

# **SOCIOLOGY 3480-090: ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**

*Summer 2019, 3 Credits, International & Sustainability – Limited Requirements  
online*



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## **Syllabus and Course Outline**

### **Course Summary:**

This course is designed to introduce you to the sub-discipline of environmental sociology. Throughout the semester we will explore the interactions between society and the natural world. More specifically, we will discuss factors of human society that have caused degradation of ecological systems and that contribute to unsustainable practices. Understanding contemporary environmental problems requires that we critically look at the values and priorities of humans and societies as a whole. We will also delve into social movements that address ecological issues and pursue sustainability. Specifically looking at the motivations and measures individuals, groups, and nations take to curb and/or prevent further degradation.

### **Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify core concepts, theories, and perspectives in the study of environmental sociology
- Critically view and analyze environmental and sustainability challenges associated with contemporary society
- Understand changes in the natural environment through a sociological perspective
- Explore the origins and impacts of environmental movements seeking environmental justice
- Critically understand and analyze the reciprocal relationship between human society and the natural environment

- Employ the methods of environmental sociology to study social relationships with nature, environmental degradation, and sustainability.
- Conceptualize social drivers for ecological crisis, and contemplate social changes to address environmental problems and forge a more sustainable future.

Required Texts: All required readings are available on Canvas. There is no required text for purchase for this course.

*For the assigned readings you should always keep in mind: begin by grappling with actual arguments and data, and then proceed to critically assess the key questions, propose alternative approaches or clarifications, point out weaknesses, relate them to your own experience, examine or question the theoretical or methodological approach or underlying values and assumptions, pose questions they raise for you, and/or compare them to other readings. The key point is to give evidence of having critically engaged with the readings.*

Note Regarding Class Conduct:

Discussion threads and e-mails are all equivalent to classrooms, and student behavior within this environment shall conform to the Student Code. Specifically: Posting photos or comments that would be off-topic in a classroom are still off-topic in an online posting. When discussing topics students should be respectful of race, color, creed, religion, gender, disability, sexuality, etc. Discriminatory language will not be tolerated, and is subject to be handled according to the Student Code. Online course communications are part of the classroom, therefore University property and subject to the Student Code.

Office Hours and Emails:

While my office hours are by appointment, I am more than happy to meet with you in person, via phone or Skype, if you need to discuss any element of the class. Please email me and give me at least 24 hours to respond to inquiries. It is important to keep in mind that due to the nature of this being an online course, all email and discussion correspondence is taken as in-class behavior. So, stay respectful and frame these as questions or concerns -- rather than demands, please and thank you.

As this class is online, it is critical that you regularly check the Canvas course page and email in order to keep updated on all class requirements, documents, and assignments. You should also consistently check to see if any changes have been made to the syllabus, updates, reminders, or any other relevant information regarding the course.

An additional reminder about technology: Please perform these tasks as early as possible to ensure you do not have technological problems. Back up any and all assignments, use a USB flash drive, google docs, email attachments, what have you. I cannot give you credit if your assignment did not post and you do not have a back-up copy. If you are unsure if an assignment correctly submitted, please check on the submission status and send your assignment as an attachment so to confirm it was completed by the due date. As soon as possible, please familiarize yourself with the Canvas page and let me know if you have any questions. It is best to submit and download assignments and readings early to make sure we handle any glitches in the system, particularly since these may need to be handled by the Canvas tech, and not me.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged

to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

### Academic Misconduct

As per University of Utah regulations (Policy # 6-400). “A student who engages in academic misconduct,” as defined in Part I.B. and including, but not limited to, cheating, falsification, or plagiarism, “may be subject to academic sanctions including but not limited to a grade reduction, failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program or the University, or revocation of the student's degree or certificate. Sanctions may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.” Please refer to the Student Code for full elaboration of student academic and behavioral misconduct policies (<http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>).

### Citations

**You must cite when:** You directly quote from an outside source. The cited text should always be placed in quotation marks [“”] or block quoted followed by (Author year, p. #). Use a block quote when your citation is over two lines in length. Block quotes should always be single-spaced and indented beyond the normal margins.

**You must cite when:** You are paraphrasing or citing an idea. When you paraphrase quotation marks are not necessary, but the paraphrased section should always be followed by (Author year)

**If you have questions about proper citation formatting, visit** (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>)

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

### Wellness Statement

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu); 801-581-7776.

### Veterans Center

If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. For more information about the resources they provide to our student veterans please visit <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>.

### LGBT Resource Center

The U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. For more information about the resources they offer, along with a list of ongoing events, please visit <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>.

### Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language

If you are an English language learner, there are several resources on campus that will support you with

your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (<http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/>); the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>).

#### Evaluation Methods and Criteria:

The final course grade will be determined by your performance on:

3 Quizzes (50 points each; 150 points total)

2 Short papers (100 points each; 200 points total)

1 Final Research Project (100 points)

\*All assignments must be submitted via Canvas, PLEASE DO NOT submit assignments as email attachments.

Late Work Policy: I will never accept late quizzes. For each day a written assignment is late, you will lose 10 points. It is your responsibility to know what is due and when it is due. Documented medical or family emergencies are to be communicated to me ASAP and we will go from there.

#### **QUIZZES** *Due June 2, June 30 and July 31*

Throughout the semester, you will have 3 quizzes consisting of short answer, essay, and multiple-choice questions (50 points each). These quizzes will not be cumulative, but will only cover the readings from the previous quiz onward. For example, Quiz 2 will only consist of questions from weeks 4, 5, and 6. You will be given 80 minutes for each quiz because I expect that you have read the material prior to taking the quiz. I will open the quiz a few days before it is due, and you have until that day at midnight to complete it, on Canvas. Quizzes will not be re-opened after the due date, so please make sure you pay attention to deadlines.

#### **SHORT PAPERS**

##### **Environmental Change Project** *Due June 16*

**4-6 pages of writing - double-spaced paper not including bibliography or a title page**

The environmental project for this class involves you making some change in your lifestyle that reduces your impact on the natural environment or serves to bring about environmentally positive social change. This exercise is intended to be a challenging and educational project whereby you can experience the social structural and cultural factors that constrain and/or facilitate widespread social change along ecologically sensitive lines. You will select what type of change in your life you would like to make. Some examples of changes include becoming a vegetarian or vegan, giving up driving a car, using public transportation, purchasing only locally produced products, reducing your use of electricity or single-use plastics, etc. You may also choose to engage in some form of environmental activism (such as working with an environmental organization, attending a rally, etc.). The length of time you will need to continue with this behavior depends on the difficulty entailed. For some projects, I expect that a few weeks will typically be a sufficient amount of time for most types of lifestyle changes, although some may be much shorter (for example, giving up electricity for one or two days would probably be sufficient). The key point is that the behavior must be a change—i.e., it cannot be something you already do. The project does not require that you are successful at making the change, only that you make a sincere attempt at it. Start thinking now of what you would like to do. You will be provided further guidelines as the due date approaches.

##### **Environmental Justice Case Study** *Due July 21*

**4-6 pages of writing - double-spaced paper not including bibliography or a title page**

The environmental justice project allows you to further your understanding of environmental justice, and explore specific cases of environmental justice globally, nationally, or locally. You will be required to research a specific case of environmental injustice. Under this module there are numerous links to

interactive maps that locate environmental injustices and/or environmental movements nationally and globally. I encourage you to use these maps as a tool to locate the area you are interested in, and possibly find specific cases you would like to further research.

**Final Project – Choose Your Own Adventure Due August 2**

**6-8 pages of writing - double-spaced paper not including bibliography or a title page**

**OR Creative Group Project – Podcast, Mini Documentary, Interactive Website or Game, etc.**

*“envision concrete possibilities for another world” - Jose Munoz, 2009*

Your project should focus on an aspect(s) of the environment relevant to your own research interests/goals, incorporating both concepts from the course and additional bibliographic resources. You can follow the commodity chain of a single item, look at the status of our oceans, forests, reserves, national parks, follow an environmental social movement in the US or another country, the production of our goods etc. Further guidelines will be provided closer to the due date. *The purpose of this project is to demonstrate critical engagement with the key course themes and analytical framework, and introduce sustainable, innovative solutions to ecological crises.*

**Grading Scale:**

A 93-100	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-66
A- 90-92	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63
B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F <60

**Schedule for Environmental Sociology**

**Week 1: What is Sociology? What is the Environment? What is Environmental Sociology?**

- Gould and Lewis. 2015. *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. Intro & Chapters 1-2
- Catton, William R. Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap. 1978. “Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm.” *The American Sociologist* 13:41-49.
- Rockström, Johan et al. 2009. “A Safe Operating Space for Humanity.” *Nature* 461(24): 472-475.
- Leopold, Aldo. “Thinking Like a Mountain.” [*A Sandy County Almanac*, 1949].
- *Take Ecofootprint Calculator* – you will need results on quiz 1!

**Week 2: Metabolic Rift**

- Foster, John Bellamy. 1999. “Marx’s Theory of the Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundation for Environmental Sociology.” *American Journal of Sociology* 105(2): 366-405.
- Clausen, Rebecca. 2007. “Healing the Rift.” *Monthly Review* May 2007.
- Gunderson, Ryan. 2011. “The Metabolic Rifts of Livestock Agribusiness.” *Organization & Environment* 24(4) 404-422.
- Longo, Stefano. 2010. “Mediterranean Rift: Socio-Ecological Transformations in the Sicilian Bluefin Tuna Fishery.” *Critical Sociology* 38(3): 417-436.

**Week 3: Treadmill of Production**

- Gould, Kenneth A., David N. Pellow, and Allan Schnaiberg. 2004. “Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Everything You Wanted to Know About the Treadmill but Were Afraid to Ask.” *Organization & Environment* 17(3): 296-316.
- Gould and Lewis, Chapter 4: Labor Productivity & Environment, by Allan Shnaiberg
- Edwards, Bob and Adam Driscoll. 2009. “From Farms to Factories: The Environmental Consequences of Swine Industrialization in North Carolina.” Pp. 153-175 in *Twenty Lessons in*

*Environmental Sociology*, edited by Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis. New York: Oxford Press.

- Bell, Shannon and Richard York. 2010. "Community Economic Identity: The Coal Industry and Ideology Construction in West Virginia." *Rural Sociology* 75(1): 111-143.
  - \*\*\*Optional Extra Credit: Watch *The Lorax* and produce a 1 page, single-spaced academic response threading Treadmill of Production theory throughout (don't forget citations!)

**\*Quiz 1: Due June 2 by Midnight on Canvas**

**Week 4: Ecological Modernization Theory**

- Mol, Arthur P.J. and Gert Spaargaren. 2000. "Ecological Modernisation Theory in Debate: A Review." *Environmental Politics*. 9(1):17-49.
- Mol, Arthur, Gert Spaargaren, and David Sonnenfeld. 2014. "Ecological Modernization Theory: Taking Stock, Moving Forward." Pp. 15-30 in *Routledge International Handbook of Social and Environmental Change*, edited by Stuart Lockie, David Sonnenfeld, and Dana Fisher. Routledge Press.
- York, Richard and Eugene A. Rosa. 2003. "Key Challenges to Ecological Modernization Theory: Institutional Efficacy, Case Study Evidence, Units of Analysis, and the Pace of Eco-efficiency." *Organization & Environment* 16:273-288.
- Jorgenson, Andrew and Brett Clark. 2012. "Are the Economy and the Environment Decoupling?: A Comparative International Study, 1960-2005." *American Journal of Sociology* 118:1-44.
  - \*\*\*Optional Further Reading: Spaargaren, Gert and Arthur P. J. Mol. 1992. "Sociology, Environment, and Modernity: Ecological Modernization as a Theory of Social Change." *Society and Natural Resources* 5: 323-44.

**Week 5: Ecologically Unequal Exchange**

- Jorgenson, Andrew K., Christopher Dick, and Kelly Austin. 2010. "The Vertical Flow of Primary Sector Exports and Deforestation in Less Developed Countries: A Test of Ecologically Unequal Exchange Theory." *Society and Natural Resources* 23: 888-897.
- Rice, James. 2007. "Ecological Unequal Exchange: Consumption, Equity, and Unsustainable Structural Relationships within the Global Economy." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 48:43-72.
- Dunway, Wilma and M. Cecilia Macabuac. 2007. "'The Shrimp Eat Better than We Do': Philippine Subsistence Fishing Households Sacrificed for the Global Chain." *Review* 30: 313-337.
- Austin, Kelly. 2010. "The 'Hamburger Connection' as Ecologically Unequal Exchange: A Cross-National Investigation of Beef Exports and Deforestation in Less-Developed Countries." *Rural Sociology* 75(2): 270-299.
- Clark, Brett, Stefano B. Longo, Rebecca Clausen, and Daniel Auerbach. 2019 "From Sea Slaves to Slime Lines: Commodification and Unequal Ecological Exchange in Global Marine Fisheries." In *Ecologically Unequal Exchange*, pp. 195-219. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

**\*Environmental Change Project Due June 16 by Midnight on Canvas**

**Week 6: Kuznets Curve & Jevons' Paradox + Intro to Environmental Justice**

- Dinda, Soumyananda. 2004. "Environmental Kuznets Curve Hypothesis: A Survey." *Ecological Economics* 49:431-455.

- Foster, John Bellamy, Brett Clark, and Richard York. 2010. "Capitalism and the Curse of Energy Efficiency: The Return of the Jevons Paradox." *Monthly Review* 62(2):1-12.
- Mascarenhas, Michael. Environmental Inequality and Environmental Justice. Gould and Lewis, *20 Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Chapter 10.
- Taylor, Dorceta. 2014. Introduction, Ch. 1: Toxic Exposure, Ch. 2: Disproportionate Siting, and Ch. 3: Internal Colonialism in *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility*. (Your required book for the course). New York: NYU Press. Pages 1-68.
  - \*\*\*Optional Further Reading: Stern, David I. 2004. "The Rise and Fall of the Environmental Kuznets Curve." *World Development* 32(8):1419-1439.

### **Week 7: Gender and the Environment**

- Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari. 1996. "Gender and Environment: A Feminist Political Ecology Perspective." Ch. 1 in *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experiences*. D. Rocheleau et al. Eds. New York: Routledge. pp. 3-23.
- Fortmann, Louise, Camille Antinori, and Nontoko Nabane. 1997. "Fruits of Their Labors: Gender, Property Rights, and Tree Planting in Two Zimbabwe Villages." *Rural Sociology*. Vol. 62, No. 3:295-314.
- Shiva, Vandana. 1988. "Development, Ecology, and Women." Ch.1 in *Women, Ecology, and Survival in India*. London: ZED Books. Pp. 1-13.
  - \*\*\*Optional Extra Credit: Watch *Taking Roots: The Vision of Wangari Maathai* and produce a 1 page, single-spaced academic response threading key course concepts throughout (don't forget citations!)

### **\*Quiz 2 Due June 30 by Midnight on Canvas**

### **Week 8: Consumption**

- Durning, Alan. "How Much is Enough." *The Social Contract* p. 177-179. [Excerpt from *How Much is Enough*, 1992]
- Knight, Kyle, Eugene Rosa and Juliet Schor. 2013. "Could Working Less Reduce Pressures on the Environment?: A Cross National Panel Analysis of OECD Countries, 1970-2007." *Global Environmental Change* 23: 691-700.
- Sagoff, Mark. "The Allocation and Distribution of Resources," p. 50-73. [Excerpt from *The Economy of the Earth*, 1988].
- Tietz, Jeff. 2006. "Boss Hog." *Rolling Stone* (Dec. 14).
  - \*\*\*Optional Further Reading:
  - Sagoff, Mark. 1997. "Do We Consume Too Much?" *The Atlantic Monthly*
  - Thomas Dietz, Eugene A. Rosa and Richard York. 2012. "Environmentally Efficient Well-Being: Is There a Kuznets Curve?" *Applied Geography* 32: 21-28.

### **Week 9: Environmental Racism and Sacrifice Zones**

- Ward, Chip. "Breakfast Cereal for Two-Headed Babies." [*Canaries on the Rim*, 1999].
- Downey, Liam and Brian Hawkins. 2008. "Race, Income, and Environmental Inequality in the United States." *Sociological Perspectives*: 51(4): 759-781.
- Hooks, Greg and Chad Smith. 2004. "The Treadmill of Destruction: National Sacrifice Areas and Native Americans." *American Sociological Review* 69(4): 558-575.
- Malin, Stephanie A. and Peggy Petrzalka. 2010. "Left in the Dust: Uranium's Legacy and Victims of Mill Tailings Exposure in Monticello, Utah." *Society and Natural Resources* 23:1187-1200.

- \*\*\*Optional Further Reading: Barnett, Harold. "Production, Disposal, and Contamination." [*Toxic Debts and the Superfund Dilemma*, 1994]

### **Week 10: Environmental Health & Inequality**

- Roberts, J. Timmons. 2001. "Global Inequality and Climate Change." *Society and Natural Resources* 14:501-509.
- Pellow, David and Robert Brulle. 2007. "Poisoning the Planet: The Struggle for Environmental Justice." *Contexts* 6(1): 37-41.
- McCormick, Sabrina. *The Sociology of Environmental Health*. Ch. 11 in Gould and Lewis' *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.
- Brown, Phil Stephen Zavestoski, Theo Luebke, Joshua Mandelbaum, Sabrina McCormick, and Brian Mayer. 2004. "Clearing the Air and Breathing Freely: Disputes Over Air Pollution and Asthma." *International Journal of Health Services* 34(1): 39-63.
- Thomson, Jennifer. 2016. "Toxic Residents: Health and Citizenship at Love Canal." *Journal of Social History* 50(1): 204-223.
- Shriver, Thomas and Gary Webb. 2009. "Rethinking the Scope of Environmental Injustice: Perceptions of Health Hazards in a Rural Native American Community Exposed to Carbon Black." *Rural Sociology* 7(2): 270-292.
  - \*\*\*Optional Further Reading: Carson, Rachel. "The Obligation to Endure." [*Silent Spring*, 1962].
  - \*\*\*Optional Extra Credit: Watch *Erin Brokovich* or *Blue Vinyl* and complete write-up

### **Week 11: Environmental Justice Movements + Environmental Governance**

- Konefal, Jason and Maki Hatanaka. "Producing and Consuming Food: Justice and Sustainability in a Globalized World?" Gould and Lewis, *20 Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Chapter 12.
- Redclift, Michael and Colin. Sage. 1998. "Global Environmental Change and Global Inequality: North/South Perspectives." *International Sociology* 13(4): 499-516.
- Brulle, Robert J. "U.S. Environmental Movements." Gould and Lewis, *20 Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Chapter 16.
- Lewis, Tammy L. "Environmental Movements in the Global South," Gould and Lewis, *20 Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Chapter 18.
- Comic on International Cooperation (PDF on Canvas)
- Roberts, Timmons, Bradley Parks, and Alexis Vasquez. 2004. "Who Ratifies Environmental Treaties and Why?: Institutionalism, Structuralism and Participation by 192 Nations in 22 Treaties." *Global Environmental Politics* 4(3): 22-64.
  - \*\*\*Optional Further Reading: *A Climate of Injustice* (Available as an ebook at library)

### **\*Environmental Justice Case Study Due Sunday, July 21 by Midnight on Canvas**

### **Week 12: Climate Change Denial + A Better Tomorrow**

- McCright, Aaron M. and Riley E. Dunlap. 2010. "Anti-Reflexivity: The American Conservative Movement's Success in Undermining Climate Science and Policy." *Theory, Culture and Society* 26:100-133.
- Brulle, Robert. 2014. "Institutionalizing Delay: Foundation Funding and the Creation of U.S. Climate Change Counter-Movement Organizations." *Climatic Change* 122: 681-694.
- Norgaard, Kari Marie. "Normalizing the Unthinkable: Climate Denial and Everyday Life." Gould and Lewis, *20 Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Chapter 15.
- Diehm, Christian. 2007. "Identification with Nature: What It Is and Why It Matters." *Ethics and the Environment* 12(2): 1-22.



- Daniel Wahl's 'Findhorn Talk' on Human and Planetary Health: Ecosystems Restoration at the dawn of the Century of Regeneration (link on Canvas)
  - \*\*\*Optional: Devall, Bill. 2001. "The Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement 1960–2000—A Review." *Ethics and the Environment* 6(1): 18-41.

**\*Quiz 3 Due Wednesday, July 31 by Midnight on Canvas** (same day the course is over)

**\*FINAL PROJECT DUE Friday, August 2 - submitted by Midnight on Canvas**

\*\*Note: The syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification. The first day of class, a more finalized version of this document will be presented.

\*\*\*There is NO comprehensive final exam in this course.