

## Environmental Sociology

Fall 2017

SOCI 3347-001

TuTh 11:00-12:20, PKH 113

**Professor:** Kelly Bergstrand

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**Department Phone:** 817-272-2661

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:30 or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** Jennifer Wellman

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**TA Office Hours:** Monday 11:00-12:00

**TA Office:** 415 University Hall

### **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to environmental sociology and explores the interaction between the environment and human society. From a sociological perspective, we seek 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 how actors such as corporations, the media and social movements affect public opinion and environmental issues, case studies of environmental problems, and new directions in sustainable development.

### **Learning Outcomes and Course 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

Gould, Kenneth A., and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. 2015. *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Additional reading assignments, announcements and class handouts will be posted on the course Blackboard site, which you can access at: [elearn.uta.edu](http://elearn.uta.edu). For help with Blackboard, go to: <http://www.uta.edu/blackboard/students/>

## Course Requirements

1. Assignments: There will be two assignments. The topics of the assignments are 1) Communities and Sources of Pollution (40 points) and 2) Environmental Autobiography (50 points). I will distribute class handouts for each that describe the assignment in greater detail.
2. Group Presentation: Your group will be responsible for presenting on one critical, contemporary environmental problem (e.g. pollution, threats to biodiversity, waste disposal, water issues, endangered species, etc.). This should be a 10-15 minute PowerPoint 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 presentation will be worth 50 points.
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 activities held in class, which includes attendance-taking. In-class work will be worth 40 points total and 10% of your grade.
4. Quizzes and Newspaper Articles: Throughout the semester, there will be reading quizzes as needed. There will also be assignments to connect real world events to course material. This work will be worth 20 points total and 5% of your grade.
5. Exams: There will be a midterm exam and a final exam that will cover material from lectures, videos, class discussions, and the readings. These exams will not be open-book, and you are not allowed to bring notes. The exams will include multiple choice questions and short-answer questions. Each exam will be worth 100 points.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Assignment 1	40	10%
Assignment 2	50	12.5%
Group Presentation	50	12.5%
In-class Activities	40	10%
Quizzes and News	20	5%
Mid-Term Exam	100	25%
Final Exam	100	25%
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Total	400	100%

#### Grading scale for course

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
59% or below	E

### **Course Policies**

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to amend the syllabus during the semester.

#### *Attendance*

Attendance will usually be taken and will count toward the class participation grade. Rather than ask for written documentation to excuse absences, I allow students to miss up to four days over the semester without penalty. Please use these absences wisely; you cannot use all your four days and then hope if additional missed days occur due to unexpected reasons like illness that I will excuse those days as well.

#### *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. If you do not have an approved absence, you can make up the test but will receive half credit.

#### *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, an assignment due on Monday that would have received an A if turned in on time on Monday, will receive a B if turned in Tuesday and a C if turned in Wednesday. Assignments must be turned in by class time to avoid the late penalty. I will not accept work more than one week late.

### *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.

### *Environmental and Sustainability Studies Minor*

This course counts as part of the Environmental and Sustainability Studies Minor, a minor that is open to students in all majors, in all colleges. For more information about ESS classes, requirements, advising or the FB group see:

[http://www.uta.edu/english/alaimo/For%20ESS%20Minors%20\(Environmental%20and%20Sustainability%20Studies\).html](http://www.uta.edu/english/alaimo/For%20ESS%20Minors%20(Environmental%20and%20Sustainability%20Studies).html)

## Course Outline and Schedule

*Readings to be completed by dates listed*

### What is Environmental Sociology?

Th 8.24.17 Introduction to the course and syllabus

T 8.29.17 *Reading:* Luiz Barbosa, "Theories in Environmental Sociology." Ch. 2 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Chuck Laszewski, "The sociologists' take on the environment."

### Environmental Health and Distribution of Environmental Harms

Th 8.31.17 *Reading:* Sabrina McCormick, "The Sociology of Environmental Health." Ch. 11 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

*Class Handout on Assignment 1: Communities and Sources of Pollution*

T 9.5.17 *Reading:* Michael Mascarenhas, "Environmental Inequality and Environmental Justice." Ch. 10 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Andrew Szasz and Michael Meuser, "Environmental Inequalities"

*Video:* TED talk: Majora Carter, "Greening the Ghetto"

Th 9.7.17 *Reading:* David Pellow, "Environment, Modernity, Inequality."

T 9.12.17 *Reading:* Nicole Youngman, "Understanding Disaster Vulnerability" Ch. 14 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Th 9.14.17 *Reading:* Kai Erikson, "Three Mile Island: A New Species of Trouble"

*Video:* Radioactive Wolves

## **Consumption and Production**

T 9.19.17     *Reading:* Michael Mayerfield Bell, "Consumption and Materialism."

### ***Assignment 1: Community Sources of Pollution Due***

Th 9.21.17     *Reading:* Juliet Schor, "Born to Buy" (excerpts)

Andrew Szasz, "Shopping Our Way to Safety: Introduction"

T 9.26.17     *Reading:* Allan Schnaiberg, "Labor Productivity and the Environment." Ch. 4 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

## **Social Movements**

Th 9.28.17     *Reading:* Robert Brulle, "U.S. Environmental Movements." Ch. 16 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

T 10.3.17     *Reading:* Tammy Lewis, "Environmental Movements in the Global South." Ch. 18 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, "The Environmentalism of the Poor."

Th 10.5.17     Review for Mid-Term Exam

T 10.10.17     **Mid-Term Exam**

## **Values and the Environment**

Th 10.12.17     *Reading:* Robin Andersen, "Selling 'Mother Earth': Advertising and the Myth of the Natural."

T 10.17.17    *Reading:* William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness"

Aldo Leopold, "Prairie Birthday" pp. 44-50

Aldo Leopold, "Thinking Like a Mountain" and "Escudilla" pp. 129-137

*Class Handout on Assignment 2: Environmental Autobiography*

### **Environmental Problems: Extinction and Waste**

Th 10.19.17    *Reading:* Elizabeth Kolbert, "The Sixth Extinction" (Excerpts)

T 10.24.17    Video: Tapped

***Submit Topic for Class Presentation***

### **Environmental Problems: Population and Energy**

Th 10.26.17    *Reading:* Diana Bates, "Population, Demography and the Environment."  
Ch. 8 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

***Assignment 2: Environmental Autobiography Due***

T 10.31.17    *Reading:* Shannon Elizabeth Bell, "Energy, Society and the Environment."  
Ch. 9 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

### **Environmental Problems: Climate Change**

Th 11.2.17    *Reading:* Jeffrey Sachs, "Global Solutions to Climate Change"

T 11.7.17    *Reading:* Kari Marie Norgaard, "Normalizing the Unthinkable." Ch. 15 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Dan Kahan, "Fixing the communications failure"

Dan Kahan, "Why we are poles apart on climate change"

Patrick Egan and Megan Mullin, "Climate Change: U.S. Public Opinion"

### **Class Presentations**

Th 11.9.17

T 11.14.17

### **Environmental Problems: Food Production and Waste**

Th 11.16.17 *Reading:* Jason Konefal and Maki Hatanaka, "Producing and Consuming Food."  
Ch. 12 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

Adam Driscoll and Bob Edwards, "From Farms to Factories."  
Ch. 13 in *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*.

T 11.21.17 *Reading:* Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (Excerpts)

Daniella Martin, *Edible* (Chapter 1)

Th 11.23.17 Thanksgiving Holiday: No Class

### **Social Responses to Environmental Problems and Sustainable Development**

Th 11.28.17 *Reading:* Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons."

Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (Excerpts)

T 11.30.17 Juliet Schor, *True Wealth* (Excerpts)

Th 12.5.17 Course Conclusion and Review for Final Exam

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, December 12: 11:00-1:30 pm



## Course Bibliography

- Andersen, Robin. 2009. "Selling 'Mother Earth': Advertising and the Myth of the Natural." In Leslie King and Deborah McCarthy (eds) *Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action*. Lanham Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Bell, Michael Mayerfeld. 2009. "Consumption and Materialism." Pp. 33-53 in *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Cronon, William. 1996. "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature." *Environmental History* 1(1): 7-28.
- Diamond, Jared. 2005. *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*. London: Penguin Books.
- Egan, Patrick J., and Megan Mullin. 2017. "Climate Change: US Public Opinion." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 209-227.
- Erikson, Kai. 2004. "Three Mile Island: A New Species of Trouble." Pp. 139-157. in *A New Species of Trouble*. New York: Norton.
- Guha, Ramachandra and Juan Martinez-Alier, "The Environmentalism of the Poor." In *Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South*. London: Earthscan.
- Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* 162: 1243-48.
- Kahan, Dan. 2010. "Fixing the communications failure." *Nature* 463(7279): 296-297.
- Kahan, Dan. 2012. "Why we are poles apart on climate change." *Nature* 488 (7411): 255.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2014. *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. New York: Picador.
- Laszewski, Chuck. 2008. "The sociologists' take on the environment." *Contexts* 7(2): 20-25.
- Leopold, Aldo. 1949. *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Oxford
- Martin, Daniella. 2014. *Edible*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Pellow, David Naguib. 2007. "Environment, Modernity, Inequality." Pp. 1-37 in *Resisting Global Toxics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Pollan, Michael. 2006. *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. New York: Penguin Books.

Sachs, Jeffrey. 2008. "Global Solutions to Climate Change." Pp. 85-114 in *Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet*. New York: Penguin Press.

Schor, Juliet B. 2010. *True Wealth*. New York: Penguin Press.

Schor, Juliet B. 2004. *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Cult*. New York: Scribner.

Szasz, Andrew. 2007. *Shopping Our Way to Safety*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Szasz, Andrew and Michael Meuser. 1997. "Environmental Inequalities: Literature Review and Proposals for New Directions in Research and Theory." *Current Sociology* 45(3): 99-120.

### **Additional Course Information:**

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).*

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington ("University") is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in

employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).*

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located at either of the main doors to the left or right of the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

<p><b>Emergency Phone Numbers:</b> In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at <b>817-272-3003</b> (non-campus phone), <b>2-3003</b> (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number 817-272-3381</p>
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