer reviewed journals. One (1) of the three (3) peer reviewed journals must be from GEOGRAPHY. One (1) source must be dated from 2015-2018.	5						
Report followed formatting instructions.	5						
Writing is clear.	5						
Student's Score							
TOTAL	65						