

## **SOC165: Introduction to Environmental Sociology**

**Mgr. Benjamin Vail, M.Sc., Ph.D.**  
**Spring 2013**

Lecture time: Mondays 10.00-11.40

Classroom: U35

Credits: 12

Office hours: Mondays 13.00-14.00 in room 3.59

### **Course Description**

This course introduces many of the major schools of thought and topics of research in the field of environmental sociology, and presents a historical overview of the development of environmental sociological theory and research. Each week, students are expected to attend the lecture, read the assigned literature, and watch required multimedia resources. By the end of the semester, students will have an in-depth understanding of the development of environmental sociology as an academic discipline, gain knowledge about historical and contemporary environmental issues, and be able to critically analyze the material and ideal relationships between modern society and its biophysical environment.

### **Evaluation**

Success in this course depends on reading and watching all assigned materials, which serve as the basis for the midterm and final exams that determine your grade for the semester. Students are expected to attend every lecture, and information provided in lectures may also be tested in the exams. You will receive a final letter grade (A-F) for the semester based only on the midterm and final exam grades. See the online Interactive Syllabus for detailed information about the exams.

<b>Final grade components</b>	<b>Final grade scale</b>	<b>FSS grade meanings</b>
40% – Midterm exam	A = 90 – 100%	A = Excellent
60% – Final exam	B = 80 – 89%	B = Outstanding
	C = 70 – 79%	C = Good
	D = 60 – 69%	D = Satisfactory
	E = 50 – 59%	E = Acceptable
	F = <50%	

### **E-mail Policy**

Students may contact the instructor at any time by e-mail with questions about the course. I will strive to reply to your questions within 48 hours of receipt of your e-mail. I usually do not read or respond to e-mail on weekends or holidays.

### **Academic Honesty**

The Faculty of Social Studies at MU expects students to know the study rules and maintain academic honesty by refraining from plagiarism and from cheating during exams. Plagiarism means that one presents other peoples' ideas as one's own and does not credit the author. Plagiarism is one of the most serious breaches of ethical standards in the academic environment, for it denies the mission of the university and the meaning of studying. From a legal perspective, plagiarism is the stealing of intellectual property. The official FSS policy on academic honesty is available in the course's interactive syllabus in IS in English and Czech. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated under any circumstances at FSS. The minimum penalty for academic dishonesty is expulsion from the course, a grade of F for the semester, and referral to the Faculty disciplinary committee.

## Weekly Schedule

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Required Reading	Required Video
1	Feb 18	Introduction to Environmental Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus</li> <li>• Bell: Chapter 1</li> <li>• Harper: Chapter 1</li> <li>• Barbosa: Theories in Environmental Sociology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of the Planet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Part 1: Is there a Crisis?</li> <li>○ Part 2: Why is there a Crisis?</li> <li>○ Part 3: The Future of Life</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2	Feb 25	Consumption, Materialism, and Modern Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapter 2</li> <li>• Shove and Warde: Consumption and the Environment</li> <li>• Pearce: Consumption as Environmental Threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathis Wackernagel: The Ecological Footprint</li> <li>• Barry Schwartz: The Paradox of Choice</li> <li>• ABC News: Pacific Garbage Dump</li> <li>• Charles Moore: Sailing the Great Pacific Garbage Patch</li> </ul>
3	March 4	The Treadmill of Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapter 3</li> <li>• Brulle: US Environmental Movements</li> <li>• Lewis: Env. Movements in the Global South</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annie Leonard: The Story of Stuff</li> </ul>
4	Mar 11	Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapter 4</li> <li>• Harper: Chapter 6</li> <li>• Prugh and Assadourian: What is Sustainability, Anyway?</li> <li>• Daly: A Steady State Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vandana Shiva: Defending Biodiversity</li> <li>• Monsanto Company: Global Benefits of Plant Biotechnology</li> <li>• Bonnie Bucqueroux: Curing America's Eating Disorder</li> <li>• Interview with Michael Pollan</li> </ul>
5	Mar 18	Health, Risk, and Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapters 5 &amp; 9</li> <li>• Leblanc: Babies are Polluted at Birth</li> <li>• Mascarenhas: Environmental Inequality &amp; Env. Justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vyvyan Howard: The Chemical Industry and Toxicology</li> <li>• Vyvyan Howard: Rising Cancer Rates (parts 1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• <i>The Digital Dump: Exporting High-Tech Re-Use and Abuse to Africa</i></li> <li>• <i>Exporting Harm: The High-Tech Trashing of Asia</i></li> </ul>
6	Mar 25	Ideology of Environmental Domination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: The Ideology of Environmental Domination (chapter 6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why Should Christians Care about the Environment?</li> <li>• BBC Interview with Richard Cizik</li> </ul>
7	April 1	<b>* No Lecture – Reading Week *</b> The Sociology of Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harper: Chapter 5</li> <li>• Can Organic Farming Feed the World?</li> <li>• Michael Pollan: Unhappy Meals</li> <li>• The Dirty Dozen and Clean 15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food, Inc.</li> </ul>
8	April 8	<b>* No Lecture *</b> Midterm Exam		

9	April 15	Ideology of Environmental Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapter 7</li> <li>• Harper: Chapters 7 &amp; 8</li> <li>• Michael Braungart: “Cradle to Cradle” Design</li> <li>• Remembering Rachel Carson</li> <li>• Satish Kumar: Deep Ecology</li> </ul>
10	April 22	The Social Construction of Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapter 8</li> <li>• Hannigan: Media and Environmental Communication</li> </ul>
11	April 29	Sociological Perspectives on Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harper Chapter 3</li> <li>• Gore: Ten Simple Things You Can Do to Help Stop Global Warming</li> <li>• Monbiot: Save the Planet in 10 Steps</li> <li>• McKibben: Global Warming’s Terrifying New Math &amp; The Arctic Ice Crisis</li> <li>• Klaus: Blue Planet in Green Shackles</li> <li>• Klein: Capitalism vs. the Climate</li> <li>• The Independent: Scientist publishes “escape route” from global warming</li> <li>• BBC: <i>The Truth About Climate Change</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Part 1: Are We Changing Planet Earth?</li> <li>○ Part 2: Can We Save Planet Earth?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Interview with Bjørn Lomborg</li> <li>• David Keith on Geoengineering</li> <li>• George Monbiot on “Love Miles”</li> </ul>
12	May 6	Energy and Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harper: Chapter 4</li> <li>• Kunstler: The Long Emergency</li> <li>• Is it Time to Revive Nuclear Power?</li> <li>• News Articles on Energy Issues</li> <li>• <i>The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream</i></li> <li>• <i>Power of Community</i></li> <li>• Colin Campbell: The Future of Oil</li> </ul>
13	May 13	Environmental Problems and Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bell: Chapters 10 &amp; 11</li> <li>• Kennedy: Crimes Against Nature</li> <li>• Heinberg: Post-Growth Economics &amp; Gross National Happiness</li> <li>• York, Rosa and Dietz: The Environmental Consequences of Modernity</li> <li>• <i>A Convenient Truth</i></li> <li>• Bill McKibben: Proactive Localism</li> <li>• Reuters: Community Gardens Blossom</li> </ul>