Boston College  
Environmental Sociology I  
SC 562  
Fall Semester 2012  
© Dr. Brian J. Gareau

LOCATION:  McGuinn, Room 413  
Mondays 11:00-1:30  
OFFICE: McGuinn, Room 412  
OFFICE PHONE: (617) 552-8148  
OFFICE HOURS: TBA  
EMAIL: gareau@bc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course reviews some of the major literatures and lines of research in environmental sociology. The literature emphasized here 1) pioneered the formation of environmental sociology, 2) directed its various trajectories, and 3) represents recent developments. Classical readings include the works of Karl Marx, Kautsky, and Adam Smith. Early environmental sociology works include those of Catton, Dunlap, Freudenberg, Buttel, Schnaiberg, Merchant, and others. Contemporary trajectories explored include ecological modernization, treadmill of production, ecology of the world-system, world polity theory, eco-Marxism, eco-feminism, actor-network theory, risk society, ecological modernization, environmental justice, critical studies of global environmental governance, and political ecology.

REQUIREMENTS
Please print out and read the assigned readings for the day they are due, so that we may have a complete discussion with maximum participation each week. Class participation counts for 15% of your final grade.

There are two major writing assignment: First, a 4-6 pp. midterm paper in which I will ask you to answer some questions relating to the readings. Second, a Final Paper that is due at the end of the course. We shall be conferring about topics and lengths of these final papers.

SIX REQUIRED BOOKS
**Electronic Readings:**
Course readings are available to view online, download, and print on Blackboard Vista.

**Attendance/Participation:**
SC 562 is a seminar-format class that combines lecture with group discussion. Students’ final grade will depend, in part, on the quality of their participation in class discussion. Obviously, adequate participation requires regular attendance. You must be respectful of other’s viewpoints, experiences, orientation, etc. when discussing the concepts in this class. Debate is inevitable and useful, but be respectful. If you are not, you will be asked to withdraw from the course.

Each of you will be expected to keep abreast of the reading, **prepare and make presentations on materials during the scheduled sections.** We have a good deal of material to cover, so the success of the seminar depends on **the active participation of everyone.** During the first meeting we shall organize ourselves and generate a schedule of presentations.

**You must come prepared with a two-page write-up on the day’s reading every class.** Make notes, comments, questions, and critiques of the readings. Readings should be studied before the class for which they are assigned. These assignments count for your attendance, and you may not turn them in late or in absentia from the class. These write-ups will make valuable notes for your exams and potential future work on globalization issues.

Required readings are, of course, required, and recommended readings are recommended. Depending on your area of specific interest, you might find some of the recommended readings very relevant to your own pursuits. If so, talk to me about making them more central to your course experience and/or writing assignments (including the course paper). All the required and recommended articles are available on Blackboard Vista. If the recommended reading is a book, it is on reserve at O’Neill Library.

**NOTE:** THERE ARE NO unexcused absences permitted during the semester. For each absence, your participation and write-up grades will be lowered (e.g., for example, if we have 10 write-ups due this semester, with one absence you will receive a maximum score of 90% on write-ups and participation). The only "excused" absences are those presented to me in writing (a) by a health care practitioner certifying that you had a sound medical reason to be absent from class (and note that the BC Infirmary does not give out such notes) or (b) by your Dean certifying that you had a serious personal reason to be absent from class. Job interviews do not count as a legitimate absence, but rather a conscious choice you make to miss class.
ASSESSMENT
All grades in SC 562 are based on the percentages shown in Table 1.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ASSOCIATED GRADES.
Students are responsible for the work listed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Student Work &amp; Percentage of Grade Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Midterm Paper</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Paper</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Team-led Discussion</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Daily Reading Summaries</strong></td>
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<td><strong>In-class Participation</strong></td>
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Table 1. Grade Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>% Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-78</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You must come prepared with a one to two-page write-up on the day’s reading every class.

General Outline:
1. In the first paragraph, provide the general thread of argument, ideas, concepts, and/or themes that run through the readings for the week.
2. In the body of the paper, discuss in detail some of the key concepts and arguments. Discuss the readings in an integrative way; put the current readings in conversation with previous readings. Dig deep into the readings; do not provide a superficial summary. Rather, engage with the reading by giving a critical review of what you choose to focus on.
3. Then, give your view on some of these concepts. Which concepts/arguments make sense to you? Which do not? Use readings from previous weeks to support your claims.
4. This assignment will take some time to master, but it is a valuable skill, so work hard at it.

Students are also required to lead the discussion with a 10-15 minute formal presentation several times throughout the course.
ORGANIZATION OF THE CLASS BY WEEK

WEEK ONE: Monday 3 September LABOR DAY; NO CLASSES

WEEK TWO: Monday 10 September

Theme: Course overview: Syllabus, readings, assignments, and expectations. Assign seminar leaders.

WEEK THREE: MONDAY 17

Overview of the field and Origins of Environmental Sociology

Recommended:

Seminar Leaders: ______________________________________________________

WEEK FOUR: Monday 24 September

Paradigmatic Perspectives in Environmental Sociology


Seminar Leaders: ______________________________________________________
WEEK FIVE: MONDAY 1 OCTOBER

Classical Theoretical Perspectives in Environmental Sociology

2. Sunderlin, William D. 1995. “Managerialism and the Conceptual Limits of Sustainable Development” *Society and Natural Resources*

Recommended:


Seminar Leaders:____________________________________________________

WEEK SIX: Monday 8 October COLUMBUS DAY NO CLASSES

**Midterm Paper Guidelines Emailed This Week to the Class**
WEEK SEVEN: Monday 15 October

Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives I: The Risk Society vs. Ecological Modernization


Seminar Leaders: _____________________________________________________________
WEEK EIGHT: Monday 22 October
Midterm Paper Due

Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives II: Treadmill of Production, World-Systems Theory, and Socio-Structural Perspectives


Recommended:


WEEK NINE: 29 OCTOBER

Societal-Environmental Interactions II: Constructivist Approaches and Controversies


Seminar Leaders: ________________________________________________________

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**WEEK TEN: 5 November**

*Case Study I: Climate Change*


Recommended:

**Seminar Leaders:** ______________________________________________________

**WEEK ELEVEN: Monday 12 November**

*Case Study II: Environmental history*


Recommended:
- Mann, C. Chapter 1, “A View from Above,” and Chapter 6, “Cotton and Maize” In *1491*

**Seminar Leaders:** ______________________________________________________
**WEEK TWELVE: Monday 19 November**

*Case Study III: Eco-Feminism and Environmental History*


**Recommended**


**Seminar Leaders:**

**WEEK THIRTEEN: Monday 26 November**

*Case Study IV: Global Political Ecology: Environmentalism for the Whole World*


**Recommended:**

1. Gareau, B.J. Definitions of “Ecological Imperialism” and “Domination of Nature”

**Seminar Leaders:**
WEEK FOURTEEN: Monday 3 December

Rethinking Society-Environment Relations: A Call for Socionatural Relations (Or, back to NEP? Whatever happened to the new ecological paradigm?)

   And
   Or
   Or
   Or
6. Perkins, H., Ecologies of actor-networks and (non)social labor within the urban political economies of nature Geoforum 2007, 38, 1152-1162.

Recommended:

Seminar Leaders: __________________________________________________________
WEEK FIFTEEN: MONDAY 10 DECEMBER

Environmental Justice


Recommended


Seminar Leaders: ______________________________________________________

FINAL PAPER DUE AT DAY AND TIME NOTED IN THE BC SCHEDULE OF EXAMS