

## **SOCIOLOGY 005: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**

### **Boston College, Spring 2006**

Course Information

Course ID #6090

Classroom: Champion 303

Class time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:00

Course Website: Consult your WebCT

Instructor: Michael Agliardo, SJ

michael.agliardo@bc.edu

(617) 552-4645 (office), 552-8218 (residence)

Office: McGuinn Hall 510

Office hours: Wednesday 1:00 - 3:30 PM,  
Thursday 10 AM - noon, & by appointment

### **Course Overview and Goals**

This course is an introduction to environmental sociology. During the semester we will explore the relationship between human societies and the larger natural environment of which they are a part. Our principle focus will be modern society, especially present-day American society, but in order to gain some perspective on our contemporary ecological circumstances, we will also review the history of resource use, wilderness preservation, pollution, various environmental movements, and other developments with significant ecological implications. To broaden further our perspective, we will also look at ecological regimes in other societies. As we pursue these investigations, students will be introduced to a cross-section of sociological modes of analysis.

A central theme that emerges in this course is that the environmental issues we face are almost always profoundly social issues, as well. Sociology points us beyond technical and scientific issues to the social roots of contemporary ecological issues. Why have some societies treated their environment differently than others? What makes the way modern societies interact with their environment different from the way earlier ones did? Is it technology and industrialization? Is it our economic system? Is it too much or too little democracy? Does religion or culture make a difference? Does science help, or is it actually part of the problem? Sociology also raises questions that have significant justice implications. How do power and status affect whose ideas about natural resources are given priority? And who actually suffers the effects of pollution, toxic waste, loss of biodiversity, and environmental degradation?

Since this is an introductory course, students are not expected to have a background in sociology or in environmental science. Certainly, any background you do bring will enhance your appreciation of the material we cover, but we should cover enough new and interesting ground that everyone will be on a more or less equal footing.

In keeping with the introductory nature of this course, we will cover a fairly wide range of topics, but at the same time, we will not be able to pursue any in great depth. As a result, you will not walk away with final answers to all the questions we raise. Instead, we will give contour to those questions: We will highlight their significance and begin to understand how to approach them. We will review certain standard lines of thought and analysis. We will try to understand where the issues raised fit into the larger scheme of things. In other words, our goal is to provide a foundation for an informed, critical approach to contemporary environmental issues in society.

Ultimately, sociology is part of a larger attempt to gain a critical and reflexive grasp of what is taking place in society and how we should respond. For a number of reasons, the boundaries between what you read in the news, other social commentary, and sociology itself are not hard and fast. What sets sociology apart is its theoretical nature, its reliance on evidence, and the rigor of its standards of argument. Sociology strives to be more systematic and more empirical than other modes of reflecting on society. Nonetheless, sociology

takes place in the same social world as these other modes of social reflection. It draws on them and contributes to them. This course will examine how sociology can contribute to an important debate taking place in our society today, the larger debate concerning how best to take responsibility for our relationship to the natural world of which we are a part.

The notion that there are long-running, sophisticated debates taking place in society is crucial to note. It should constitute a central theme of your university education. Education at a prior stage emphasized mastering a certain body of knowledge and skills, usually as they were summarized in a textbook. But central to a university education is the admission that the answers are not "in the book". What you get from a university education is not the answers to debates taking place in society, but the resources you need to participate in them.

This course is also a Core course. At Boston College, courses in the Core are designed to serve a number of important objectives. They raise perennial questions, the deeper questions of human and social existence. They include a substantial historical component, because history provides a crucial perspective on the origins of our society and on the very disciplines in which we are engaged. They further enrich our perspective by taking into account the cultural diversity of the world in which we live. They expose us to the range of methods that characterize a discipline. They include a significant writing component. And they provide some opportunity for assimilating the material we have covered on a more personal, existential level. How this course addresses these objectives is spelled out below.

Perennial questions: This course addresses certain larger, perennial philosophical questions. What is the relationship between human beings and the larger order (the natural world) of which we are a part? How do our historical circumstances affect the way we see things and shape society? How does the way we treat the environment affect various groups in society, especially those who are not privileged or powerful? What are the justice considerations this provokes?

Historical approach: In order to gain a critical perspective on the ecological issues that have arisen in contemporary society, this course traces the social history of these issues. It also traces the history of thought about ecological and environmental matters, both in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in the developing world. And it reviews the emergence of key institutions for addressing these matters.

Cultural diversity: This course takes into account cultural diversity, not simply by studying different cultures, but also by integrating the writings of American and non-American authors, women and men, and authors of various religious and ethnic backgrounds into the material of the course. To the extent that we can, we will hear what people have to say in their own voice.

Methodology in social science: As noted above (paragraph two), the second part of this course is specifically devoted to exploring a significant part of the range of methods that sociology offers for making sense of the social world. More than exploring particular modes of sociological analysis, in this course we will also reflect more generally on the distinctive perspective that sociological analysis can bring.

Writing: This course also includes a significant writing component. There are four critical essays and two written exams. (See the sections "Essays" and "Exams" below for more information.) All essays should be carefully written. They will be graded with care.

Creating a personal philosophy: The overall goal of this course is not merely to accumulate facts and abstract ideas, but to be able to follow and participate in contemporary debates concerning ecological issues. In particular, the final classes of the course will explore ways of integrating what we have learned on a more personal, existential level. This will involve considering the implications of what we have studied insofar as we ourselves are members of the university community, consumers, members of religious and community groups, citizens, and (in the future) workers or corporate decision makers.

## Course Outline and Reading Assignments

### Definitions, Issue, Debates

#### **1/18 Defining Ecological Issues**

Frey, "Environmental Problems from the Local to the Global". eText.

#### **1/20 Population, Food, and Hunger**

Brown, "Eradicating Hunger". eText.

Eberstadt, "World Population Prospects for the 21st Century: Specter of 'Depopulation'?". eText.

#### **1/23 Human Progress versus Ecological Collapse**

Bailey, "The Progress Explosion: Permanently Escaping the Malthusian Trap". eText.

Lomborg, "Things Are Getting Better". eText.

### The Economic Factor

#### **1/25 Industrialization or Capitalism?**

Foster, "Ecological Conditions before the Industrial Revolution". Course text (chapter 2).

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Environment at the Time of the Industrial Revolution". Course text (chapter 3).

#### **1/27 The Modern Economy and its Ecological Implications**

Foster, "Expansion and Conservation". Course text (chapter 4).

\_\_\_\_\_, "Imperialism and Ecology". Course text (chapter 5).

#### **1/30 Consumer Society**

Bell, "Consumption and Materialism" (chapter 2). eText.

Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret". eText.

*Recommended:* Gardner, Assadourian, Sarin, "The State of Consumption Today". eText.

### Modern Environmentalism

#### **2/1 The Origins of Modern Environmentalism**

Guha, "The Ideology of Scientific Conservationism". Course text (chapter 3).

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Growth of the Wilderness Idea". Course text (chapter 4).

#### **2/3 The Sixties – A New Paradigm Emerges**

Guha, "The Ecology of Affluence". Course text (chapter 5).

Sale, "Sixties Seedtime". eText (chapter 2).

#### **2/6 Mainstream U.S. Environmentalism Since the Sixties**

Sale, "Doomsday Decade". eText (chapter 3).

Sale, "Reagan Reaction". eText (chapter 4).

Sale, "Endangered Earth". eText (chapter 5).

**2/8 The Limits of the Traditional Debate**

➔ *First Paper due: Ecological Issues in Historical Perspective.*

Gottlieb, "Resources and Recreation: Limits of the Traditional Debate". Course text (chapter 1).

**2/10 Locating Environmentalism in the Context of Social History**

Gottlieb, "Urban and Industrial Roots: Seeking to Reform the System". Course text (chapter 2).

**2/13 Environmentalism as Part of a Larger Social Critique**

Gottlieb, "The Sixties Rebellion: The Search for a New Politics". Course text (chapter 3).

Social Justice and Environmental Issues

**2/15 Gender, Justice, and Environmental Issues**

Gottlieb, "Gender and Place: Women and Environmentalism". Course text (chapter 6).

**2/17 Race, Justice, and Environmental Issues**

Gottlieb, "Ethnicity as a Factor: The Quest for Environmental Justice". Course text (chapter 7).

**2/20 Race, Justice, and Environmental Issues (continued)**

Haggerty, "Crisis at Indian Creek". eText.

Grossman, "The People of Color Environmental Summit". eText.

**2/22 Social Class, Justice, and Environmental Issues**

Gottlieb, "A Question of Class: The Workplace Experience". Course text (chapter 8).

**2/24 Social Class, Justice, and Environmental Issues (continued)**

Levenstein, "Dying for a Living". eText.

Foster, "The Limits of Environmentalism Without Class". eText.

Cultural & Religious Factors

**2/27 The Debate on Christianity and Ecology**

➔ *Second Paper due: Ecological Issues as Social Issues.*

White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis". eText.

Allitt, "American Catholics and the Environment, 1960-1995". eText.

*Recommended:* Christiansen, "Ecology and the Common Good". eText.

**3/1 Christian Environmentalism**

Kearns, "Saving the Creation". eText.

Shibley, "The Greening of Mainline American Religion". eText.

**3/3 Midterm Exam**

**3/6-3/10 Spring Break**

**3/13** *Review midterm & course so far and preview of remaining topics*

**3/15 Testing the Lynn White Thesis**

Eckberg, "Varieties of Religious Involvement and Environmental Concerns". eText.  
Greeley, "Religion and Attitudes toward the Environment". eText.

**3/17 Ecology and "Postmodern" Religion**

Taylor, "Earth- & Nature-Based Spirituality I: From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism". eText.  
Taylor, "Earth & Nature-Based Spirituality II: From Earth First! and Bioregionalism to Scientific Paganism and the New Age". eText.

**3/20 Resources for an Ecological Ethic in Native American Traditions**

Grim, "Native North American Worldviews and Ecology". eText.

**3/22 Resources for an Ecological Ethic in Hinduism and Buddhism**

Narayanan, "Water, Wood, and Wisdom: Ecological Perspectives from the Hindu Traditions." eText.  
Swearer, "Principles and Poetry, Places and Stories: The Resources of Buddhist Ecology". eText.

**3/24 Resources for an Ecological Ethic in Chinese Traditions**

Tu, "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism". eText.  
Miller, "Envisioning the Daoist Body in the Economy of Cosmic Power". eText.

**3/27 Culture, Rationality, and Modernity**

Tu, "Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality." eText.  
Murphy, "Rationalization and Ecological Irrationality" (chapter 2). eText.

Environmentalism Abroad

**3/29 Perspectives from the Developing World**

Guha, "The Southern Challenge". Course text (chapter 6).  
Shiva, "Let Us Survive: Women, Ecology and Development". eText.

**3/31 Environmental Movements in Taiwan and Thailand**

Lee & So, "Environmental Movements in Taiwan". eText (chapter 2).  
\_\_\_\_\_, "Environmental Movements in Thailand". eText (chapter 5).

**4/3 Environmental Movements in the Philippines**

Lee & So, "Environmental Movements in the Philippines". eText (chapter 6).  
\_\_\_\_\_, "Culture and Asian Styles of Environmental Movements". eText (chapter 8).

## Rational "Self-interest" and Collective Regimes

### **4/5 Rational Choice, Collective Behavior, and Ecology**

"The Prisoners' Dilemma". eText.

Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons". eText.

*Read first part:* Olson, "A Theory of Groups and Organizations" (chapter 1). eText.

*Recommended:* Goldman, "Tragedy of the Commons or the Commoners' Tragedy". eText.

### **4/7 The Global Ecological Commons**

➔ *Third Paper due: Social Theory and Ecological Issues.*

Vogler, "The Governance of the Commons" (chapter 1). eText.

### **4/10 Global Ecological Regimes**

Soroos, "Global Institutions and the Environment: An Evolutionary Perspective." eText.

*Recommended:* Brown, Chasek, & Porter, "The Emergence of Global Environmental Politics" (chapter 1) and "Actors in the Environmental Arena" (chapter 2). eText.

## Democracy, Civil Society, and Ecology

### **4/12 Modes of Political Mobilization**

Gottlieb, "Professionalization & Institutionalization: Mainstream Groups". Course text (chapter 4).

Gottlieb, "Grassroots and Direct Action: Alternative Movements". Course text (chapter 5).

### **4/14-17 Easter Holidays**

### **4/19 Democracy, Civil Society, and Ecology**

Brulle, "The Dynamics of the Environmental Movement". eText (chapter 10).

*Recommended:* Brulle, "Agency, Democracy, and the Environment". eText (chapter 11).

### **4/21 Local, International, and Global Eco-Social Movements**

Wapner, "Greenpeace and Political Globalism". Course text (chapter 3).

\_\_\_\_\_, "The World Wildlife Fund and Political Localism". Course text (chapter 4).

*Recommended:* Wapner, "Friends of the Earth and Political Internationalism" (chapter 5). Course text.

### **4/24 Ecology and Global Civil Society**

Lee & So, "The Impact of Democratization on Environmental Movements". eText (chapter 9).

Wapner, "Environmental Activism and World Civil Politics". Course text (chapter 6).

## Response and Responsibility

### **4/26 Alternative Economics**

Daly, "The Shape of Current Thought on Sustainable Development". eText (Introduction).

*Recommended:* Daly, "Moving to a Steady-State Economy" and

"Elements of Environmental Macroeconomics". eText (chapters 1 & 2).

**4/28 A Second Look at Consumption**

Schor, "The Visible Lifestyle: American Symbols of Status" (chapter 3). eText.  
Schor, "Towards a New Politics of Consumption". eText.

**5/1 Individual Ethics and Public Policy**

Shove & Warde, "Inconspicuous Consumption". eText.  
Murphy & Cohen, "Consumption, Environment, and Public Policy" (chapter 1). eText.

**5/3 The University, the Churches, and Civil Society**

➔ *Fourth Paper due: Ecological Issues and Our Social World.*

Gardner, "Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World". eText.  
Uhl, "Process and Practice: Creating the Sustainable University". eText.

**5/11 Thursday, 9:00 AM – Final exam**

## **About the Readings**

The assigned readings constitute the bulk of the work you will have to do for this course. There are no problem sets, research projects, or term papers. Along with attending the lectures, doing the readings is main vehicle for accomplishing the goals of this course.

Since the readings and lectures form the basis of this course, your primary task will be to master those readings and participate in class regularly. The course outline indicates which selections you are asked to prepare *prior to coming to class* each day. During class we will refer to the readings, and I will offer some background to the larger debate in which they figure. If you do not prepare, you will not benefit fully from class.

The assigned essays all refer back to the course readings and lectures. In addition, they are designed to help you warm over the material to help you prepare for the exams. Ideally, all the work you do for this course will build on itself in an integrated way. Therefore, if you keep up with the readings, you should find the papers and exams quite manageable.

One further comment: The readings were *not* chosen because the point of view they present is somehow the official point of view of this course. They were chosen because they reflect the state of the debate in society today; because they allow us to view the issues they treat from a range of vantages; and because (in most cases) they offer a perspective worthy of consideration, whether or not you ultimately find yourself in agreement. So read appreciatively but critically.

## **Focus Questions**

In order to help you prepare, at the end of each class I will give you a preview of the readings for the next class. On the course website you will also find a series of focus questions pertaining to each unit. After you read the selections for a given class, review the focus questions for that assignment. Are you able to answer them? Perhaps not right off the bat. However, you should be able to back over the readings and put together a response. Moreover, doing so will help you to appropriate and synthesize the material you just covered. You do not read in order to accumulate masses of inert data. You want to have active command of what you read. The focus questions will give you an initial opportunity to work with the readings on your own. We will continue to work with the readings in lecture, class discussion, the papers, and the exams.

In lecture, I may not always go back over the focus questions, but you are welcome to raise them yourself. The focus questions serve to highlight the main reasons the texts were assigned. By highlighting what is relevant in the assigned texts, the focus questions of each unit not only help you prepare to participate actively in class. Ideally, they will also help you excel in the course assignments and exams.

### Texts for Purchase

Assignments for this course entail your reading all or most of the following books. They are available at the Boston College bookstore under "required texts":

- Foster, John Bellamy. 1999. *The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Planet*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Gottlieb, Robert. 2005. *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- Guha, Ramachandra. 2000. *Environmentalism: A Global History*. New York: Longman.
- Wapner, Paul. 1996. *Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics*. Albany: SUNY Press.

### Electronic Texts on Course Reserves

Each assignment in the Course Outline is followed by the notation "Course text" or "eText".

"Course text": A reading followed by this designation can be found in one of the texts available for purchase in the Boston College Bookstore.

"eText": A link for a reading followed by this designation can be found on the "Readings" page of the Course Website, which you can access via your WebCT.

In addition, the **course texts** and all other **books** that contain assigned readings are available at the Reserve Desk in O'Neill Library. (However, **journals** from which **articles** have been taken will not be on reserve.)

See "Complete Bibliography" (below) for complete bibliographic information on all your readings.

### **Class participation**

In class, I will provide background information for the readings, and I will highlight what in the readings is significant *for our purposes*. We will review and discuss many of the readings. The point is not only to understand the readings, but also to gain some critical perspective on the concepts and analyses they provide. That means being able to go beyond the written text itself. In other words, the answers are not "in the book" somewhere. With that in mind, you cannot succeed in this class if you fail to attend and participate in class. That is where this course takes place. We do this show live.

In class, I will solicit your questions and feedback concerning the readings. I will also ask questions of the class. Sometimes I will choose a person who has raised his or her hand in response to a question. Sometimes I will choose my "volunteers" at random. This interaction will help me gauge what made sense, what needs to be stressed more, and so forth. For your part, please show up to class having done the reading for that day. That will give me something to work with.

The point is that you will not have done your job if you simply got through the readings and arrived at class with a mass of inert information. Plan to give yourself the time you need to begin to pull it all together: What were the readings about? What made sense? What questions do you have? How might this relate to previous readings or to themes we are building in the course? Do you see contradictions within a given argument or claim, or with previous readings? The more you take active command of the readings, the more you will get out of class.

Attendance will be recorded by means of a sign-in sheet that is passed around at the beginning of class. If you arrive late, you not only disrupt class; you may also miss the opportunity to sign in. Please be considerate and arrive on time.

In order to gauge how well you are able to engage the readings, there will be a number of quizzes throughout the semester, some announced in advance, some unannounced. Some may be graded plus, check, and minus. Some may not be graded. I may simply use them for gauging how well the class is assimilating the subject matter of the course or for other pedagogical purposes.

I will try to keep track of the contributions you make to class. I will not go out of my way to record lack of preparation, but I am sure it will make due impression, as well. If for some reason you are not able to prepare for class for a given day, as can happen from time to time, just discretely hand me a note before class and I will avoid calling on you. You will also be exempt from any quiz we might have. When you turn in the quiz, just write on it "exempt", or "I turned in a note", and I will treat your quiz accordingly. Not being able to prepare for class on one or two occasions will not be a problem. However, more than that could indicate that you are not able to participate fully in class. If a problem has arisen, or you are struggling, then come in and see me so that we can figure out how best to address the situation.

If something beyond your control arises, and you cannot attend class, then we can work out some alternative. One possibility is that you do the reading for a missed class; review another student's class notes; then come in to see me during office hours to go over things. However, if for some reason you have to miss classes for a very long period, it may not be possible or reasonable to expect you to be able to continue in the course.

Class participation will factor into your grade. (See "Grading Policy" below.) Attendance, contribution to class discussion, and performance on quizzes will constitute the basis of this part of your grade.

## **Critical Essays**

The written assignments are designed to give you the opportunity to work with the readings and meet the goals of the course as outlined above. I certainly am interested in the originality of your answers to the questions posed in each essay. At the same time, I also want to see how well you are able to work with the subject matter we cover in this course and master what other people have written. The main point of the essays is to work with the material we have covered in our readings and class discussions. Therefore, you should think of your assignment this way: If you write a brilliant essay answering the given question, but in essence you write an essay which you could have written without ever having taken this course, then that essay would get a zero.

Please take the time to plan your essays well. They are short assignments. That means you only have a brief space in which to construct a thoughtful response, and one which incorporates as much reference to the readings and lectures as you can manage.

### First Paper - Due Wednesday 2/8

General topic: Contemporary Ecological Issues in Historical Perspective

What are the foundational ecological issues that societies face? What is distinctive about contemporary environmental issues? What are some of the key turning points and developments that have led to our current circumstances?

More details regarding this assignment will be announced the week prior to its due date.

Approximate length: 5 pages, 1200 to 1500 words.

### Second Paper - Due Monday 2/27

General topic: Ecological Issues as Social Issues

Ecological issues involve more than technical or scientific problems. They almost always are intertwined with a whole range of social issues. Discuss **one** way in which this is the case. You can focus on the relationship of the ecological practices of a society to other aspects of the culture of that society (for example, its economic system). You can discuss how ecological issues are caught up in the relationship between groups in a given society (employers and workers, dominant and minority groups, men and women, different social classes). Or you discuss the ecological implications of the relationship between different cultural groups or societies.

More details regarding this assignment will be announced the week prior to its due date.

Approximate length: 5 pages, 1200 to 1500 words.

### Third Paper - Due Friday 4/7

General topic: The Cultural Construction of Ecological Issues

Environmental issues are not just matters of uninterpreted fact. How people make sense of the issues at stake, and how those issues themselves take shape, is a function of the categories, concepts, and culture of a given society. Discuss how environmental issues are "constructed" through the interpretive lenses of a given society. How is this then reflected in the culture of that society, its way of life? In particular, focus on the difference it makes for that society's ecological practices, its "ecological regime".

More details regarding this assignment will be announced the week prior to its due date.

Approximate length: 6 pages, 1500 to 1800 words.

### Fourth Paper - Due Wednesday 5/3

General topic: How can we make a difference?

Take an organization, movement, or other initiative in which you are interested – it can be a campus group, a local community-based organization, a church-based initiative, a consumer or corporate program, a piece of legislation, or a national or international group or movement – and discuss it in light of your own personal concerns. Bring to bear some of the topics we have covered in this course. What approach or construction of things is being advocated? What social group is doing the advocating? To whom are they appealing? What judgments would you tentatively draw about this group?

More details regarding this assignment will be announced the week prior to its due date.

Approximate length: 5 to 6 pages, 1400 to 1800 words.

### Mode of Submission and Extensions

Please submit your assignments to me electronically. If I have them in electronic form, I can insert comments and make editorial suggestions on my word processor in "Document Review" mode. Ideally, when you get the assignment back, also electronically, you will be able to readily track my suggestions and comments.

I use Microsoft Word to review your assignments. I can take your text in whatever form you submit it and place it in a Word document. However, if you do not have compatible software, you may not be able to track my responses very conveniently. In that case, let me know, and either I will convert my response to the appropriate format, or as a last resort I will give you a hard copy with my suggestions and comments (and your grade, of course).

Your assignments are due by *midnight* of the due date. If you need an extension, please email me by *noon* of the due date. Let me know in brief what the problem is *and when you expect to complete the assignment*. Generally, I am happy to grant an extension for a day or two, especially if that does not involve pushing beyond the meeting time of the next class. Longer extensions are not as easily arranged. I try to have all the papers back to students within a class or two so that I can make a few general comments about how people did. Late papers delay that process. Also, I am concerned about students falling behind in the course.

Normally, for each **unexcused** day it is late, an assignment will lose one-half point (out of ten points for the assignment, i.e., 5%).

### The Quality of Your Work

Please take the time to plan your essays well. They are short assignments. That means you only have a brief space in which to construct a thoughtful response, and one which incorporates as much reference to the readings and lectures as you can manage.

Writing is an important dimension of any Core course at Boston College. Please write your assignments with care. I will review them accordingly. Be sure to proofread and polish your work. And be sure to present your ideas clearly. For example, if you find yourself trying to include ten different ideas into the same sentence, why not try ten smaller sentences instead?

Turning in slapdash, last-minute work shows a lack of consideration and maturity. Poorly executed work is not acceptable in the business world, and it certainly is not acceptable at the university. Moreover, if you hope to benefit from having your writing reviewed, it pays to make the effort to give me the best work you can. Otherwise, you waste my time and yours.

### **Exams**

***Midterm exam: Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>***

***Final exam: Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>***

There will be a midterm and a final exam. The midterm will take place on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the final will take place on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

A week or so prior to each exam, I will distribute a study guide. It will indicate the format of the exam and the material you are to review in order to prepare. If members of the class would like to organize a voluntary review session, I will help facilitate that process.

The point of the midterm and final exams is not simply to derive your grade. That certainly is part of it. However, your exams also have an important pedagogical dimension. In other words, the whole process of preparing for and taking the exams should serve the larger educational goals of this course.

Given the goals of this course, as discussed above, your exams will require you to do a number of things. You will be asked to:

- 1) identify key persons, events, and developments that have shaped environmental issues in U.S. society and the global community;
- 2) explain central concepts reviewed in this course;
- 3) demonstrate mastery of the course readings;
- 4) distinguish between different modes of sociological analysis;
- 5) be able to compare and otherwise integrate the various components of this course.

Knowing isolated facts (#1) and ideas (#2) may make for good cocktail conversation, but without being able to make use of them in any larger argument, such knowledge is not very useful. At the same time, trying to analyze an issue without drawing on some factual knowledge only results in a vacuous, tired discussion. In general, you should be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments and theories we cover (#2 and #3), compare two schools of thought (#5), bring some of the history we covered (#1) into a discussion of a sociological theory (#4), and so forth. If given a passage from a sociological text, you should be able to identify the theoretical approach it reflects (#4).

When you are writing answers to your exam questions, view them as *opportunities*. In other words, do not think in terms of minimum requirements—what is the minimum you can write to provide an answer on a purely literal level? Instead, think of exam questions as openings for showing what you know. I construct exam questions so that they open up to the issues that are central to the course, so you should find considerable leeway to construct an intelligent response that draws on what you have learned.

Again, there is a larger goal that even the grades themselves are supposed to serve, and that is your education. Ideally, the exams themselves will also be learning experiences.

## **Grading Policy**

I will not distribute grades in this course on a curve. In other words, there are no predetermined number of A's, B's, C's, and so forth. I am happy to give out as many A's as people earn.

In order to facilitate your accomplishing as much as you can in this course, I try to make the course expectations and the basis of your grade clear, and I also try to make clear the concrete steps you can take to do well. If my expectations or your task are not clear, please raise the matter in class, or come in to see me during office hours.

You will be graded out of 100 points, distributed as follows:

First paper	10
Second paper	10
Midterm exam	20
Third paper	10
Fourth paper	10
Class participation and quizzes	10
Final exam	30

Your points earn the following grade equivalents:

		87 – 89 = B+	77 – 79 = C+	67 – 69 = D+
95 – 100 = A	84 – 86 = B	74 – 76 = C	65 – 66 = D	
90 – 94 = A-	80 – 83 = B-	70 – 73 = C-	below 65 = F	

There is some leeway regarding the deadline for the course assignments, so you are expected to be able to do well on each. If you keep up with the course reading, which is a central expectation, you should do well on the exams. There are no make-up opportunities. I do not drop the lowest paper or exam grade. The point is that the assignments and exams are for real. Each assignment and exam counts, and once you have done each, the opportunity to earn the points in question has passed. At the same time, there are no major surprises or unknowns in this course, so I believe this policy is reasonable and salutary.

What if you improve as the semester proceeds? In fact, that is an expectation, and the grading standards will rise accordingly. Be aware of this. What you produce for the third assignment or the final exam should be more impressive and sophisticated than what you produce for the midterm or the first assignment. And I am sure it will be.

If you receive a grade on an assignment or exam that you believe does not give you full credit, then you are welcome to drop me a note or come in and see me. In order to receive the credit you think you deserve, be prepared to show me that what you have produced is worth more credit.

Of course, even when each assignment is graded appropriately, there are times when the numbers do not add up to the full story. I will try to have your grades ready as soon after the final as I can. If you believe your final grade for the course is not appropriate for some reason, then, again, be prepared to make your case. I will take into account what you have to say and, if warranted, will make an adjustment.

## **Academic integrity**

In brief, academic integrity means you must cite your sources and not misrepresent someone else's work as your own. Please review and be aware of the university standards for plagiarism and academic integrity. University policy can be found at <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>.

The university is a community of learning. Any community is based on trust. Students who do not take that trust seriously will be asked to leave this course.

**SOCIOLOGY 005: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**  
**Boston College, Spring 2006**

**Complete bibliography**

- Allitt, Patrick. 1998. "American Catholics and the Environment, 1960-1995." *Catholic Historical Review* 84: 263-80.
- American Sociological Association. 1997. *American Sociological Association Style Guide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association.
- Bailey, Ronald. 2000. "The Progress Explosion: Permanently Escaping the Malthusian Trap." in *Earth Report 2000: Revisiting the True State of the Planet*, edited by Ronald Bailey. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bell, Michael Mayerfeld. 2004. *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Thousand Oaks, California: Pine Forge Press.
- Brown, Lester R. 2001. "Eradicating Hunger." Pp. 43-62 in *State of the World 2001*, edited by Lester R. Brown, Christopher Flavin, and Hilary French. New York: Worldwatch Institute and W. W. Norton.
- Brown, Janet W., Pamela S. Chasek, and Gareth Porter. 2000. *Global Environmental Politics*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Brulle, Robert J. 2000. *Agency, Democracy, and Nature: The U.S. Environmental Movement from a Critical Theory Perspective*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Christiansen, Drew. 1996. "Ecology and the Common Good: Catholic Social Teaching and Environmental Responsibility." Pp. 183-96 in *And God Saw That It Was Good*, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter Grazer. Washington: United States Catholic Conference (USCC).
- Daly, Herman E. 1996. *Beyond Growth*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Eberstadt, Nicholas. 2000. "World Population Prospects for the Twenty-First Century: The Specter of 'Depopulation'?" in *Earth Report 2000: Revisiting the True State of the Planet*, edited by Ronald Bailey. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Eckberg, Douglas Lee, and T. Jean Blocker. 1989. "Varieties of Religious Involvement and Environmental Concerns: Testing the Lynn White Thesis." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28: 509-17.
- Foster, John Bellamy. 1993. "The Limits of Environmentalism without Class: Lessons from the Ancient Forest Struggle in the Pacific Northwest." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 4(1): 11-41.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. *The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Planet*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Frey, R. Scott. 2001. "Environmental Problems from the Local to the Global." Pp. 4-25 in *The Environment and Society Reader*, edited by R. Scott Frey. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gardner, Gary. 2003. "Engaging Religion in the Quest for a Sustainable World." Pp. 152-176 in *State of the World 2003*, edited by Linda Starke. Washington: Worldwatch Institute.
- Gardner, Gary, Erik Assadourian, and Radhika Sarin. 2004. "The State of Consumption Today." Pp. 3-21 in *State of the World 2004*, edited by Linda Starke. Washington: WorldWatch Institute.
- Goldman, Michael. 1993. "Tragedy of the Commons or the Commoners' Tragedy: The State and Ecological Crisis in India." *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 4(4):49-68.

- Gottlieb, Robert. 2005. *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- Greeley, Andrew M. 1993. "Religion and Attitudes toward the Environment." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32: 19-28.
- Grim, John A. 1994. "Native North American Worldviews and Ecology." Pp. 41-54 in *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy, and the Environment*, edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis.
- Grossman, Karl. 1996. "The People of Color Environmental Summit." Pp. 272-97 in *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*, edited by Robert D. Bullard. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. *Environmentalism: A Global History*. New York: Longman.
- Haggerty, Michael. 1996. "Crisis at Indian Creek." Pp. 23-42 in *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*, edited by Robert D. Bullard. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* 162: 1243-48.
- Kearns, Laurel. 1996. "Saving the Creation: Christian Environmentalism in the United States." *Sociology of Religion* 57: 55-70.
- Lee, Yok-shiu F., and Alvin Y. So (Eds.). 1999. *Asia's Environmental Movements: Comparative Perspectives*. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe.
- Levenstein, Charles, and John Wooding. 1998. "Dying for a Living: Workers, Production, and the Environment." Pp. 60-80 in *The Struggle for Ecological Democracy: Environmental Justice Movements in the United States*, edited by Daniel J. Faber. New York: Guilford Press.
- Lomborg, Bjorn. 2001. *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Marx, Karl. 2000. "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret." Pp. 331-42 in *The Consumer Society Reader*, edited by Juliet B. Schor and Douglas B. Holt. New York: New Press.
- Miller, James. 2001. "Envisioning the Daoist Body in the Economy of Cosmic Power." *Daedalus* 130: 265-87.
- Murphy, Joseph, and Maurie J. Cohen. 2001. "Consumption, Environment, and Public Policy." Pp. 3-17 in *Exploring Sustainable Consumption: Environmental Policy and the Social Sciences*, edited by Joseph Murphy and Maurie J. Cohen. New York: Pergamon.
- Murphy, Raymond. 1994. *Rationality and Nature: A Sociological Inquiry into a Changing Relationship*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Narayanan, Vasudha. 2001. "Water, Wood, and Wisdom: Ecological Perspectives from the Hindu Traditions." *Daedalus* 130: 179-208.
- Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- "Prisoners' Dilemma." 2005. *Wikipedia*. 2005 December 15 ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prisoner's\\_dilemma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prisoner's_dilemma)).
- Sale, Kirkpatrick. 1993. *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement 1962-1992*. New York: Hill & Wang.
- Schor, Juliet B. 1998. *The Overspent American: Upscaling, Downshifting, and the New Consumer*. New York: Basic Books.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. "Towards a New Politics of Consumption." Pp. 446-62 in *The Consumer Society Reader*, edited by Juliet B. Schor and Douglas B. Holt. New York: New Press.
- Shibley, Mark A., and Jonathon L. Wiggins. 1997. "The Greening of Mainline American Religion: A Sociological Analysis of the Environmental Ethics of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment." *Social Compass* 44: 333-48.
- Shiva, Vandana. 1996. "Let Us Survive: Women, Ecology and Development." Pp. 65-73 in *Women Healing Earth: Third World Women on Ecology, Feminism, and Religion*, edited by Rosemary Radford Ruether. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis.
- Shove, Elizabeth, and Alan Warde. 2002. "Inconspicuous Consumption: The Sociology of Consumption, Lifestyles, and the Environment." Pp. 230-51 in *Sociological Theory and the Environment*, edited by Riley E Dunlap and others. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Soroos, Marvin S. 2005. "Global Institutions and the Environment: An Evolutionary Perspective." in *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*, edited by Norman J. Vig and Regina S. Axelrod. Washington: CQ Press.
- Swearer, Donald K. 2001. "Principles and Poetry, Places and Stories: The Resources of Buddhist Ecology." *Daedalus* 130: 225-42.
- Taylor, Bron. 2001a. "Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality, Part I: From Deep Ecology to Radical Environmentalism." *Religion* 31: 175-93.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001b. "Earth and Nature-Based Spirituality, Part II: From Earth First! And Bioregionalism to Scientific Paganism and the New Age." *Religion* 31: 225-45.
- Tu Wei-ming. 1994. "Beyond the Enlightenment Mentality." Pp. 19-29 in *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy, and the Environment*, edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism." *Daedalus* 130: 243-64.
- Uhl, Christopher. 2004. "Process and Practice: Creating the Sustainable University." Pp. 29-48 in *Sustainability on Campus: Stories and Strategies for Change*, edited by Peggy F. Barlett and Geoffrey W. Chase. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Vogler, John. 1995. *The Global Commons: A Regime Analysis*. New York: Wiley.
- Wapner, Paul. 1996. *Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- White, Lynn, Jr. 1967. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis." *Science* 155: 1203-07.

## **SOCIOLOGY 005: INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY**

### **Links to Further Resources**

#### Here at Boston College

The Environmental Studies Program

<http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/envstudies/>

The Urban Ecology Institute

<http://www.urbaneco.org/>

Urban Sciences Research & Learning Group

<http://inkido.indiana.edu/mikeb/urslg/urslhome.html>

Environmental Action Coalition (student group)

<http://www.bc.edu/clubs/eac/>

#### On the Web

Center for a New American Dream

<http://www.newdream.org>

EarthFirst! (worldwide)

<http://www.earthfirst.org/>

EarthFirst! Journal

<http://www.earthfirstjournal.org/>

Earth Island Institute

<http://www.earthisland.org/>

EarthJustice

<http://www.earthjustice.org>

Earthwatch Institute

<http://www.earthwatch.org>

Environmental Defense (e)

<http://www.edf.org>

Environmental Defense Action Network

<http://actionnetwork.org/>

Greenpeace International

<http://www.greenpeace.org/>

GreenpeaceUSA

<http://www.greenpeaceusa.org>

Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship

<http://www.stewards.net/About.htm>

League of Conservation Voters

<http://www.lcv.org>

MassPIRG

<http://www.masspirg.org>

Nature Conservancy

<http://www.tnc.org>

National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Page

<http://www.nccecojustice.org>

National Parks & Conservation Association

<http://www.npca.com>

National Religious Partnership for the Environment

<http://www.nrpe.org>

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

<http://www.nrdc.org>

Sierra Club

<http://www.sierraclub.org>

Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC)

<http://www.seac.org>

Union of Concerned Scientists

<http://www.ucsusa.org>

U.S. Catholic Bishops' Environmental Justice Program

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/ejp/index.htm>

Waterkeeper Alliance

<http://www.waterkeeper.org>

Wilderness Society

<http://www.wilderness.org>

World Resources Institute

<http://www.wri.org/index.html>

Worldwatch Institute

<http://www.worldwatch.org>

World Wildlife Fund

<http://www.worldwildlife.org>

WWF - Conservation Action Network

<http://takeaction.worldwildlife.org/index.htm>