

Community & Environmental Sociology 140

Introduction to Community & Environmental Sociology

Spring 2015

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Office: 308A Agricultural Hall

Classroom: Ag Hall 10
Lectures: T/Th 9:30pm-10:45pm
Office Hours: T/Th 11am-12pm
or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is an introduction to Community and Environmental Sociology. More specifically, we examine the linkages between the human society and the natural environment. The key topics include growth and development, globalization and localism, social construction of nature, environmental justice, local food, and climate change. Throughout the course, we will also spend time envisioning how transition to a more sustainable future could happen.

I expect students to come away from the course with a basic understanding of the concepts and theories. In addition, through the community learning assignment, my goal is to help students learn to analyze real-world problems with a sharp sociological lens. This course aims to improve student's skills in inquiry, analysis, and critical thinking.

COURSE MATERIALS

Bill McKibben. 2007. *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. New York: Times Books.

Ozzie Zehler. 2012. *Green Illusions: The Dirty Secrets of Clean Energy and the Future of Environmentalism*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

These books are available through the UW Library System. *Deep Economy* is on reserve at Steenbock Library and College Library. [Green Illusions](#) can be accessed through the Ebook library (EBL).

All other readings, some lecture materials, and other key information will be available through Learn@UW at <https://learnuw.wisc.edu/>

COURSE REQUIREMENT

Your grade will be based on your participation in class, two exams, reading response papers, and the community learning project. The grading rubric is as the following:

Participation	15%
Midterm Exam (March 3 rd)	20%
Final Exam (April 30 th)	20%
Reading Response	15%
Community Learning Project	30%

A	= 93-100
AB	= 86-93
B	= 80-86
BC	= 75-80
C	= 70-74
D	= 60-69
F	= < 60

Participation (15%):

Class attendance is extremely important for this course. I will exercise attendance checks regularly. You are allowed to be absent without any reason TWICE. Beyond the two absence, you will lose 1 out of your 15 participation points for every absence. Please email me when you are unable to attend, need to leave early, or have to be late in the class. When you need walk in and out of the classroom during lecture, please be considerate to your classmates.

My teaching goal is to create a learning community in the classroom. The quality of our collective learning experience depends on your participation. To do well in this class, you should finish the readings *before* class, listen attentively, join actively in the conversation, and ask critical questions during lectures.

When I calculate your grade at the end of the semester, participation will carry special weight when a student is close to getting the next letter grade up. This is completely up to my discretion.

Exam (20%*2)

There will be one midterm (March 3) and one final exam (April 30) in this course. Both exams will account 20% of your final grades. Exams will consist of multiple choice question and short answer questions. Exams are not cumulative.

Reading Response (15%):

In three of the weeks you are required to write a one-page reading response paper. In your reading responses, you must a) demonstrate that you are engaged with the reading for that week by discussing the main arguments or conclusions of the reading, b) critically assess the argument, and c) relate the readings to the lectures, films, or discussion in class. In some weeks, I will provide you with a prompting question that you should address in the reading response paper.

The reading response papers are due on Tuesday. Each of them will be 5% of your grade. If you wish to write more than three papers, you can drop the lower scores in the final grade.

Community Learning Project (30%):

In this course, we strive to engage in social and environmental challenges in the real world. This exercise seeks to be the bridge between our classroom and your community. There are 4 components in this exercise: a Proposal, your Community Fieldwork, a Presentation, and a Final Paper. The due dates are listed in the following course schedule.

Proposal (5%):

In early weeks of the semester, you need to identify an issue, related to community and environmental sociology broadly defined, of your interests in your community. In your 1-page proposal, illustrate why the particular issue is important to you and your community, describe its background in a clear manner, and lay out a plan of your community fieldwork.

You are required to come to my office hour to discuss your paper topic. This is a necessary step to ensure that you can complete this semester-long assignment. The proposal is due on February 19th.

Community Fieldwork:

After you identify your topic, you need to engage in community to deepen your understanding of the issue. For example, you can observe social interaction in the farmer's market, make a trip to nature reserves, conduct short interviews to your family or friends, attend town hall meetings, volunteer in community events, etc. Be creative. Choose something of your interest. Have fun! The ideal fieldwork allows multiple participation opportunities throughout the semester.

In late February, we will dedicate one class to discuss your community learning project. It will be a valuable opportunity to gather useful feedback to your projects.

Presentation:

Towards the end of the semester, you will have a chance to share your community learning experiences with the class. 5 minutes, no powerpoint, just tell us what you've learned! The presentation counts toward your participation grades.

Final Paper (25%):

To sum up your project, you need to write up a 3500-word final paper to reflect on your experience. Your paper needs to 1) describe and reflect on your community participation activities, and 2) apply the concepts and theories in community and environmental sociology to analyze your findings. You are encouraged to use other scholarly materials to support your points. Please cite properly.

Assignment Policy

Please submit your work on time. The assignments are always due BEFORE THE CLASS on the due dates. You will lose 20% of your points for one late-day.

All writing should include your name in the page heading, follow the format of 12-pt, Times New Roman, single line spacing, 1-inch margin. Please use spell check to avoid typos.

To become a more effective writer, I highly encourage you to take advantage of the resources at university's writing center: <http://www.writing.wisc.edu/>

Office Hour:

My office is on Tuesday and Thursday 11am-12pm. If you need to meet up with me in times other than my regular office hours, you can make an appointment with me. It is usually easiest if you do so by email. Office hours will not be devoted to tutorial for materials that students miss when not attending class. Also, please strive to ask routine questions of clarification during the lecture.

Lecture Notes:

Lecture slides will be posted on Learn@UW before each class. These notes are intended to provide you with a broad outline of the discussion, not specific details, so you will still need to take notes in class.

Academic Honesty:

The University takes academic honesty very seriously. If you are found to be cheating on exams or papers, you will be reported to the Dean of Students.

All of the work that you submit for this class must be your own work, and you are required to quote and cite all references properly. Although this appears straightforward, it can sometimes be confusing. Wherever you are unsure about quoting and citing, please come see me to figure out the best strategy. If you use a web-based source, you can always cite the URL.

For information about plagiarism policy:

<http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#points>

Please take some time to read through this short introduction to “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”:

www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf

Use of Technology:

No use of Laptops, Tablets, Phones, or Other Electronic Devices in this class. Although computers are a valuable tool for research and study, they often hinder participation and collegiality in the classroom.

If you are interested in this policy, I recommend *The New Yorker's* article “The Case for Banning Laptops in the Classroom”: <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>

Accommodation:

I wish to include any students with special needs in this course. In order to enable you to participate fully, please let me know (the earlier the better) if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction or evaluation procedures. The McBurney Disability Resource Center (<http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>) will provide useful assistance and documentation.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Preparation
- ◆ Dates that you should know

Week 1 (Jan 20 & 22) Setting the Stage

- Read the syllabus carefully
- Maniates, Michael F. "Individualization: Plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world?." *Global environmental politics* 1.3 (2001): 31-52.
- Laszewski, Chuck. "The sociologists' take on the environment." *Contexts* 7.2 (2008): 20-24.

Week 2 (Jan 27 & 29) Growth vs Development

- Amartya Sen. 1999. *Development as freedom*. Introduction and Chapter 1
- Daly, Herman E. "Economics in a full world." *Scientific American* 293.3 (2005): 100-107.
- Gertner, Jon. "The Rise and Fall of the GDP." *New York Times* 13 (2010).
- *Deep Economy* Chapter 1
- ◆ January 29: In-class documentary "The High Cost of Low Price"

Week 3 (Feb 3 & 5) Globalization vs Localism

- *Deep Economy* Chapter 2
- Maruo Guillen. 2001. Is globalization civilizing, destructive or feeble? A critique of five key debates in the social science literature. *Annual Review of Sociology* 27: 235-260.

Week 4 (Feb 10 & 12) Social Capital

- *Deep Economy* Chapter 3
- Robert Putnam. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*, Simon and Schuster, 2000. Chapter 1
- Hart-Brinson, P. (January 01, 2011). New Ways of Bowling Together? *Contexts*, 10, 4, 28-33.

Week 5 (Feb 17 & 19) Production and Consumption

- *Deep Economy* Chapter 4-5
- Rudel, Thomas K., J. Timmons Roberts, and JoAnn Carmin. "Political economy of the environment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 221-238.
- Watch *The Story of Stuff*: <http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>
- ◆ Feb 19: Community Learning Project Proposal

Week 6 (Feb 24 & 26) Environmental Justice

- Mohai, Paul, David Pellow, and J. Timmons Roberts. "Environmental justice." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 34 (2009): 405-430.
- Pellow, David Naguib, and Robert J. Brulle. "poisoning the planet: the struggle for environmental justice." *Contexts* 6.1 (2007): 37-41.
- Watch Van Jones: The Economic Injustice of Plastic
http://www.ted.com/talks/van_jones_the_economic_injustice_of_plastic
- ◆ Feb 26: Community Learning Workshop

Week 7 (Mar 3 & 5) Environmental Concern

- ◆ March 3: Midterm Exam
- Kollmuss, Anja, and Julian Agyeman. "Mind the gap: why do people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior?" *Environmental education research* 8.3 (2002): 239-260.
- Hulme, Mike. *Why we disagree about climate change*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Chapter 1
- John Oliver on climate change: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1ywB8132jc>

Week 8 (Mar 10 & 12) Social Construction of Nature

- Angelo, Hillary, and Colin Jerolmack. "Nature's Looking-Glass." *Contexts* 11.1 (2012): 24-29
- Cronon, William. "The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature." *Environmental History* (1996): 7-28.
- ◆ March 12: Fieldtrip to the Chazen Museum of Art

Week 9 (Mar 17 & 19) Food & Agriculture I

- Read the website of [Plowshare & Priare Farm](#)
- ◆ March 17: TBA
- ◆ March 19: Guest Speaker Scott Laeser on Community Support Agriculture

Week 10 (Mar 24 & 26) Food & Agriculture II

- Pierre Desrochers and Hiroko Shimizu. 2012. "[Why Locavorism Doesn't Make Us Happier, Healthier, or Safer](#)", The Daily Beast
- Born, Branden, and Mark Purcell. "Avoiding the local trap scale and food systems in planning research." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 26.2 (2006): 195-207.
- Harrison, Jill Lindsey, and Sarah E. Lloyd. "Illegality at work: Deportability and the productive new era of immigration enforcement." *Antipode* 44.2 (2012): 365-385.
- White, Monica M. "D-Town Farm: African American Resistance to Food Insecurity and the Transformation of Detroit." *Environmental Practice* 13.04 (2011): 406-417.
- Re-read Deep Economy Chapter 2

March 28- April 5 Spring Recess

Week 11 (Apr 7 & 9) Living in the Turbulent World

- Bill McKibben. [Global Warming's Terrifying New Math](#). Rolling Stone. July 19, 2012
- Naomi Klein. [Capitalism vs. the Climate](#). The Nation. November 9, 2011
- Roberts, J. Timmons, and Bradley C. Parks. 2007. *A climate of injustice: Global inequality, North-South politics, and climate policy*. Chapter 1
- Watch *Disruption*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ktgEzXZDtmc>
- ◆ April 9: Guest Speaker Laura Schlachter on the Divestment Campaign, 350.org, and climate justice

Week 12 (Apr 14 & 16) Fossil Fuel, Green Technology, and Capitalism

- *Green Illusions* Intro, Chapter 1-3

Week 13 (Apr 21 & 23) The Future of Environmentalism

- *Green Illusions* Chapter 8-14
- Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger. 2004. "[the Death of Environmentalism](#)"

Week 14 (Apr 28 & 30) Community Learning Projects & Final Exam

- ◆ April 30: Final Exam

Week 15 (May 5 & 7) Community Learning Projects & Conclusion

- ◆ May 15: Final Paper due on 1159pm

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change any aspect of this syllabus, including readings, assignments, and due dates.