I am always looking for graduate students with an interest and aptitude to study the governance and land use implications of energy transitions. For a 2016 start, I am most interested in working with graduate students along one of two lines of inquiry:

1) The (multi-level) governance frameworks that shape spatial patterns of renewable energy development, with emphasis on the role of community energy planning (CEP). This research project will contribute to our understanding of how renewable energy is envisioned and managed in CEPs, and of the cross-jurisdictional and multi-scalar implications of CEP implementation. The successful applicant will gain expertise in Canadian energy policy, community energy planning, renewable energy approval processes, and policy-technology-land-use dynamics, along with exposure to advanced concepts and techniques from energy geography, sociotechnical transitions studies, multi-level governance, and (or) political-industrial ecology. In addition, the successful applicant will gain experience in qualitative research design, policy analysis, and working with local community partners in research design and knowledge dissemination. The field work for this research will involve communities across the province of Ontario, with potential to expand the research to BC and Nova Scotia.

2) Area-based renewable energy resource assessments and the development of spatial planning scenarios for renewable energy development using GIS. This project will build on Dr. Calvert’s efforts to develop a standardized resource classification system for renewable energy resources. Here, the student will gain expertise in GIS-based research design and the use of GIS for regional decision-support in resource management. In addition the successful applicant will be exposed to cutting-edge concepts and techniques that are being used to facilitate informed decisions related to renewable energy development and implementation; notable the integration of land-use planning and energy supply planning. The field work for this research will take place in specialty agricultural regions (e.g., viniculture regions).

Although the general themes and contributions of the research have been scoped, in both cases described above the student will have considerable latitude in project design (i.e., there are a range of possible projects that fit within these two lines of inquiry). For more information about these opportunities please contact Dr. Kirby Calvert, ideally before submitting a formal application to the Department. Please include an unofficial transcript, a resume/CV, and a writing sample with your inquiry.