Sociology 307  
Environmental Sociology  
Fall 2012

Instructor: Kelly Bergstrand  
Office: Social Sciences 439  
Email: kellyjb@email.arizona.edu

Course Description

This course is an introduction to environmental sociology and explores the interaction between the environment and human society, with the understanding that the organization of human society has environmental consequences, and environmental problems, in turn, affect human societies. From a sociological perspective, we will look beyond the scientific basis for environmental problems to understand the social roots of environmental issues, asking questions such as how do the technologies, consumption and production patterns, population trends, status systems, religion and culture of societies affect the emergence of, and reactions to, environmental problems? We will also investigate how the risks and harms of environmental problems are distributed across societies to understand the relationship between social systems and environmental inequalities. Lastly, this course will introduce students to a variety of topics in environmental sociology, including new directions in sustainable development and how actors such as corporations, the media and social movements affect public opinion and environmental issues.

Objectives:

- To apply a sociological perspective to environmental issues by introducing the basic concepts, theories and literature of environmental sociology.
- To examine the causes and consequences of, and potential solutions to, environmental issues, as they relate to human society.
- To introduce students to the wealth of questions posed and researched by environmental sociologists.
- To encourage students to think critically about the subject matter of the course and develop their own questions about human societies and the environment.
- To encourage students to relate the material of this class to everyday life experiences.

Required Texts and Reading Materials


Additional reading assignments, announcements and class handouts will be posted on the course D2L site. To access the site, go to [http://d2l.arizona.edu](http://d2l.arizona.edu), click on the UANetID Login in the upper left corner, and then click on the course link.
Course Requirements

1. **Reading Memos:** For each reading memo, I will post five discussion questions for you to think about as you do the reading and listen to the class lectures and discussions. You will choose one of these discussion questions and write a three page, double-spaced memo on the question. There will be four reading memos due throughout the semester, worth 20 points each, and total these will constitute 80 points and 20% of your grade.

2. **Group Presentation:** You will be responsible for contributing to a group presentation on one critical, contemporary environmental problem (e.g. climate change, threats to biodiversity, waste disposal, water issues, etc). Each group will be responsible for a 20 minute presentation to the class that communicates basic information about the problem and explores the interaction between human societies and the causes and consequences of the environmental problem. The group presentation will be worth 40 points total and 10% of your grade.

3. **In-class Activities:** Class participation includes attending class and being an active participant by listening carefully and joining discussion. Throughout the course, there will be graded group activities held in class. In-class work will be worth 40 points total and 10% of your grade.

4. **Mid-Term Exam:** The mid-term exam will cover material from lectures, videos, class discussions, and the readings. This exam will not be open-book, and you are not allowed to bring notes. The exam will include multiple choice questions, short-answer questions, and essay questions. The mid-term exam will be worth 80 points total and 20% of your grade.

5. **Final Exam:** The final exam will cover material from lectures, videos, class discussions, and the readings. This exam will not be open-book, and you are not allowed to bring notes. The exam will include multiple choice questions, short-answer questions, and essay questions. The final exam will be worth 100 points total and 25% of your grade.

6. **Research Paper:** You will be responsible for researching and writing a 10 page, double-spaced research paper on a topic in environmental sociology. I will distribute a handout on the requirements of this paper and will present on the proper routes for conducting (and citing) research. A two-page, double-spaced research proposal describing the proposed paper topic is due October 9th. The research paper is worth 60 points and 15% of your grade.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Memos</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>In-class Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Grading scale for course

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>59% or below</td>
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Course Policies

Missed Exam
A make-up exam will be scheduled for students who have talked with the professor before the exam and have an approved absence, or have had a documented illness/family emergency.

Late Work
Late work will be accepted but will drop one letter grade for each day past the due date that the assignment is turned in. For example, a memo due on Thursday that would have received an A if turned in on time on Thursday, will receive a B if turned in Friday and a C if turned in Saturday.

Classroom Courtesy and Respectful Discussion
Students are expected to arrive to class on time and to turn off any personal electronic devices (cell phones) during class. During class, students are expected to be respectful by listening carefully to others and not engaging in disruptive or distracting behavior. Every student has the right to disagree with opinions expressed by the professor or other students, however the student must respond in a courteous, respectful way that ensures a safe and tolerant classroom environment. Hostility, intimidation or derogatory comments absolutely will not be tolerated, and students who do not act in a respectful manner will be asked to leave the class.

Academic Integrity
Any form of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Students are expected to observe the University’s Code of Academic Integrity. This Code can be found at http://w3.arizona.edu/~studpubs/handbook/policyframe.html.

Students with disabilities
Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements must register with the Disability Resource Center. If you qualify for services through DRC, bring your letter of accommodations to me as soon as possible.
Course Outline and Schedule

What is Environmental Sociology? Introduction

Th 08.23.12  Reading: Kenneth Gould and Tammy Lewis: “An Introduction to Environmental Sociology.” Ch. 1 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

Theories in Environmental Sociology

T 08.28.12  Reading: Luiz Barbosa, “Theories in Environmental Sociology.” Ch. 3 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

Th 08.30.12  Reading: William Catton and Riley Dunlap, “Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm.”


T 09.04.12  Reading: Allan Schnaiberg, “Labor Productivity and the Environment.” Ch. 5 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

Film: The Story of Stuff

Th 09.06.12  Reading: Dana Fisher and William Freudenburg, “Ecological Modernization and its Critics.”

Greta Gaard and Lori Gruen, "Ecofeminism: Toward Global Justice and Planetary Health."

Reading Memo 1 due on 09/06/12

Classical Readings on the Environment

T 09.11.12  Reading: Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac. (Excerpts)

Th 09.13.12  Reading: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring. (Excerpts)

T 09.18.12  Reading: Lynn White, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis.”

Th 09.20.12  Reading: Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons.”
Environmental Movements

T 09.25.12  Reading: Robert Brulle, “U.S. Environmental Movements.” Ch. 15 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

Th 09.27.12  Reading: Tammy Lewis, “Environmental Movements in the Global South.” Ch. 17 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

Film: Rubber Jungle: Part 9

Reading Memo 2 due on 09/27/12

Corporations and the Media

T 10.02.12  Reading: Robin Andersen, “Selling ‘Mother Earth’: Advertising and the Myth of the Natural.”

Th 10.04.12  Reading: Elizabeth Campbell, “Corporate Power: The Role of the Global Media in Shaping What We Know About the Environment.” Ch. 6 in Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.

T 10.09.12  Film: Tapped

Research Paper Proposal due on 10/09/12

Consumption and Materialism

Th 10.11.12  Reading: Michael Mayerfield Bell, “Consumption and Materialism.”

T 10.16.12  Reading: Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret."

Thorstein Veblen, “Conspicuous Consumption.”

Th 10.18.12  Review for Mid-Term Exam

Reading Memo 3 due on 10/18/12

T 10.23.12  Mid-Term Exam
**Environmental Hazards and Injustice**

**Th 10.25.12**  
*Reading:* Michael Mascarenhas, “Environmental Inequality and Environmental Justice.” Ch. 10 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.*

*Film:* TED talk: Majora Carter, “Greening the Ghetto”

**T 10.30.12**  
*Reading:* Daniel Faber, “The Unfair Trade-off: Globalization and the Export of Ecological Hazards.”

*Film:* Journey to Planet Earth: Toxins in the Arctic

**Th 11.01.12**  
*Reading:* Nicole Youngman, “Understanding Disaster Vulnerability: Floods and Hurricanes.” Ch. 13 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.*

**T 11.06.12**  
*Reading:* Sabrina McCormick, “The Sociology of Environmental Health.” Ch. 11 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology.*

**Th 11.08.12**  
*Film:* Food Inc.

*Reading Memo 4 due on 11/08/12*

**Topics in Environmental Problems**

**T 11.13.12**  
Class presentations

**Th 11.15.12**  
Class presentations

**T 11.20.12**  

**Th 11.22.12**  
No Class: Thanksgiving Recess

**Future Directions**

**T 11.27.12**  
*Reading:* Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (Excerpts)

*Film:* TED talk: Jared Diamond, “Why Societies Collapse”

**Th 11.29.12**  
*Reading:* Juliet Schor, *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth* (Excerpts)

*Film:* The Plenitude Economy

Research Paper due on 12/02/12

Th 12.06.12 Review for Final Exam

T 12.11.12 Final Exam
Course Bibliography


