**SOC/ENR 3950 - Environmental Sociology**

**Fall 2020**

**Tues/Thurs 1:20 PM-2:35 PM**

**Webconference Via Zoom**

**Instructor:** Dan Auerbach **Email:** dauerbac@uwyo.edu

**Office: TBA** **Office Phone:** TBA

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 2:45 PM-4:00 PM

**Teaching Assistant:** Tomi Castillon **Email:** tcastil4@uwyo.edu

**Office Hours: TBD**

**Office: TBD**

**Course Description:**

In this course we will learn about environmental sociology—the study of interactions between humans and the environment. We will engage readings and issues from a diversity of disciplines including ecology, economics, geography, history, and sociology, amongst others. We will investigate how human societies affect the environment, and how human societies are shaped by the environment, as well as how we come to recognize and understand changing environmental conditions. This course is a survey of the major theoretical traditions and areas of research within environmental sociology. These readings will help us understand the relationship between society and nature.

Through the course, students will be able to : 1) establish how and why environmental sociology arose as a field of study within sociology; 2) identify and explicate the concepts and ideas associated with the major paradigms within environmental sociology; 3) evaluate and distinguish the different theories in their applicability to the social and natural world; 4) extend and apply specific theories to understand examples outside of the readings; 5) compare and contrast the approaches and questions of different disciplines on environmental issues; 6) develop a sociological lens for engaging in environmental analysis, which identifies particular social drivers of ecological change and contemplates what social changes are necessary to address environmental problems.

This course requires dedication from you. Environmental Sociology is a **reading heavy** course (as you can see by scrolling down the syllabus). The readings are a mixture of books and articles. It is highly recommended that you spread out the readings throughout the week and not try to read it all in one evening. I promise that the readings are manageable if you spread them out. Additionally, this course is also heavily dependent upon class discussion (which I will describe below). Reading, reflecting, and engaging with others will be helpful in processing and understanding these challenging readings. **All readings are expected to be completed before the first class of each week (Tuesday)**

**Prerequisites:**

The prerequisite for this class is SOC 1000

**Required Books:**

Traci Brynne Voyles, *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*

Clive Hamilton, *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering*

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

Additional readings, such as articles, book chapters, and websites are listed in the reading schedule and will be available for download on CANVAS.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

Papers and exams must be turned in by Friday, 11:59 PM the week they are due. You must submit the assignments on CANVAS. Late papers and exams will be reduced by 10% for each day they are late. Additionally, there will be several quizzes that must be completed (in CANVAS). I will let you know at the beginning of the week when the quizzes will be administered.

**(15%) Reading Quizzes.** During the term, several, short, in-class reading quizzes will be given. The quizzes are designed to ensure that you are doing the readings on a weekly basis. There will be a total of 6 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of five fill-in-the-blank, short answer, or multiple-choice questions, will last approximately 10 minutes, and will be worth 3 percent of your overall grade. If you have done the readings you should be able to do well on the quizzes. Your single lowest quiz score will be automatically dropped.

**(10%) Group Discussion and Participation.** Throughout the course, there will be numerous in-class activities that are part of your grade. For instance, we will divide into small groups for discussion. Within these groups, specific questions will be addressed. The ideas of the group will be recorded by individuals within the group and turned in at the end of class. Also, on a regular basis, we will take a couple of minutes to pause and reflect on the readings. You will be asked to record your reflections and submit them to CANVAS at the end of class.

**(20%) Reading/Reaction Journals.** In order to succeed in this course, it is necessary that you analyze the readings and class material in a critical fashion. To provide that process with some structure, students will be required to complete a total of four Reading/Reaction Journals throughout the term. These journals will require students to analyze the week’s readings and write up their reactions and reflections. Students will submit the first two Reading/Reaction Journals by the end of Week 7. The second two papers must be submitted by the end of Week 15. You are free to choose any four weeks that you want. Papers must be submitted via CANVAS by the end of the week that you have chosen to write about by Friday at 11:59 PM. For instance, if you would like to write about Human Ecology (week 3) your assignment is due Friday, September 11, by 11:59 PM. Complete instructions can be found on CANVAS.

**(25%) Environmental Project (involves a short proposal and paper).** While exams capture one form of knowledge and understanding, writing reflects a different process of learning and thinking. Therefore, each student will be required to complete one class paper. The paper revolves around each student making a lifestyle change around an environmental issue or principle that reduced your impact on the natural environment or serves to bring about environmentally positive social change. Students will be expected to analyze their experiences with that change through the lens of course material. This is intended to be a challenging and educational project whereby you can experience the social structural and cultural factors that constrain and/or facilitate widespread social change along ecologically sensitive lines. The project does not require that you are successful at making the change, only that you make a sincere attempt at it. You will be required to make a short proposal (1-2 pages, single-spaced) of what you intend to do (laying out the ground rules and duration of time you thinking appropriate) and briefly explaining why it is important for the environment. Once I have approved the proposal you should implement the change and keep a journal of your experiences (you are not required to turn in this journal), which will help when you write your paper. Students should expect to be evaluated on the quality of their writing and their ability to incorporate class concepts into their paper. Additionally, you will be graded on how creative you are in developing and implementing your project. We will regularly discuss how your projects are going in class. **The proposal is due Friday, September 4 by 11:59 PM. The paper is due Friday, October 30 by 11:59 PM. The proposal and the paper must be submitted via CANVAS.** Complete instructions can be found on CANVAS.

**(30%) Final Essay Exam.** A 15-page (double-spaced) research paper is due by the end of Finals Week (Friday, December 11 by 11:59 PM). The final essay exam is designed to elicit a comprehensive, detailed, and critical response to the course materials for the entire term. The assignment will be discussed and distributed later in the term.

**Statement on Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with UW Regulation 2-114. The penalties for academic dishonesty can include, at my discretion, an “F” on an exam, an “F” on the class component exercise, and/or an “F” in the entire course. Academic dishonesty means anything that represents someone else’s ideas as your own without attribution. It is intellectual theft – stealing - and includes (but is not limited to) unapproved assistance on examinations, plagiarism (use of any amount of another person’s writings, blog posts, publications, and other materials without attributing that material to that person with citations), or fabrication of referenced information. Facilitation of another person’s academic dishonesty is also considered academic dishonesty and will be treated identically.

**Grading Scale:**

A =90-100

B =80-89.9

C =70-79.9

D =60-69.9

F =<60

**Classroom Behavior Policy:** At all times, treat your presence in the classroom and your enrollment in this course as you would a job. Act professionally, arrive on time, pay attention, complete your work in a timely and professional manner, and treat all deadlines seriously. You will be respectful towards you classmates and instructor. Spirited debate and disagreement are to be expected in any classroom and all views will be heard fully, but at all times we will behave civilly and with respect towards one another. Personal attacks, offensive language, name-calling, and dismissive gestures are not warranted in a learning atmosphere. As the instructor, I have the right to dismiss you from the classroom, study sessions, electronic forums, and other areas where disruptive behavior occurs.

**Diversity Statement:** The University of Wyoming values an educational environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. The diversity that students and faculty bring to class, including age, country of origin, culture, disability, economic class, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, linguistic, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, worldview, and other social and cultural diversity is valued, respected, and considered a resource for learning.

**Disability Support:** The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a disability, including but not limited to physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, and would like to request accommodations in this course due to your disability, please register with and provide documentation of your disability as soon as possible to Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 128 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at (307) 766-3073 or [udss@uwyo.edu.](mailto:udss@uwyo.edu) It is in the student’s best interest to request accommodations within the first week of classes, understanding that accommodations are not retroactive. Visit the DSS website for more information at: [www.uwyo.edu/udss](http://www.uwyo.edu/udss).

**Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination Policy—Duty to Report:** While I want you to feel comfortable coming to me with issues you may be struggling with or concerns you may be having, please be aware that I have some reporting requirements that are part of my job requirements at UW.

For example, if you inform me of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of the institution’s Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to talk to those offices directly, you can contact Equal Opportunity Report and Response (Bureau of Mines Room 319, 766-5200, [report-it@uwyo.edu](mailto:report-it@uwyo.edu), [www.uwyo.edu/reportit](http://www.uwyo.edu/reportit)). Additionally, you can also report incidents or complaints to the UW Police Department. You can also get support at the STOP Violence program ([stopviolence@uwyo.edu](mailto:stopviolence@uwyo.edu), [www.uwyo.edu/stop](http://www.uwyo.edu/stop), 766-3296) (or SAFE Project ([www.safeproject.org](http://www.safeproject.org), [campus@safeproject.org](mailto:campus@safeproject.org), 766-3434, 24-Hour hotline: 745-3556).

Another common example is if you are struggling with an issue that may be traumatic or unusual stress. I will likely inform the Dean of Students Office or Counseling Center. If you would like to reach out directly to them for assistance, you can contact them using the info below or going to [www.uwyo.edu/dos/uwyocares](http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/uwyocares).

Finally, know that if, for some reason, our interaction involves a disruptive behavior or potential violation of policy, I inform the Dean of Students, even when you and I may have reached an informal resolution to the incident. The purpose of this is to keep the Dean apprised of any behaviors and what was done to resolve them.

**Student Resources:**

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES: [udss@uwyo.edu](mailto:udss@uwyo.edu), 766-3073, 128 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/udss](http://www.uwyo.edu/udss)

COUNSELING CENTER: [uccstaff@uwyo.edu](mailto:uccstaff@uwyo.edu), 766-2187, 766-8989 (After hours), 341 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/ucc](http://www.uwyo.edu/ucc)

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: 766-4286, 312 Old Main, [www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs](http://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs)

DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE: [dos@uwyo.edu](mailto:dos@uwyo.edu), 766-3296, 128 Knight Hall, [www.uwyo.edu/dos](http://www.uwyo.edu/dos)

UW POLICE DEPARTMENT: [uwpd@uwyo.edu](mailto:uwpd@uwyo.edu), 766-5179, 1426 E Flint St, [www.uwyo.edu/uwpd](http://www.uwyo.edu/uwpd)

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT WEBSITE: [www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct](http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct)

**Substantive Changes to the Syllabus:** All deadlines, requirements, and course structure is subject to change if deemed necessary by the instructor. Students will be notified verbally in class, on our WyoCourses page announcement, and via email of these changes.

**COVID-19 Policies:** During this pandemic, you must abide by all UW policies and public health rulesput forward by the City of Laramie (or by Natrona County if at UW-Casper), the University of Wyomingand the State of Wyoming to promote the health and well-being of fellow students and your own personalself-care. Please review our current policy.

As with other disruptive behaviors, we have the right to dismiss you from the classroom (Zoom and physical), or other class activities if you fail to abide by these COVID-19 policies. These behaviors will be referred to the Dean of Students Office using the UWYO Cares Reporting Form for Student Code of Conduct processes.

**Reading Schedule**

**Week 1 (August 25 & 27):** Introduction/Class Logistics/Development of Ecological Science/Ecosystems/Social and Ecological Problems/Sustainability/Environmental History

**No Readings**

**Week 2 (September 1 & 3):** Environmental Sociology: Foundations, History, Orientations; Humans as a Geological Force

**Required Readings:**

Catton, William R. Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap. 1978. “Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm.” *The American Sociologist* 13:41-49.

Catton, William R. Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap. 1978. “Paradigms, Theories, and the Primacy of the HEP-NEP Distinction.” *The American Sociologist* 13: 256-259.

Pellow, David N. and Hollie Nyseth Brehm. 2013. “An Environmental Sociology for the Twenty-First Century.” *American Review of Sociology* 39:229-50.

Steffen, Will, Paul J. Crutzen, and John R. McNeill. 2007. “The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?” *Ambio* 36(8):614-621.

Steffen, Will, Katherine Richardson, Johan Rockström, Sarah E. Cornell, Ingo Fetzer, Elena M. Bennett, Reinette Biggs, Stephen R. Carpenter, Wim de Vries, Cyntha A. de Wit, Carl Folke, Dieter Gerten, Jens Heinke, Georgina M. Mace, Linn M. Persson, Veerabhadran Ramanathan, Belinda Reyers, Sverker Sörlin. 2015. “Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet.” *Science* 347(6223). doi: 10.1126/science.1259855.

**Week 3 (September 8 & 10):** Human Ecology: Human-Environment Relations and Interactions/IPAT/STIRPAT

**Required Readings:**

Catton, William R. Jr. 1994. “Foundations of Human Ecology.” *Sociological Perspectives* 37:75- 95.

Dietz, Thomas, Eugene A. Rosa, and Richard York. 2007. “Driving the Human Ecological Footprint.” *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 5:13-18.

Gross, Matthias. 2004. “Human Geography and Ecological Sociology: The Unfolding of a Human Ecology, 1890-1930—and Beyond.” *Social Science History* 28(4):575-605.

Willette, Mirranda, Karie Marie Norgaard, and Ron Reed. 2016. “You Got to Have Fish: Families, Environmental Decline and Cultural Reproduction.” *Families, Relationships and Societies* 5(3):375-92.

York, Richard and Philip Mancus. 2009. “Critical Human Ecology: Historical Materialism and Natural Laws.” *Sociological Theory* 27: 122-149.

**Week 4 (September 15 &17):** Ecological Modernization/Environmental Kuznets/Ecological Efficiency/Economic Growth and the Environment

**Required Readings:**

Buttel, Frederick H. 2000. “Ecological Modernization as Social Theory.” *Geoforum* 31:57-65.

Dinda, Soumyananda. 2004. “Environmental Kuznets Curve Hypothesis: A Survey.” *Ecological Economics* 49:431-55.

Ehrhardt-Martinez, Karen, Edward M. Crenshaw, and J. Craig Jenkins. 2002. “Deforestation and the Environmental Kuznets Curve: A Cross-National Investigation of Intervening Mechanisms.” *Social Science Quarterly* 83(1):226-243.

Grossman, Gene M. and Alan B. Krueger. 1995. “Economic Growth and the Environment.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 110:353-377.

Spaargaren, Gert and Arthur P. J. Mol. 2013. “Carbon Flows, Carbon Markets, and Low-Carbon Lifestyles: Reflecting on the Role of Markets in Climate Governance.” *Environmental Politics* 22(1):174-193.

**Week 5 (September 22 & 24):** Political Economy/Treadmill of Production/Issues of Scale

**Required Readings:**

Bell, Shannon Elizabeth and Richard York. 2010. “Community Identity: The Coal Industry and Ideology Construction in West Virginia.” *Rural Sociology* 75(1):111-143.

Freudenburg, William R. 1992. “Addictive Economies: Extractive Industries and Vulnerable Localities in a Changing World Economy.” *Rural Sociology* 57:305-332.

Gould, Kenneth A., David N. Pellow, and Allan Schnaiberg. 2004. “Interrogating the Treadmill of Production: Everything You Wanted to Know About the Treadmill but Were Afraid to Ask.” *Organization & Environment* 17(3):296-316.

Long, Michael A., Paul B. Stretesky, Michael J. Lynch and Emily Fenwick. 2012. “Crime in the Coal Industry: Implications for Green Criminology and Treadmill of Production Theory.” *Organization & Environment* 25(3):299-316.

**Week 6 (September 29 & October 1):** Political Economy/Metabolic Analysis/Qualitative Environmental Change

**Required Readings:**

Clausen, Rebecca and Brett Clark. 2005. “The Metabolic Rift and Marine Ecology: An Analysis of the Ocean Crisis Within Capitalist Production.” *Organization & Environment* 18(4):422-444.

Foster, John Bellamy. 1999. “Marx’s Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundation for Environmental Sociology.” *American Journal of Sociology* 105(2):366-405.

Holleman, Hannah. 2018. “Dust to Dust: An Age Beyond Extremes.” Pp. 17-37 in *Dust Bowls of Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Holleman, Hanna. 2018. “Imperialism, White Settler Colonialism, and the Ecological Rift.” Pp. 55-73 in *Dust Bowls of Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Longo, Stefano B. 2012. “Mediterranean Rift: Socio-Ecological Transformations in the Sicilian Bluefin Tuna Fishery.” *Critical Sociology* 38(3): 417-436.

**Week 7 (October 6 & 8):** Global Processes: World-Systems Theory/Unequal Ecological Exchange/World Polity/Global Inequalities

**Required Readings:**

Austin, Kelly F. 2017. “Brewing Unequal Exchanges in Coffee: A Qualitative Investigation into the Consequences of the Java Trade in Rural Uganda.” *Journal of World-Systems Research* 23(2):326-352.

Dunaway, Wilma A. and M. Cecilia Macabuac. 2007. “‘The Shrimp Eat Better Than We Do’: Philippine Subsistence Fishing Households Sacrificed for the Global Food Chain.” *Review* XXX(4):313-337.

Frey, R. Scott. 1998. “The Export of Hazardous Industries to the Peripheral Zones of the World- System.” *Journal of Developing Societies* 14:66-81.

Givens, Jennifer E. and Xiaorui Huang, and Andrew Jorgenson. 2019. “Ecologically Unequal Exchange: A Theory of Global Environmental *In*justice.” *Sociology Compass* 13(5):e12693.

Longhofer, Wesley and Andrew K. Jorgenson. 2017. “Decoupling Reconsidered: Does World Society Integration Influence the Relationship Between the Environment and Economic Development?” *Social Science Research* 65:17-29.

Shondra, John. 2007. “The World Polity and Deforestation: A Cross-National Analysis.” *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 48:5-28.

**Week 8 (October 13 & 15):** Militarism: Treadmill of Destruction/Environmental Inequalities

**Required Readings:**

Alvarez, Camila Huerta. 2016. “Militarization and Water: A Cross-National Analysis of Militarism and Freshwater Withdrawals.” *Environmental Sociology* 2(3):298-305.

Bonds, Eric. 2016. “Legitimating the Environmental Injustices of War: Toxic Exposures and Media Silence in Iraq and Afghanistan.” *Environmental Politics* 25(3):395-413.

Clark, Brett and Andrew K. Jorgenson. 2012. “The Treadmill of Destruction and the Environmental Impacts of Militaries.” *Sociology Compass* 6(7):557-569.

Hooks, Gregory and Chad L. Smith. 2004. “The Treadmill of Destruction: National Sacrifice Areas and Native Americans.” *American Sociological Review* 69(4):558-575.

Smith, Chad L. and Michael Lengefeld. 2019. “The Environmental Consequences of Asymmetric War: A Panel Study of Militarism and Carbon Emissions, 2000-2010.” *Armed Forces & Society*. DOI: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0095327X 19832615.

**Week 9 (October 20 & 22):** Environmental Injustice/Environmental Racism/Settler Colonialism

**Required Readings**:

Voyles, Traci Brynne. 2015. *Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*, Chapters Introduction-3 (pp. 1-115).

Bacon, J.M. 2019. “Settler Colonialism as Eco-Social Structure and the Production of Colonial Ecological Violence.” *Environmental Sociology* 5:59-69.

Mohai, Paul, David N. Pellow, and J. Timmons Roberts. 2009. “Environmental Justice.” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 34:405-430.

**Week 10 (October 27 & 29):** Environmental Injustice/Gendered Inequality/Settler Colonialism (Continued)

**Required Readings:**

Voyles, Traci Brynne. 2015. *Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country*, Chapters 4-6 (pp. 117-218).

Norgaard, Kari and Richard York. “Gender Equality and State Environmentalism.” *Gender and Society* 19(4):506-522.

LaDuke, Winona. 1999. *All Our Relations*. Cambridge: South End Press. (Selection.)

**Week 11 (November 3 & 5):** Technology: Climate Change as a Technical Problem or a Social Problem

**Required Readings:**

Hamilton, Clive. 2013. *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering*, Chapters 1- 4 (pp. 1-106).

York, Richard. 2012. “Do Alternative Energy Sources Displace Fossil Fuels?” *Nature Climate Change* 2:441-443.

York, Richard and Brett Clark. 2010. “Critical Materialism: Science, Technology and Environmental Sustainability.” *Sociological Inquiry* 80(3):475-499.

**Week 12 (November 10 & 12):** Technology: Climate Change as a Technical Problem or a Social Problem

**Required Readings:**

Hamilton, Clive. 2013. *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering*, Chapters 5- 8 (pp. 107-210)

Rosen, Julia. 2018. “Vast Bioenergy Plantations Could Stave Off Climate Change—and Radically Reshape the Planet.” *Science*, [https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/02/vast- bioenergy-plantations-could-stave-climate-change-and-radically-reshape-planet](https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2018/02/vast-%09bioenergy-plantations-could-stave-climate-change-and-radically-reshape-planet).

**Week 13 (November 17 & 19):** Silent Spring and the Beginnings of the Environmental Movement

**Required Readings:**

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*, Chapters 1-9 (pp. 1-152)

Harrison, Jill. 2008. “Abandoned Bodies and Spaces of Sacrifice: Pesticide Drift Activism and the Contestation of Neoliberal Environmental Politics in California.” *Geoforum* 39(3):1197-1214.

**Week 14 (November 24) (Thanksgiving):** Silent Spring and the Beginnings of the Environmental Movement

**Required Reading:**

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring*, Chapters 10-17 (pp. 154-297)

**Week 15 (December 1 & 3):** Environmental Movements

**Required Readings:**

Dreiling, Michael and Brian Wolf. 2001. “Environmental Movement Organizations and Political Strategy: Tactical Conflicts over the NAFTA.” *Organization & Environment* 14(1):34- 54.

Estes, Nick. 2019. *Our History is the Future*. London: Verso. (Selection.)

Grossman, Zoltan. 2017. *Unlikely Alliances*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. (Selections.)

Brulle, Robert J. 2013. “Institutionalizing Delay: Foundation Funding and the Creation of U.S. Climate Change Counter-Movement Organizations.” *Climatic Change*. DOI 10.1007/s10584-013-1018-7.

**Week 16 (Finals Week)**