

# SOC 369: Environmental Sociology

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Spring 2017

3 Credit Hours

TR 2:20-3:40pm, Morton Hall 316

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**Professor: Kyle Knight, Ph.D.**

**Email: kyle.knight@uah.edu** (Note: I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours on weekdays 9-5pm.)

**Phone: 256-824-2294**

**Office: Morton Hall 344H**

**Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9-11am (and by appointment)**

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## **Course Description and Goals**

In this course we will be exploring the ways in which society and the natural environment interact and shape each other. We will engage with the major debates in the field of environmental sociology in order to understand the challenges and options human societies face as we head further into global environmental crisis. We will investigate from a sociological perspective a number of currently recognized environmental problems and issues. These issues will be discussed in the context of the United States as well as in an international comparative context in order to better understand the sources and consequences of environmental problems.

*By the end of this course, you will:*

1. Be familiar with various sociological approaches for understanding environmental issues.
2. Understand the social, political, and economic forces that cause environmental problems and shape their consequences.
3. Be able to articulate your own position on environmental issues and policies using sociological concepts, theories, and evidence.

## **Required Texts\***

Gould, Kenneth and Tammy Lewis. 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-932592-4

\*All additional assigned readings will be available on Canvas (<http://canvas.uah.edu>).

## **Course Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade)

Attendance and class participation is crucial to your success in this class. You should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings with your classmates. Attendance and participation will account for 10% of your overall grade. *I will excuse a maximum of two absences for each student, no exceptions. Students who use a phone or other distracting device during class may be counted absent.*

Exams (60% of final grade)

Two exams are scheduled for this course: a midterm and a final. The final exam will be *cumulative*. Each exam is worth 30% of your overall grade. Exams may include essay, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, and multiple choice questions.

### Research Paper (30% of final grade)

In this course you will write a research paper in which you conduct a *sociological* analysis of a chosen environmental issue. The final paper, due at the end of the semester, should be about 10 double-spaced pages and formatted according to ASA guidelines. This paper is worth 30% of your grade and will be assessed based on five components: 1) paper topic proposal, 2) first draft, 3) classmate peer reviews, 4) final draft, and 5) presentation. Further details and a timeline for completion will be provided in class.

### Course Policies

#### Policy on Makeup Exams

Make-up exams are permitted only in extreme circumstances (i.e., a death in the immediate family, an illness or accident requiring medical attention, an automobile accident on the way to class, or a court appearance). Without exception, official documentation verifying the cause of the missed exam must be presented in writing prior to or within **24 hours** of the scheduled exam. If events do not warrant a make-up exam, a grade of 0 will be recorded for the exam. The makeup exam will be all essay questions and will be scheduled by me at a date and time of my choosing.

#### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating, and otherwise academically dishonorable acts will not be tolerated. Students caught engaging in any of these behaviors will receive a grade of zero on the assignment or exam and may be reported to the Dean of Students. The use of a phone during an exam will be considered an act of academic dishonesty and treated accordingly. *UAH is committed to the fundamental values of preserving academic honesty as defined in the Student Handbook (7.1). The instructor reserves the right to utilize electronic means to help prevent plagiarism. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents.*

#### Learning Environment

Please be respectful and courteous to your instructor and fellow students. I consider web-browsing, text-messaging, talking, sleeping, and reading the newspaper or other non-class materials disruptive activities. Please avoid these during class time or you may be asked to leave the room. In addition, please do not arrive late or leave early. If you will be coming to class late or leaving early on a certain day due to special circumstances, please let me know beforehand. *Any unauthorized usage of cell phones or other electronic devices during an exam will result in a grade of zero for that exam.*

### Grading

#### Percent of Final Grade

Attendance and Participation: 10%  
Research Paper (5 parts): 30%  
Midterm Exam: 30%  
Final Exam: 30%

#### Final Letter Grades

90-100% = A  
80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
60-69% = D  
0-59% = F

## Course Calendar

Note: I reserve the right to alter the course schedule if necessary.

Topic	Dates	Readings and Exams
Introduction to Environmental Sociology	T 1/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No readings</li> </ul>
	R 1/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Introduction (Gould and Lewis)</li> </ul>
What is the environment?	T 1/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch. 1 (Capek)</li> </ul>
Environmental Movement	R 1/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brulle and Jenkins. 2008. "Fixing the Bungled US Environmental Movement."</li> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch. 16 (Brulle)</li> </ul>
	T 1/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Szasz. 2007. Introduction and Ch.7</li> </ul>
	R 1/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In-Class Activity</i></li> </ul> <p><b><i>PAPER TOPIC PROPOSAL DUE (via Canvas; bring hardcopy to class)</i></b></p>
Public Opinion and Environmental Concern	T 1/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunlap and York. 2008. "Globalization and Environmental Concern."</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
	R 2/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch.15 (Norgaard)</li> <li>• McCright 2011. "Political orientation moderates Americans' beliefs and concern about climate change."</li> </ul>
	T 2/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Film- Climate of Doubt</i></li> </ul>
Introduction to Theoretical Perspectives	R 2/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch. 2 (Barbosa)</li> </ul>
Human Ecology; Population and the Environment	T 2/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catton. 1987. "The World's Most Polymorphic Species."</li> <li>• Schulz and York. 2011 "Recognizing <i>Overshoot</i>: Succession of an Ecological Framework"</li> </ul>
	R 2/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch. 8 (Bates)</li> </ul>
	T 2/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Film- Mother: Caring for 7 Billion</i></li> </ul>
	R 2/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exam Review</li> </ul>
<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	T 2/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Midterm Exam</b></li> </ul>

Political Economy Theories; Eco-Marxist Theory; Treadmill of Production	R 3/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Film-TBA</i></li> </ul>
	T 3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster et al. 2010. "Ch.10: The Absolute Law of Environmental Degradation under Capitalism."</li> <li>• Foster et al. 2010. "Ch.2: Rifts and Shifts."</li> </ul>
	R 3/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould et al. 2004. "Interrogating the Treadmill of Production"</li> </ul>
Science and Technology; Ecological Modernization Theory	T 3/14	<b>NO CLASS (Spring Break)</b>
	R 3/16	<b>NO CLASS (Spring Break)</b>
	T 3/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Chs. 6 (York) and 7 (Gould)</li> </ul>
	R 3/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mol and Spaargaren. 2002. "Ecological Modernization and the Environmental State."</li> </ul>
	T 3/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• York 2006. "Ecological Paradoxes: William Stanley Jevons and the Paperless Office"</li> </ul>
Global Perspectives; World Systems Theory; World Polity Theory	R 3/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jorgenson. 2010. "World-Economic Integration, Supply Depots, and Environmental Degradation."</li> </ul>
	T 4/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frank et al. 2007. "World Society, NGOs and Environmental Policy Reform in Asia"</li> </ul>
Environmental Inequality and Justice	R 4/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch.10 (Mascharenas)</li> </ul> <b>FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE (via Canvas)</b>
	T 4/11	<b>NO CLASS (Honor's Day)</b>
	R 4/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Peer Review Day</i></li> </ul>
Sustainable Development	T 4/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch.20, pp.330-336 (Gould and Lewis)</li> <li>• Gould and Lewis, Ch.9 (Bell)</li> </ul>
Research Paper Presentations	R 4/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Paper Presentations</i></li> </ul>
	T 4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Paper Presentations</i></li> <li>• Exam Review</li> </ul>
<b>Final Exam</b>	Thursday, April 27th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3:00-5:30pm</li> </ul> <b>FINAL DRAFT OF RESEARH PAPER DUE (via Canvas)</b>