

Environmental Sociology
Eastern Illinois University
Soc 3820-001 3 Credit Hours Fall 2020

Class: TTh 2:00 - 3:15

Professor: Darren Hendrickson, Ph.D.

Phone: 581-3123

Virtual Office Hours: TTh 3:30-4:30, W 10:00 - 12:00, or by appointment

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“Ultimately, it is certain patterns of human behavior that lead to environmental degradation and other patterns that result in sustainable development.”

- William Clark

Required Texts/Readings:

- Michael Mayerfeld Bell and Loka L. Ashwood. 2016. *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. 5th ed. Pine Forge Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Select Articles Available on the Course *D2L* Page

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce you to the field of environmental sociology. More specifically, as stated in the undergraduate catalog, this course “examines the interrelations between the natural environment, social organization, and social behavior. Attention is directed at both the social causes of and social responses to various environmental problems.” Thus, this course will be directed at investigating the social and cultural aspects of environmental problems which include an analysis of such things as: how political and economic institutions influence our views about the environment, the role of collective social behavior in creating and solving environmental problems, how the issues of social inequality and power figure in environmental issues, and the emergence of various environmental movements. Of course, environmental issues have been addressed by a wide range of academic fields, however, keep in mind that we will examine these issues from the sociological perspective.

The specific objectives for this course are as follows:

- Develop an understanding of the contributions that sociology makes to knowledge about the natural environment and environmental problems. This includes an analysis of how aspects of culture, including political and economic institutions, influence our views of the natural environment.
- Develop an understanding of the social and cultural causes of our environmental problems including: consumption, materialism, technology, development, and population.
- Explore the social dynamics of both the U.S. environmental movement and the emerging global environmental movement.
- Address the issue of environmental racism and the related movement for environmental justice.
- Investigate the current efforts to solve environmental problems and organize an environmentally sustainable society.

These objectives will be met through lectures, class discussions, readings, videos, writing assignments, and examinations.

Readings:

The reading assignments for each week are indicated below in the syllabus. You are expected to complete the assigned readings in advance of the respective class session so you will be prepared for lecture and discussion. In class we will deal with additional, and occasionally different, material than is found in the corresponding readings. Nonetheless, class lectures and discussion are designed to build off of and complement assigned readings.

Course Requirements:

(1). *Examinations.* There will be a total of three examinations in this course. Two of the exams are scheduled during the semester and will take place during regular class time (see schedule below). The third exam will be administered during finals week on Monday, December 14 from 2:45 - 4:45.

(2). *Video Analysis Papers.* In this course we are going to watch a number of different videos to illustrate the concepts and ideas that we are addressing. As a result, I am requiring you to write *four* video analysis papers during this course. The specific purpose of these analyses is to assess your ability to apply information from videos to other relevant course material. Subsequently, these video analyses require you to discuss, in writing, how the information presented in the video connects with other course material (i.e. readings & lectures). It is essential that in writing your video analyses you *explicitly* connect the material in the video with other relevant course content. Approximately 6 to 8 videos will be shown throughout the semester so you may choose the *four* you want to analyze. This is not a “best of” assignment, you may only turn in four video analyses. The specific instructions are as follows:

- Your video analysis should not simply be a summary of what you watched, you are required to discuss how material presented in the video specifically connects to the material we are covering, or have covered, in the course. In other words, explicitly explore and discuss the links between the content of the video and other course materials (i.e. readings & lectures).
- Video analyses are to be typed, double spaced, and no more than two pages. Be sure to include the video title at the beginning of the review.
- *Video analyses will be turned in electronically through the “dropbox” on D2L and they are due by the beginning of the class period after the film is shown. Late video analyses will not be accepted.*

(3). *Environmental Problem Research Paper.* In this course you are required to write a research paper in which you will address such factors as the scope, causes, consequences, and proposed solutions for a specific environmental problem of your choice. While we will be discussing and reading about a wide range of environmental problems during the semester (e.g. resource scarcity, global climate change, environmental racism) because of time constraints we will not always be able to explore every environmental problem in great detail. Subsequently, one of the primary objectives of this research paper is to provide you an opportunity to begin developing an in-depth sociological knowledge of a specific environmental problem. Specific instructions and the due date for the research paper will be distributed at a later date.

(4). *Participation.* Students are expected to both raise and answer questions and remain active participants in this course. In this course I will pose many questions for discussion and everyone is expected to contribute to that discussion – this is learning.

Grading Scale:

100%-90%.....A
89%-80%.....B
79%-70%.....C
69%-60%.....D
59%-0%.....F

Basis for Final Grade:

Exam #1.....22%
Exam #2.....22%
Exam #3.....22%
Video Analyses.....12%
Research Paper.....22%
<i>Total</i>100%

Desire2Learn (D2L):

Exam and assignment grades will be available through D2L. Furthermore, a copy of the course syllabus, research articles that you are required to read, other important course documents, and course announcements will also be posted on the D2L course page. More information about accessing D2L is available at the following site: <http://www.eiu.edu/d2l/>

Course Schedule:

Aug. 25 - Aug. 27	General Introduction to the Course Sociological Study of the Natural Environment Chapter 1: Environmental Problems and Society
Sept. 1 - Sept. 3	Sociological Theory & The Environment Frameworks for Understanding Environmental Problems Chapter 1: Environmental Problems and Society (cont'd) Frey, R. Scott. 2001. "Environmental Problems." Pp. 4-25 in <i>The Environment and Society Reader</i> , edited by R. S. Frey. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
<i>Social Causes of Environmental Problems</i>	
Sept. 8 - Sept. 10	Consumption, Materialism, and the Environment Chapter 2: Consumption & Materialism Good, Jennifer. 2014. "Television and the Environment: More Screen – Less Green." Pp. 213-226 in <i>How Television Shapes our Worldview: Media Representations of Social Trends and Change</i> , edited by D. Macey, K. Ryan, and N. Spring. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
Sept. 15 - Sept. 17	Consumption, Materialism, and the Environment (cont'd) Economics, Technology, and the Environment Chapter 2: Consumption & Materialism (cont'd) Chapter 3: Money & Markets (pgs. 78-95) Chapter 4: Technology & Society (pgs. 107-121)
Sept. 22 - Sept. 24	Economics, Technology, and the Environment (cont'd) Chapter 3: Money & Markets (pgs. 78-95) Chapter 4: Technology & Society (pgs. 107-121)

Exam #1 – Thursday, September 24th

- Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 Population, Development, and the Environment
Chapter 5: Population & Development
- Social Responses to Environmental Problems***
- Oct. 6 - Oct. 8 Population, Development, and the Environment (cont'd)
Environmental Domination as an Ideology
Chapter 5: Population & Development
Chapter 7: The Ideology of Environmental Domination
- Oct. 13 - Oct. 15 Environmental Domination as an Ideology (cont'd)
Environmental Concern
Chapter 7: The Ideology of Environmental Domination
Chapter 8: The Ideology of Environmental Concern
- Oct. 20 - Oct. 22 Environmental Movements: U.S. & Global
- Oct. 27 - Oct. 29 Environmental Movements: U.S. & Global (cont'd)

Exam #2 – Thursday, October 29th

- Nov. 5 Environmental Racism, Environmental Justice, & Environmental Health
Chapter 6: Body and Justice
- Nov. 10 - Nov. 12 Environmental Racism, Environmental Justice, & Environmental Health (cont'd)
Chapter 6: Body and Justice
- Nov. 17 - Nov. 19 Environmental Racism, Environmental Justice, & Environmental Health (cont'd)
Chapter 6: Body and Justice
- Nov. 23 - Nov. 27 ☺☺☺ ***Thanksgiving Break*** ☺☺☺
- Dec. 1 - Dec. 3 Sustainable and Equitable Environmental Future
Chapter 12: Governing the Ecological Society
Chapter 13: Living in the Ecological Society
- Dec. 8 - Dec. 10 Sustainable and Equitable Environmental Future (cont'd)
Chapter 12: Governing the Ecological Society
Chapter 13: Living in the Ecological Society

Exam #3 – Monday, December 14th – 2:45-4:45

Policies:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Much of the material presented during class time will be included on the examinations. You are responsible for any course material that you miss if you are not in class, regardless of the reason for your absence. Most certainly your grade will suffer if you miss a number of classes. Finally, for students with “borderline” final grades the Professor may consider a student’s attendance record.

Late/Missed Assignments & Exams: Assignments are to be turned in on time and examinations are to be taken when scheduled. If, for some reason, you are going to miss an examination or an assignment due date, you must notify me in advance. If you fail to notify me in advance that you are going to miss an examination, you will not be able to make-up that exam. Make-up exams will only be given with a legitimate excuse (e.g. medical reason, family emergency) and may be somewhat different than the original exam. Late video analyses will *not* be accepted and late research papers will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade for every day they are late. Plan ahead to ensure that you are able to meet the due dates for this course.

COVID-19 Safety Precautions and Behavior Expectations: Consistent with University policy, all students are required to wear a clean cloth or disposable face mask while in class and observe physical distancing guidelines. Students who refuse to comply with the COVID-19 mask policy will be asked to leave the classroom and reported to the Office of Student Standards. Students should also self-monitor for possible COVID-19 symptoms and contact University Health Services, 581.3013, if feeling ill. You should *NOT* come to class if you are feeling sick.

Student Success Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment call 217.581.6696.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. Furthermore, if you are found cheating or plagiarizing you will receive a zero for that assignment, exam, or quiz.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. You can call 217.581.6583 to make an appointment.

Tape/Video Recorders: The use of tape recorders, or other recording devices, during class is not allowed. Exceptions will be made only under special circumstances.

Cell Phones/Text Messaging: I understand that many of you like to stay connected and many important people are constantly trying to get a hold of you, but if you have a cell phone please turn off or disable the ringer before coming to class. Furthermore, text messaging during class is not permitted or tolerated.

Note: All material in this course syllabus, including exam and assignment due-dates, may be subject to change.