Please note that this syllabus should be regarded as only a general guide to the course. The instructor may have changed specific course content and requirements subsequent to posting this syllabus. Last Modified: 23:37:51 01/16/2017

Boston College

SOCY 3349: Select Topics in Environmental Studies

Spring Semester 2017
Dr. Brian J. Gareau

LOCATION: Gasson 301
Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays 2:00-2:50
OFFICE: McGuinn, Room 412
OFFICE PHONE: (617) 552-8148
OFFICE HOURS: TBD
EMAIL: gareau@bc.edu
Teaching Assistant: Xiaorui Huang; Office Hours: TBD; Email: huangxl@bc.edu

This is not a Core course

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course explores how ecology, technology, politics, economics, and culture intersect. By analyzing key contemporary environmental debates, students develop skills necessary for investigating any sophisticated social issue. Topics we cover: the environmental movement; the sustainable development debate (the tension between environmental protection and the plight of developing nations); capitalism and technology (friends or foes of the environment?); global warming (where science, economics, and politics collide). We employ a range of materials, including participant accounts, media coverage, movies, and sociological analyses. This course can build on but does not require prior coursework in environmental studies or environmental sociology.

For this iteration of the course, we will focus centrally on one overarching concept: The Domination of Nature. Where did this idea come from? How has it affected societies since the Industrial Revolution? How did the environmental movement help reveal the problems with viewing “nature” as something to be dominated? What have been some of the cultural reverberations of the domination of nature? We will explore these questions through reading some foundational texts in environmental studies, as well as others that have been influenced by, and have influenced, societal responses to the domination of nature.

There are several required texts in this course (available at the BC Bookstore):

1. Leiss, The Domination of Nature
2. Dickerson, Elfs, Elves, and Eriador: The Environmental Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien
3. Tolkien, Fellowship of the Ring
4. Merchant, Death of Nature
5. Lewis, Abolition of Man
6. Carson, Silent Spring
7. Fitzmaurice and Gareau, Organic Futures

One further reading, “The Climate of Middle Earth” is also on Canvas
ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION:
SOCY 3349 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.

No Computers, no phones allowed in class. If I tell you *twice* to put away your phone, you fail the course. No discussion, just drop the course before the drop date or receive an F. If you take notes on a laptop or tablet, you need to email the TA your notes every week. This rigid rule is designed to enhance class discussion, nothing else.

You must submit a one to two-page write-up on the week’s reading **before** every first day of class for the week (i.e., Monday unless Monday is a holiday).

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.
5. Readings should be studied before the Monday for which they are assigned. These assignments also 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 environmental issues.

Weekly Write-ups are Graded on Canvas using the following Rubric:

Organization (25%)
- Does the introduction introduce the topic broadly and lay the foundation for everything that follows?
- Does each paragraph in the main body elaborate on a main point stated clearly in the topic sentence?
- Do the ideas develop in a logical sequence that any reader can follow?
- Does the assignment have all the necessary parts? (intro, several paragraphs, and a conclusion)

Critical Analysis (25%)
- Does the paper thoroughly respond to the readings assigned for the week?
- Does the paper have clear, strong arguments that go beyond description?
- Is there depth to the analysis?
- Are reputable sources used to back up claims?

Quality of writing (25%)
- Is the writing sophisticated and clear?
- Is there a variety of sentence structures and literary devices used?
- Is there a rich use of appropriate vocabulary?
Format and Editing (25%)

- Does the assignment have an informative header that includes the name of the author, class code, date, and question prompt?
- Is there a consistent citation and reference style?
- Are all references cited and are all citations referenced?
- Is there a consistent format to the paper?
- Are there no spelling or grammar errors?

ASSESSMENT
All grades in SC 349 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 2. STUDENT WORK & PERCENTAGE OF GRADE EARNED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Reading Summaries</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

TABLE 1. GRADE SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>% Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-70</td>
</tr>
<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>

[If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.]
Weekly Agenda

- **Week 1** Wednesday January 18, Fri Jan. 20
  - Introductions, Conceptualizing the Domination of Nature for a Sociological Lens
  - Read: Gareau, Definition of: “The Domination of Nature” (on Canvas)

- **Week 2** Monday Jan. 23, Wed. Jan. 25, Fri. 27
  - Birth of Capitalism
    - Ecological Implications of the transition to Capitalism
    - Francis Bacon
  - Read: Leiss, Part One

- **Week 3** Monday Jan. 30, Wed. Feb. 1, Fri. Feb. 3
    - Read: Leiss, Part Two

- **Week 4** Monday Feb. 6, Wed. Feb. 8, Fri. **Feb. 10- No Class**
  - Eco-Feminism: Feminist Reactions to the Domination of Nature
    - Read: Carolyn Merchant, *Death of Nature*, Chs 1-6
    - “Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us, and produces various fruits with colored flowers and herbs.”- St. Francis of Assisi

- **Week 5** Monday Feb. 13, Wed. Feb. 15., Fri. Feb. 17
  - Read: Merchant, *Death of Nature*, Chs 7-12
  - Read: Peruse Pope Francis’s *Laudato Si*

  - Morality in Science amid the Domination of Nature
    - Read: C.S. Lewis, *Abolition of Man*

- **Week 7** Monday Feb 27, Wed. March 1, Fri. March 3
  - Cultural Reactions
  - Post WWI Cultural Insights
    - Read: Tolkien *The Fellowship of the Ring*
      - Book ONE
      - Be sure to read the Prologue (Concerning Hobbits)
      - Browse “The Climate of Middle Earth” (on Canvas)

- **Week 8** Monday March 6- Fri Mr. 10
  - **Spring Break!**

- **Week 9** Monday March 13, Wed. Mar. 15, Fri. Mar. 17
  - Read: Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*
    - Book TWO

**Midterm Exam Handed Out This Week**
• **Week 10** Monday March 20, Wed. Mar. 22, Fri. Mar. 24
  - Read: Selections from *Pets, Elves, and Eriador*
    
    "Anyone who ever thrilled to the novel charm of the Shire will want to read this important and lovely book." – Bill McKibben, Scholar in Residence in Environmental Studies, Middlebury College, author of *The End of Nature*
    
    o Read Chs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 (Focus on the ones that interest you)

  *** Hand in Exam on Wed. Mar. 22 ***

  *** No Write-up Due This Week ***

• **Week 11** Monday Mar. 27, Wed. Mar. 29, Fri. Mar. 31
  - Origins of Environmental Sociology and Environmental Justice
    
    o Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*
    
    o Read: Chs 1-9

• **Week 12** Monday April 3, Wed. Apr. 5, Fri. Apr. 7
  - 1970s Environmental Sociology, cont.
    
    o Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*
    
    o Read: Chs 10-17

• **Week 13** Monday April 10, Wed. Apr. 12, **Fri. Apr. 14 - No Class (Good Friday)**
  - Back to the Shire? Barriers and Bridges to Solutions in Sustainable Agriculture: The History of Organic Agriculture
    
    o Read: Fitzmaurice, Part One from *Organic Futures*

• **Week 14** **Monday Apr. 17- Easter Monday (No Class)**, Wed. Apr. 19, Fri. Apr. 21
  - Back to the Shire?, How a Small New England Farms is making a difference, lessons for the future?
    
    o Read: *Organic Futures*, Part Two

• **Week 15** Monday Apr. 24, Wed. Apr. 26, Fri Apr. 28
  - Other Searches for Sustainability
    
    No Reading” Guest Lectures and Group Discussions
  - Wednesday: Monique Ouimette: “Fragrances as Environmental Matters of Concern”

  *** Final Exam Handed Out This Week ***

• **Week 15** Monday May 1, Wed. May 3
  - Monday, Guest Lecture, Will Atwood-Charles: "Makerspaces and the Paradox of the Elite Sharing Economy"
  - Wed.: Course Summary

  *** Final Exam Due Wed. May 3 ***