

University of Colorado Boulder SOCY 2077: Environment and Society syllabus

M/W/F 10-10:50 a.m. HUMN 135

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Office Hours: Monday 11a.m.- 1 p.m. and by appointment.

DESCRIPTION: The course focuses on the intersection of the social and natural worlds, and the search for effective social solutions for environmental problems. It is designed to be interactive, and experiential. Text, readings, videos and case studies reveal the complexity and interconnectedness between people, places and problems. We study the social structures, power relationships and inequalities related to wilderness preservation, sustainability, environmental justice, pollution, and natural resource extraction. Using critical, social constructionist approach, we examine and critique ideas on economic growth, green technology, and individual happiness. Students comprehend the obstacles and opportunities associated with environmental care.

OBJECTIVES: After this course, students will:

- 1) Recognize the complexity of environmental issues and the human element inherent in them.
- 2) Be alert to the interrelationship of local and global in environmental problems and issues.
- 3) Recognize the (local and global) social sources of conflicts and inequalities of issues such as natural resource use, food/agricultural practices, wilderness preservation, population, and climate change.
- 4) Gain access to a range of sociological tools that help make sense of the social world and its articulation with the natural world.
- 5) Become more able and informed citizen decision makers, and possess the tools to become leaders.

READINGS: A wide range of readings and videos supplement the textbooks. (See below for bibliography of text and recommended books.) Readings include news articles, research summaries, essays, and poetry. Some reading occurs in class as part of discussion groups and problem solving. Readings not in the text are posted online in D2L.

TEXT: The texts are for sale in the bookstore, online, and on reserve in Norlin library. The Carolan text is available on Kindle.

- Carolan, Michael. 2012. *Society and the Environment: Pragmatic Solutions to Ecological Issues*. Westwood Press: Boulder, CO.
- Kindle version: http://www.amazon.com/Society-Environment-Pragmatic-Ecological-ebook/dp/B00BSEQMP4/ref=tmm_kin_title_0
- Owens, David. 2011 *The Conundrum: How Scientific Innovation, Increased Efficiency, and Good Intentions Can Make Our Energy and Climate Problems Worse*. Riverhead Books

Recommended Books—You do not need to buy these, but much of the lecture material is expanded in these texts All are on reserve in Norlin library, and available used.

- *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. 2009. Editors Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L Lewis. New York: Oxford University Press. Paperback
- Szasz, Andrew. 2007. *Shopping Our Way to Safety: How We Changed From Protecting the Environment to Protecting Ourselves*. University of Minnesota Press, 2007. Paperback.
- Jones, Ellis. 2010. *The Better World Shopping Guide*. New Society Publishers: Gabriola, BC Canada

This class uses iclickers. The setting for HUMN 135 is CA.

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ADDITIONAL: \$2 will be collected from all students at the beginning of the semester. This money will be used for speakers (coffee cards) and for stamps and envelopes for the social action project. Any extra money will be used for class benefit or returned.

WRITING: Class assignments include 3 short papers (up to 400 word/ 20 pt.) on experiences outside the classroom; 4 short assignments (40 points), and a semester-long three part “social action” project (100pts.) on a social/environmental issue of your choosing. The project includes a persuasive letter to an influential person (25 pts.), an end of semester power point presentation (4 minute/25 pts.), and four page paper (50 pts.) that serves as the course final. This paper incorporates class concepts into the research that led you to take your position and is turned in at the time the final is due. (100 pts). Total = 200 points

ONLINE CHAPTER TESTS: Weekly reading is accompanied by an online quiz accessible on D2L. This is about 20% of your grade, reinforces important information and should enhance class discussion and group work. Total = 140 points.

GLOSSARY: In lieu of in-class tests or take home essays, students submit a “dictionary” of terms, theories and concepts used in environmental sociology, three times a semester. Entries should be compiled through the semester from readings, lectures and outside experiences. Students are encouraged to make it useful for themselves and their major course of study. The dictionary is graded on its organization, breadth, read-ability and accuracy. Total = 60 points.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION: Because our topic addresses issues deeply embedded in our social world, attendance and participation (both social activities) are worth a significant portion of your grade. Social interaction is a central component to solving environmental problems. Translate that to the classroom: participation! Measurement of participation is both objective and subjective. Your investment is worth 100 pts.

PARTICIPATION: Includes questions and comments during class discussion, iClickers, emails (not absence and grade questions), and free-writing. Participation also includes attendance. 50 points.

GROUP PARTICIPATION: Don’t panic, it’s individually graded. You join a mutual interest group at week 4/5. Ongoing activities include group problem-solving exercises, and discussion prior to free writes (50 pts.). The group works together to coordinate the PowerPoint presentations given during the last two weeks of class. outlining their social action (described in writing section). 50 points.

EXTRA CREDIT: Extra assignments are offered when a significant portion of the class needs better understanding about an issue. I do not assign extra credit on an individual basis to bolster grades, but if you are not doing well, come see me. I can usually help you bring your grade up.

EVALUATION: All your assignments, participation and tests contribute to your final grade based on the CU grading scheme of the letter grades A to F

Writing: 200 points	40 %
Online quiz: 140 points	28%
Glossary : 60 points	12 %
Class participation 100 pts.	20%
Total 500 points	100 %

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ACADEMIC HONESTY: In the final analysis, the way you produce your work is a demonstration of your work ethic. I expect you to do your own work. **Academic dishonesty includes all actions that represent others' work as your own.** For definitions and University regulations regarding academic dishonesty, see the University Honor Code: www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode. The definitions for infractions are found here: <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/about/definitions.htm>

Conduct and courtesy: We all are expected to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Rights and Responsibilities Regarding Standards of Conduct. The specific policy may be found at www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html. Computers are not allowed in the classroom.

Sexual harassment is not tolerated. For more information on maintaining a fair and safe environment or sexual harassment policies and reporting see www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment or call the Office of Sexual Harassment at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550.

Office Hours: I enjoy student visits to discuss projects, clarify material, go over tests and papers and discuss your progress in the class. In case of absence, I won't redo the lecture you missed, but if you bring in notes obtained from other class members, I will discuss it and make sure you have all the material correctly. Office visits are especially helpful for international students and anyone needing accommodations (including athletes).

ACCOMODATIONS

Many students deserve **academic accommodations**, but university policy requires written documentation to receive them. Turn this in by week 3 or as soon as received. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671, C4C Room N200, or <http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices>.

If you are involved in **University sponsored activities** that result in missing class, please inform me by the second week of class (sports), or as soon as you become aware of the conflict.

Religious Observances: If class activities, or tests, assignments conflict with your religious practices please notify me by the third week of class, so I can make alternative arrangements.

Illness: It happens, unfortunately, and may interfere with class, including attendance, tests, and assignments. Here are directions on how to handle each of these situations.

- **NOTES:** You must connect with other students to get any notes you miss due to absence.
- **TESTS:** If you are too ill to take a test, you must notify me by email as soon as possible.
- **ASSIGNMENTS** if you cannot complete an assignment on time, you must email me by the due date, and attach a copy of the work you have completed.
- **Important:** A doctor's note is required to make up tests or extend assignment deadlines.

The Writing Center: Located in Norlin Library, Room E-156, this no-fee service provides one-to-one meetings with a writing consultant for sound advice at ANY stage of your writing process. They teach strategies to formulate and organize strong thesis statements, use and cite evidence appropriately, master style and grammar, and overcome writing anxiety. <http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html>, wrtghelp@colorado.edu, or call (303)735-6906.

By federal law grades cannot be discussed by e-mail. Make an appointment or come to office hours.

PLEASE NOTE: Things happen. Better ideas, including student generated ideas, happen. Changes in the syllabus may become desirable. Any changes will be communicated promptly by email and posting on D2L.

DETAILED SCHEDULE

- **Jan. 13-17 Week 1: Awakening the sociological imagination**

- Monday: Introduction to the course and each other. Review syllabus, assignments and policies.
 - Assignment for next class: Read Mills, “Sociological Imagination: The Promise” (on D2L);
- Wednesday: Lecture, discussion **Bring iClickers!**
 - Video
 - Assignment: Read Chapter 1 in Carolan text (also posted on D2L) & Conundrum pg. 1-14
- Friday: What do we need to know?
 - Lecture: Sociological perspectives, using sociological terms, (discuss the glossary assignment). Our environment, our values and the contradictions
 - In class activity Fill out goals and knowledge survey (to hand in)
 - Next Assignment: Read Capek “The Social Construction of Nature” for Wed. and “US Environmental Movements” Rob’t Brulle for Friday.

Section I: Defining the environmental problem as social

- **Jan 20-25 Week 2: Nature as Socially Constructed: Unpacking meanings of our “environment”**

- Mon. ~ Martin Luther King Day, no class.
- Wed. ~ The many faces/definitions of “Nature.” Who gets to say what counts?
 - In class activity: Picturing the environment. “Birdsong” Leopold, “Micmac letter to the French” (handouts)
- Fri. ~ What kind of Environmentalist are you anyway? Using Brulle’s Environmental Discourses
 - ~Adventure Assignments: Hand out and discuss assignment for three extracurricular experiences and accompanying reflection papers.
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 2 in *Carolan* (also posted on D2L)

FACING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

- **Jan. 27-31 Week 3: Greenhouse Gases**

- Mon. ~ Lecture/Discussion on assigned reading
 - Next Assignment: Video: Frontline: Climate of Doubt (on D2L)
- Wed. ~ Media and conflicting ideas of Climate Change. (*Clicker Survey*)
- Fri. ~ Environmental Health
 - (reminder—work on your glossary!)
 - DUE: Media discourse analysis:
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 3 in *Carolan*

- **Feb. 3-7 Week 4: Waste**

- Mon. ~ Lecture/Discussion on assigned reading
 - Next Assignment: Video on D2L
- Wed. ~ Landfills and Ocean “Garbage Dumps”
- Fri. ~ Recycling—Answer to Consumption or Instigator?
 - DUE: Sociological glossary, part one
 - Next Assignment: Read “Are You an Environmentalist, or Do You Work for a Living?”

- **Feb. 10-14 Week 5 Bio-diversity**

- Mon. ~Lecture and discussion of reading, anthropocentric vs. ecocentric perspectives
 - Next Assignment: Watch “American Serengeti”
- Wed. ~ **Presentation:** ReWilding the Plains- Gaddy Bergmann
- Fri. ~ Favored species (human and other), Wolf dilemma Discussion, Group work
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 5 in Carolan: Water
 - DUE: First of your three adventures: Upload on D2L

- **Feb. 17-21 Week 6: Water**

- Mon. ~Lecture, discussion of text
 - Next Assignment: Read “Water Quality: The Boulder Creek Watershed on D2L
- Wed. ~ **Speaker**, local water issues, Douglas Dunn, Water Resource Specialist, Boulder County
 - Read Conundrum pg. 166-173 & 193-196
- Fri. ~ video “Water First,” Environmental Justice
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 6, Population

- **Feb. 24-28 Week 7: Population**

- Mon. ~ Population- problem?
 - Watch Al Bartlett population video (5 min.)
 - Next Assignment: Watch “Mother—Caring for 7 Billion” link on D2L
- Wed. ~ “Gapminder” Population: human rights vs. overpopulation. Activity.
- Fri. ~ Group work—go over position project assignment, discuss topics
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 7 in Carolan: Transportation
 - Pages 80-108 in *Conundrum*

- **Mar. 4-7 Week 8 Transportation/Food**

- Mon. ~ Lecture “Peak Car” Discussion of text
 - Next Assignment: Ecofootprint video and instructions
- Wed. ~ Group work, footprints, “buying” activity
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 8 in Carolan: Food
 - *Conundrum* pgs. 70-79
- Fri. ~ Lecture/text & discussion--Group
 - Due: social action topic proposal D2L
 - Bring paper copy to class
 - Next Assignment: Read *Conundrum*, pgs 38-64

- **Mar. 10-14 Week 9: Food/Energy**

- Mon. ~ Group time, Speaker? Ecofootprint
 - DUE Ecofootprint bring to class
 - Next Assignment: Read Chapter 9 in Carolan: Energy
- Wed. ~ Lecture/ Class discussion
 - Next Assignment: Read *Conundrum* pgs. 155-213
- Fri. ~ Speaker on Wind/Alternative Energy
 - DUE: Second of three “Adventures” (D2L)

Section III: Social Structures• **Mar. 17-21 Week 10:**

- Mon. ~Max Weber's Sociology
 - Wed. ~ Political Economy, Karl Marx and Critical Theory
 - Fri. ~ Lecture/Discussion political economy
 - Lots of sociological terms in these last lectures:
- Next Assignment: View Harvey link on D2L
 ▪ Read Chapter 10 in Carolan: Political Economy
 ▪ DUE: Sociological glossary, part two

March 22-30 Spring Break• **Mar. 31- April 4 Week 11**

- Mon. ~ continue political economy- EPA!
 - Group time
 - Wed. ~ Lecture/Discussion
 - Group time if possible
 - Fri. ~Speaker Environmental Racism/ Environmental Justice
- Next Assignment: Read Chapter 11 in Carolan: Governance
 ▪ DUE: Social Action Summary
 ▪ Next Assignment: Read Chapter 12 in Carolan: Inequality and Growth

• **Apr. 7-11 Week 12:**

- Mon. ~ Lecture/Discussion of readings
 - Wed. ~ Alternative consumption discussion
 - Fri. ~ Where does this leave us? Norms, Attitudes and real change
- Next Assignment: View alternative consumption videos on D2L
 ▪ Next Assignment: Read *Conundrum* pg. 238-261
 ▪ DUE: Last of three adventures (on D2L)
 ▪ Next Assignment: Read chapter 13 in Carolan: Beliefs to Behaviors

• **April 14-18 Week 13**

- Mon. ~ Lecture/Discussion of Chapter 13
 - Wed. ~ Ongoing "emotional management" vs. Happiness findings
 - Fri. ~ Catch-up and group meetings
- DUE: Glossary of terms, part three turn in on D2L

Section IV: What We Can Do• **April 21-25 Week 14**

- Group presentations start
- All social action letters are due on APRIL 21

• **April 28-May 2 Week 15**

- Group presentations continue
- FRIDAY Stamp and mail letters

• **Week 16 FINAL DUE on D2L: Turn in your final paper by 10 a.m. May 5, 2014.**

- Please remember: If group presentations are incomplete we will meet in our regular classroom during the scheduled finals time (4:30-7 p.m. May 3).

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Classmate Information:

Get contact information from a few of your classmates - this benefits everyone. Consider those on this list as resources for notes, questions and a future study buddy or adventure companion:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Group Topic _____

Member List

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

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- GRADED ASSIGNMENTS: DUE DATES AND POINTS

- REMEMBER: Grades cannot be discussed by e-mail. (FIRPA regulations) Make an appointment or come to office hours.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Grade Tracker</u>
• Adventure 1	25	Sept. 27	_____
• Glossary	25	Oct. 7	_____
• Adventure 2	25	Oct. 25	_____
• Quiz 2	25	Oct. 28	_____
• 50		Nov. 15	_____
• Adventure 3	25	Nov. 22	_____
• Position Project (100)			
• Position Paper/Letter	50/25	Dec. _____	_____
• Presentation	25	Dec. _____	_____
• Final	75	Dec. 19	_____
• Group Work	75		_____
• Includes quality of joint in-class projects, organization of presentation			
• Participation	75		_____
• Includes individual in-class work and verbal contributions, office visits, attendance, clicker responses			
• Total:	500		_____
