

Sociology 4007 - 001**Global Human Ecology****Fall 2017**

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Seeing the interconnections. Knowing “what’s hitched to what,” Asking the question, what then? This is, broadly speaking, our course objective, our shared mission, to explore our global human ecology using a systems perspective.

The promise of sociology is that of a sociological imagination, the ability to see the link between the individual and society and thus, grasp the role of social forces in our lives. It is necessary and quite urgent that young sociologists recognize and begin to include in our analysis, the vital role of natural systems in which social systems are imbedded, and seeing the nexus points. The individual, the social, the ecological and the interconnections therein, this is our analytical framework.

Our objective this semester is to enhance our sociological imaginations and develop even more potent ecological imaginations, that is to say, to include the critical role of natural systems in our emergent sociological analyses. Ecological thinking encourages a quality of mind that: understands the earth’s vital signs, is aware of the speed and extent of the global ecological crises, comprehends interrelationships, understands the dynamics of global capitalism and, leads to attitudes and behaviors of care and stewardship.

I have designed this course to highlight the current “sociology of human migration” literature; this includes topics such as the creation and measuring of vulnerable populations, spatial and temporal dimensions of migration, and the structural forces shaping modern migration patterns, including economic, political and – especially relevant - climatic causes such as extreme weather events, drought, river valley flooding and MSLR. The mass movement of people is a contemporary social issue of tremendous import. I believe these foci to be of critical importance and perhaps the most vital topics confronting all societies in this age of globalization/ climate change. Understanding and innovating sociology’s unique contribution to this topic should be of great appeal. I hope you can locate yourself and your own interests within this field of human ecology.

We will begin by learning to think in systems terms. For this initial segment of the course we will read *Thinking in Systems* by Donella Meadows. This 2008 classic provides us the language and imagery to move more comfortably between social and natural systems. We will highlight key system features – stocks, in-flows, out-flows; balancing loops, reinforcing loops, delays, etc.; sources of system stability and system growth and change; as well as system surprises, traps and leverage points. Some of the biggest problems facing the world today are essentially system failures, they cannot be solved by fixing one system in isolation from other systems. It is my hope that through a series of rich discussions and shared readings you will have an opportunity to cultivate a new “systems thinking” through which to see the intersections of society and environment, social systems and natural systems. We will then apply this “systems analysis” to the topic of human migration and the variety of economic, political and climatic causes which make this an ever more ubiquitous social challenge facing the modern world.

The three (print) books I have chosen for this course were written and designed to facilitate your understanding of the “system dimensions” via a rich array of chapter foci / readings. These texts are diverse in format and purpose. These books are, I think, wonderfully valuable in conveying potent insight into our global human ecology, and the research / design / governance challenges that lie ahead. The authors have worked hard to make a number of complex ideas as understandable as possible. You must do a little work as well. You will be expected to have read and assimilated the required readings for each class meeting.

The three required texts for this course are available at the UMC Bookstore:

- **Thinking in Systems: A Primer** by D. Meadows
- **Climate and Human Migration: Past Experiences, Future Challenges** by R. McLeman
- **Globalization and Migration: A World in Motion** by E. Dickinson

Exams and Grading: I expect lively and thoughtful participation by all members of this class. I expect you to read the appropriate material for each class meeting and come ready to talk, share, apply, refine, and/or challenge the topic at hand. I favor frequent and informed participation. I strongly encourage you to make every effort to become a “regular member” of this class. Please bring your book(s) to each class meeting. Your grade for this course will be based on the following criteria:

* Class Engagement (10%): Your regular attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities is an essential component of this class. You are expected to engage in civil discourse on issues and readings relevant to each session, as well as help co-facilitate our class discussion. Beyond two absences, your grade for engagement will be reduced by one-half letter grade for each subsequent absence, except in the case of high-holiday observance, family emergency or medical emergency.

* Four quizzes (20%): 15 minute, short essay format. Quiz dates 9/5; 9/26; 10/17; 11/16.

*Five Exams (50%): 75-minute, multi-format; covering all lecture and reading materials.
Exam dates: 9/14; 10/5; 11/2; 12/5; 12/17 @4:30pm.

*One “human migration” group project (20%): This project includes both a research paper & class presentation of your group’s findings. “Project” groups, topics, and criteria to be assigned in class. Group presentations will occur during the final three weeks of class. These projects will be due on 12/7/17 and presented in-class 12/7, 12/12, 12/14.

Accommodation for Disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students) (www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Holidays: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, *{{insert your procedures here}}*. See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation: The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU's Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder's Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the [OIEC website](#).

Honor Code: All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#)

Aug. 29 - Course and topic introduction

Aug. 31 – Thinking in Systems chapters 1 & 2

Sept. 5 - Thinking in Systems chapters 3 & 4 / **quiz 1**

Sept. 7 – Thinking in Systems chapters 5 & 6

Sept. 12 – Thinking in Systems chapter 7 / exam Review

Sept. 14 **Exam 1**

Sept. 19 Climate and Human Migration chapter 1

Sept. 21 Climate and Human Migration chapter 2

Sept. 26 Climate and Human Migration chapter 3 / **quiz 2**

Sept. 28 Climate and Human Migration chapter 4

Oct. 3 Climate and Human Migration chapter4 / exam review

Oct. 5 **Exam 2**

Oct. 10 & 12 Climate and Human Migration chapter5

Oct. 17 Climate and Human Migration chapter 6 / **quiz 3**

Oct. 19 Climate and Human Migration chapter 6

Oct. 24 & 26 Climate and Human Migration chapter 7

Oct.31 Climate and Human Migration chapter 8 / exam review

Nov. 2 **Exam 3**

Nov. 7 Globalization and Migration chapter 1

Nov. 9 Globalization and Migration chapter 2

Nov. 14 Globalization and Migration chapter 3

Nov. 16 Globalization and Migration chapter 3 / **quiz 4**

Nov. 21 & 23 no class – Fall Break

Nov. 28 Globalization and Migration chapter 4

Nov. 30 Globalization and Migration chapter 5 / exam review

Dec. 5 **Exam 4**

Dec. 7, 12, 14 Group project presentations

Dec. 17 @ 4:30pm **Final Exam 5 (cumulative)**