

This is a sample syllabus only. The instructor may make changes to the syllabus in future courses.

Environmental Sociology

Sociology 431

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Office: HHB 460J
Hours: _____
and by appointment

Course Description:

Examines the interaction between the biophysical environment and human society, how social processes, define, construct, and threaten the environment, and human causes and consequences of environmental problems and their solutions.

Course Objective:

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of environmental sociology. We will survey the classical and contemporary foundations of the field. We will critically examine topics including, but not limited to causes of environmental problems, classical sociological theories on human-environment interaction (Weber, Durkheim, and Marx), and modern theories of human-environment interaction (Treadmill of Production, Ecological Modernization, and World-Systems Theory), the realist-constructivist debate, and environmental movements. Students will investigate the application of sociological approaches to environmental issues, examine environmental inequalities, and analyze the social, political, and cultural responses to environmental change. In a nutshell, we will examine how society modifies and changes the natural environment, as well as, how the environment modifies and changes society.

Course Text:

Dunlap, R.E., F.H. Buttel, P. Dickens, and A. Gijswijt 2002. *Sociological Theory and the Environment: Classical Foundations, Contemporary Insights*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Oxford. (ISBN: 0742501868)

Gould, K.A. T.L. Lewis 2009. *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. Oxford University Press: New York. (ISBN: 9780195371123)

Course Requirements:

Attendance/Weekly Readings: Attendance is highly recommended, and an attendance sheet will be passed around daily. While attendance is not graded, it will be used to gauge student commitment. If you are absent from class, for any reason, it is your responsibility to let the instructor know. You should also obtain the class notes from another student (Do not ask the instructor for his lecture notes). Lecture Power Point slides are posted on Blackboard. Assigned readings must be completed prior to class. It is important that students come to class prepared to discuss the day's material. Having read the material before class enhances and encourages class discussion.

Weekly Commentaries: There will be 3 Critical Writings (33.34pts each, 100 total) due one week following the class material discussed (submitted electronically via BlackBoard). You get to choose which weeks you will write a commentary, but one is due by the midterm and the second is due by the end of the semester. The commentary should be a well-written 3-page (double spaced, standard 1" margins, 11 pt. Cambria font) essay discussing a point/perspective based on the previous week's readings and discussion. Examples are posted on Blackboard. The **FIRST (1)** writing must be completed by _____. The **SECOND** writing is due on _____. The **FINAL** writing is due on _____.

Discovery Writings: There will be several “discovery writing” opportunities over the course of the semester. You will be asked to write for 5-10 minutes without interruption on a topic specific to the weeks lecture/discussion. Upon completion, you will be asked to share your ideas and turn in your writing. All writings will be turned in so that I can read and ‘grade’ them. Assuming you try your best to answer the question provided honestly and academically, you will be given full credit; you have to be in class to receive the points. (10-15 pts. each = 100pts total)

Class Lecture: After the midterm, you will be ask to lead (in groups – 3-4 people) a 20-30 minute lecture/discussion on the class topic for the week. A grading rubric will be provided after the midterm (50pts).

Exams: There will be a take-home mid-term and take-home final exam (150pts midterm, 200pts final). The exams will be essay and will cover the 8-week span of the semester. Your answers should be well written (double spaced, standard 1” margins, 11 pt. Cambria font). The exam will be distributed a week prior to the due date.

Point Structure:

Commentaries:	100pts
Discovery Writings:	100pts
Class Lecture:	50pts
Midterm:	150pts
<u>Final:</u>	<u>200pts</u>
Total:	600pts

LETTER GRADES:

537-600	A
477-536	B
417-476	C
357-416	D
0-356	F

Communications:

All official correspondence will be sent **ONLY** to the @uab.edu address. All students are responsible for ensuring that the correct e-mail address is listed in Blackboard (**Bb**) by the beginning of Week 1. UAB E-mail is the only method I will use to electronically communicate with students. It is your responsibility to make sure a valid email UAB address is provided. Failure on your part to do so can result in you missing important information that could affect your grade.

Drop/Add:

According to UAB policy _____ is the last day to drop this course. The last day to withdraw from this course with a grade of “W” is _____. Students registering late will be able to make up all class material.

Accommodation of Religious Beliefs:

Religious beliefs shall be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements. Please notify the professor in advance if there is a conflict.

Reasonable Accommodations:

Any students who need reasonable accommodations are invited to share these concerns or requests with the professor. All accommodations must be approved by Disability Support Services (DSS). If you have a disability but have not contacted DSS, please call 934-4205 or visit DSS at 516 Hill University Center.

Academic Honest Policy:

UAB Faculty expects all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not limited to, acts of abetting, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Candidates are expected to honor the UAB Academic Code of Conduct as detailed *UAB Student Catalog 2012-2013*. Please consult this resource for additional information regarding the specific procedures to be undertaken when a student violates the UAB Academic Code of Conduct.

<http://www.uab.edu/internationalinfosession/module-3/student-handbook-directions>

Let me make it clear: if you cheat or plagiarize you will **fail** the course and your name will be forwarded to the University Compliance Office.

Make-up Policy:

If you must miss a commentary, discussion, quiz or exam, you will need to schedule a time to make-up the assignment **before** your absence. Only in extreme cases will this policy be modified. REMEMBER, not all quizzes, discussions, and papers are used to calculate final grades, you may not need of a make-up.

Etiquette:

Respect fellow students and myself. Topics in this class can become sensitive and someone (including myself) may say something with which you disagree. Critical discussion is encouraged, but respect differences of theoretical perspective. All class discussions must be sociological in nature.

Reservation:

I reserve the right to make changes in this syllabus to better serve the class's needs. Any changes will be announced in class in advance.