

SOCIOLOGY 291
Introduction to Environmental Sociology
SOC 291-B1 (81297), Winter 2017
Monday & Wednesday / 1000 - 1120 hrs. / ED B 19 (Education South)
Department of Sociology, University of Alberta

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Course Description:

In the Calendar, SOC 291 is described as:

“Sociological examination of the relationship between human societies and the natural environment.”

We can no longer pretend that humans and society are somehow exceptional or exempt from the biophysical environment. Each and every day we typically consume more and more products made from natural resources, utilize technologies that directly and indirectly impact upon our natural environment, and socially interact in ways that place us as humans squarely within a ‘social-ecological’ system. All this time however, whether through mainstream news or social media, we are bombarded with stark images that remind us how closely intertwined our lives are with our surrounding environment. Since the 1960’s people have begun to ask increasingly pointed societal and personally-difficult questions about this relationship and the problems that we are faced with on a daily basis. In keeping with this historical trajectory, SOC 291 is an introduction to the sociological approach of understanding environmental values, beliefs and attitudes and behaviours that contribute to our current socio-environmental situation.

This course will allow you to sharpen your questions about socio-environmental attitudes and behaviours and, in the process, explore solutions to increasingly wicked or messy environmental problems such as climate change, individual consumption-environmental degradation, the ideals of green consumption, human population and waste, and biodiversity. At the heart of all these questions is an underlying examination of power, inequality and social justice at local, national, and global scales. In this class you will be introduced to environmental sociology through an approach that seeks to understand the social causes of environmental problems and the pragmatic solutions that sociology can offer. The way in which you will do this is to examine current and future relevant environmental problems by learning from environmental sociologists’ research and community engagement, and undertaking a critique of video documentaries that address environmental issues.

Course Objectives:

1. Ability to speak to issues relating to the relationship between human beings and the natural world and in doing so introduce students to sociology and its role in understanding environmental issues.
2. Learn and articulate environmental sociological concepts and theories toward developing a deeper understanding of why environmental problems occur and endure.
3. Explore and deeply examine the interrelationship between the local and the global as they pertain to environmental issues through the analysis of an environmental documentary film.
4. Apply a range of methods that sociology offers for making sense of the social world and its articulation with the natural world.
5. Address the sociological underpinnings of conflicts and inequalities around the world that are linked to such issues as natural resource use, food, wilderness preservation, population, and global climate change.

Required Textbook:

1. Carolan, Michael. 2016. *Society and the Environment: Pragmatic Solutions to Environmental Issues*, 2nd Edition. Westview Press: Boulder, CO.
2. Other readings as assigned. Supplemental readings will be available electronically through Moodle or through Internet links.

Note: Policy about course outlines can be found in [Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading](#) in the University Calendar.

Prerequisites: None

Anti-Requisite: None

Registration:

Students are responsible for ensuring they are officially registered. Check your Class Schedule on Bear Tracks to confirm that you are properly registered in this course and section. You must be officially registered to receive marks: instructors are not allowed to mark the exam of an unregistered student or to add a student name to the official class list. If you have difficulty registering, speak with the Sociology Undergraduate Advisor (5-27 HM Tory Building).

On Class Format, Ground Rules & Being Respectful: PLEASE READ!

This class follows a lecture and group work format intermixed with audio and video to stimulate thought, illustrate concepts, and provoke and promote in-class and online discussion. In order to make this format more interactive, I ask that you respect the following ground rules:

- Due to the increasing number of emails I receive requesting information on materials already covered in lecture, I reserve the right to reply that you should speak with your classmates who were in attendance or to come and see me upon appointment.
- I will not discuss any grades through e-mail, nor will I discuss your course and assignment grades in comparison to other students in the class. Grades can be accessed through the eClass site, and you can discuss them with me in person by appointment.
- While this should go without saying, I will not ‘raise’, ‘increase’, ‘upgrade’, or ‘bump up’ your grade at your request at any time in the course, or after the final exam.
- Cell phones must be turned off or silenced at all times during class and exams. If it is an expected emergency (i.e. family illness, child care issue, etc.) please quietly step out into the corridor before taking the call.
- Arriving late and/or leaving early disturbs others. If it is unavoidable, sit in a place such that you will create the least disruption – for example if you come in late, sit in the nearest seat or if you have to leave

early, find a seat that will allow you to leave with as little disturbance as possible. If coming late or leaving early on a regular basis cannot be avoided, please let me know.

- I expect that students express their views, raise questions, and challenge taken for granted assumptions about society and the environment. For this to be possible, it is necessary that we all come to class with an open mind and willingness to listen to other points of views and perspectives that may challenge our own values and ways of thinking.
- Therefore, whoever is speaking (instructors or fellow students) must be heard in silence. Talking and whispering disturbs others who are listening, and is a sign of disrespect. If you have something to contribute to the discussion, or topic under consideration, share it with the class; otherwise save it for a later and more private opportunity outside of class.
- I strongly advise regular attendance in class. Students who attend regularly and read the assigned chapters and readings in advance have greater comprehension and retention, and perform better on various forms of evaluations. Assigned readings and lectures overlap and, while not identical, are complementary and mutually reinforcing. If you decide to not attend class you should be aware of the risk. The University holds students responsible for any information provided during class time. If you will be missing classes occasionally, or regularly, I recommend you find a classmate who is willing to lend you their notes and fill you in on what was missed.
- **My lecture notes will not be posted online, nor will they be provided to you.**
- SOC 291 has an eClass site. If you have access to Bear Tracks, your CCID and Password allows you to access the Moodle course site for SOC 291. The course syllabus will be posted on eClass.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, if you are having trouble in this class, please come see me sooner rather than later: Sooner – there is a good chance that we can work together to address your problems in the course, Later – there is a good chance that you will be left with a lower grade than you would like.

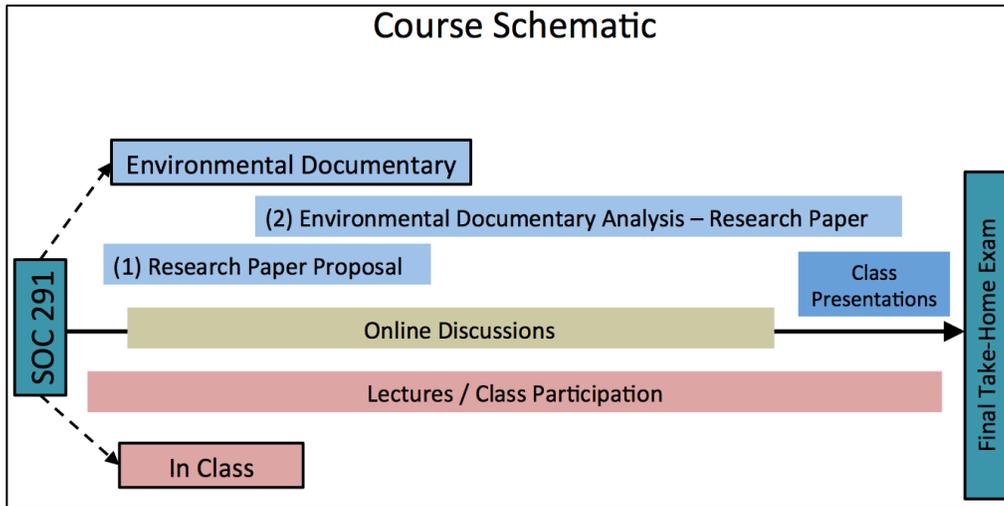
Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the content author(s) or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify Dr. Caine by e-mail within two working days from the date of the missed exam (or as soon as possible, given the circumstances underlying the absence). Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult Attendance under [Academic Regulations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Course Requirements & Course Overview:



Important Dates (note: no mid-term exam)

Project	Value	Important Dates
Participation: Online	10% 15%	First submission due: Feb 17 Second submission due: Mar 31
Participation: In Class	10%	Ongoing
Environmental Documentary Critique	30%	Proposal due: Feb 8 (5%) Final Paper due: Apr 10 (25%)
Final Exam	35%	In class (see Beartracks for date/time)

Participation (Total 35%)

Online Discussion (25%)

While participation is required in class, you will also be graded through your involvement in an ongoing online discussion. Your contribution in class will greatly contribute to the written ideas that you present in your online submissions, and vice versa. Based on weekly discussion questions on a given topic from the textbook and lectures, you are expected to contribute regularly to the eClass discussion. I will grade two of your online discussions: (1st) On February 17th you will submit via eClass what you feel are your two best contributions, for grading; (2nd) On March 28th the second submission (again, two best postings) to be graded will be submitted via eClass. Additional information, guidance, and grading rubrics are provided on eClass. Late submissions after the eClass deadline will not be accepted.

Please note: There is no midterm exam in this course; the ongoing online discussion should be seen as the replacement activity and as such, be given serious commitment.

In-Class Participation (10%)

Although some students find discussing topics online easier, a key part of the course is to explore ideas, share ideas, and assignment experiences in a face-to-face social environment. In order to ensure your participation grade is correctly applied, you MUST upload a clear facial photo to the eClass site. To upload your photo on eClass, follow the instructions at:

“My Profile Settings” ... “Edit Profile” ... “User Picture”

If you do not upload a clear facial photo of yourself, you will not receive a participation grade.

Research Paper:

Environmental Documentary Critique: Research Proposal (5%) + Paper (25%)

This assignment allows you to decide on an environmental issue that interests you, select a related documentary film, and to critically examine it through a documentary film analysis.

Proposal: You first will prepare a **2-page** proposal worth 5% (double-spaced, 12 font Times New Roman, 1 inch/2.54 cm margins (approximately 600 words) describing your environmental documentary project. Late proposals will not be accepted and will receive a zero grade).

Full Paper: The research paper is worth 25%, and will be **9-10** pages (approximately 2700 - 3000 words), double-spaced, 12 font Times New Roman, 1 inch/2.54 cm margins. Late papers will be penalized 10% per day (including weekends), and you will not receive any written comments. If you fail to submit a paper, you will receive a zero grade.

A detailed description of the assignment with accompanying grading rubric will be provided by Dr. Caine, discussed in class, and posted on the eClass site.

Examination

Because of the cumulative nature of this course based on discussion, group work, and analysis), there is only one examination at the end of the term covering all material since the start of the term. The final examination will be a written test in which a set of possible questions will be provided to you on the last class, and from which a number of questions will be selected for you to answer during the final examination in class on the date identified in Beartracks. Questions will be based on the textbook, any materials used in the class period, and all lectures and presentations.

The final exam cannot be rescheduled. Under extenuating circumstances (as outlined in the Attendance section under [Academic Regulations](#)) students who cannot write the exam, or cancel their final exam during the exam period, must provide documentation and apply to their Faculty for a deferred exam. If approved by the student’s Faculty and the professor, the Department of Sociology’s Final Exam Rewrite date is scheduled for: **Saturday, May 6th, 2017 at 0900, Room TBA**

Grading: I do not grade on a curve. Final grades for SOC 291 are determined using the following contract:

	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>4-Point Value</i>
Excellent	96 – 100	A+	4.0
	91 – 95	A	4.0
	85 – 90	A-	3.7
Good	80 – 84	B+	3.3
	75 – 79	B	3.0
	70 – 74	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	66 – 69	C+	2.3
	62 – 65	C	2.0
	58 – 61	C-	1.7
Poor	54 – 57	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	50 – 53	D	1.0
Fail	0 – 49	F	0.0

Please note: There is no rounding-up policy in this course. For example, a final course average of 94.2%, 94.5%, or 94.9% all receive a final % grade of 94 (**not** 95) and thus a letter grade of “A”.

Writing Assistance

Many students have difficulty writing. Editing each other's work and carefully editing your own work are ways to improve your writing. In addition I recommend contacting:

- (1) Student Success Centre (located in SUB 2-300, Tel: 780-492-2682, website: <http://www.studentsuccess.ualberta.ca/>)
- (2) The Centre for Writers (<http://c4w.ualberta.ca/>) offers free one-on-one writing support. Past experience has shown that seeking early help will avoid the last minute backlog of students needing writing assistance.
- (3) Another option may be to hire a tutor – visit Info Link to inquire about their tutor registry.

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services (SAS): Room 1-80 SUB, 492-3381 ssds.ualberta.ca

Please inform me of any special accommodations recommended by SAS for your participation in SOC 203. Students registered with SAS who will be using accommodations in the classroom, or who will be writing exams through SAS, are required to provide me with a "Letter of Introduction" as early as possible. Those students who need accommodated exams must submit their "Exam Instructions and Authorization" form at least one week before each exam.

COURSE OUTLINE

*Be aware that this outline of readings may change over the course of the term.
You are responsible for attending class, and checking eClass and your email for such notices*

Class Dates**Text/Topic / Readings**

NOTE: On January 6: You must pre-register for tickets for the January 30th Int'l Week Keynote Talk
Early registration: <http://sustainability.ualberta.ca/Events/SustainabilitySpeakerSeries.aspx>
Dr. Caine will send out a reminder to students to pre-register on January 6th.

January 9 Introductions & Course Overview. Reading: Chapter One - Introduction: Individuals, Societies and Pragmatic Environmentalism

January 11 Reading: Chapter One - Introduction: Individuals, Societies and Pragmatic Environmentalism

January 16 Reading: Chapter Two – Greenhouse Gasses: Warmer isn't Better

January 18 Reading: Chapter Two – Greenhouse Gasses: Warmer isn't Better

January 23 Reading: Chapter Three – Waste: Our Sinks are Almost Sunk

January 25 Reading: Chapter Three – Waste: Our Sinks are Almost Sunk

January 30 **No Class** (in lieu of attending the David Korten evening keynote talk on this day)

February 1 Reading: Chapter Four – Biodiversity: Society Wouldn't Exist Without It

February 6 Reading: Chapter Five – Water: There's No Substitute

February 8 Reading: Chapter Five – Water: There's No Substitute

***** Enviro-Documentary Research Proposal Due February 8 in class *****

February 13 Reading: Chapter Six – Population: A Question of Quantity or Quality?

February 15 Reading: Chapter Seven – Transportation: Beyond Air Pollution

[First Online Discussion Submission Due **Friday (by 2300 hrs), February 17 - via eClass**]

****** NO CLASSES February 20 – 24: Winter Term Reading Week ******

February 27 Reading: Chapter Seven – Transportation: Beyond Air Pollution

March 1 Reading: Chapter Eight – Food: From Farm to Fork

March 6 Reading: Chapter Nine – Energy Production: Our Sun-ny Prospects

March 8 Reading: Chapter Nine – Energy Production: Our Sun-ny Prospects

March 13 Reading: Chapter Ten – Political Economy: Making Markets Fair and Sustainable

March 15 Reading: Chapter Ten – Political Economy: Making Markets Fair and Sustainable

March 20 Reading: Chapter Eleven – Governance: Biases and Blind Spots

March 22 Reading: Chapter Eleven – Governance: Biases and Blind Spots

March 27 Reading: Chapter Twelve – Inequality and Growth: Prosperity for All

March 29 Reading: Chapter Twelve – Inequality and Growth: Prosperity for All

[Second Online Discussion Submission Due **Friday (by 2300 hrs), March 31- via eClass**]

April 3 Reading: Chapter Thirteen – From our Beliefs to our Behaviours: Pragmatic Environmentalism

April 5 Reading: Chapter Thirteen – From our Beliefs to our Behaviours: Pragmatic Environmentalism

April 10 Last class: Review and Final Discussion

Final Exam Possible Question List Distributed

***** Enviro-Documentary Research Paper DUE April 10 in class *****

Final Exam – Consult Beartracks for date, time, location

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by [Student Conduct and Accountability](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Please familiarize yourself with the “Don’t Cheat” sheet:

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/StudentAppeals/DontCheatsheet.aspx>

The U of A considers plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation of facts and participation in an offence to be serious academic offences. Plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation of facts and participation in an offence can be avoided if students are told what these offences are and if possible sanctions are made clear at the outset. Instructors should understand that the principles embodied in the Code are essential to our academic purpose. For this reason, instructors will be fully supported by Departments, Faculties and the University in their endeavours to rightfully discover and pursue cases of academic dishonesty in accordance with the Code.

30.3.2(1) **Plagiarism**

No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student's own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.

30.3.2(2) **Cheating**

30.3.2(2)a No Student shall in the course of an examination or other similar activity, obtain or attempt to obtain information from another Student or other unauthorized source, give or attempt to give information to another Student, or use, attempt to use or possess for the purposes of use any unauthorized material.

30.3.2(2)b No Student shall represent or attempt to represent him or herself as another or have or attempt to have himself or herself represented by another in the taking of an examination, preparation of a paper or other similar activity. See also misrepresentation in 30.3.6(4).

30.3.2(2)c No Student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as the Student's own work.

30.3.2(2)d No Student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course Instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project, assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has previously been obtained by the Student or which has been or is being submitted by the Student in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.

30.3.2(2)e No Student shall submit in any course or program of study any academic writing, essay, thesis, report, project, assignment, presentation or poster containing a statement of fact known by the Student to be false or a reference to a source the Student knows to contain fabricated claims (unless acknowledged by the Student), or a fabricated reference to a source.

30.3.6(4) **Misrepresentation of Facts**

No Student shall misrepresent pertinent facts to any member of the University community for the purpose of obtaining academic or other advantage. See also 30.3.2(2) b, c, d and e.

30.3.6(5)

No Student shall counsel or encourage or knowingly aid or assist, directly or indirectly, another person in the commission of any offence under this Code.

The Truth In Education (T*I*E) project is a campus wide educational campaign on Academic Honesty. This program was created to let people know the limits and consequences of inappropriate academic behaviour. There are helpful tips for Instructors and Students. The following procedures are drawn from the Code of Student Behaviour as approved by GFC and the Board of Governors. The guidelines summarize what instructors must do when they have reason to believe that a student has plagiarized, cheated, misrepresented facts or participated in an offence.

30.5.4 Procedures for Instructors in Cases Respecting Inappropriate Academic Behaviour

30.5.4(1) When an Instructor believes that a Student may have committed an Inappropriate Academic Behaviour Offence [30.3.2] or that there has been Misrepresentation of Facts [30.3.6(4)] or Participation in an Offence [30.3.6(5)] in cases respecting Inappropriate Academic Behaviour in the course that he or she instructs, the Instructor will meet with the Student. Before such a meeting, the Instructor shall inform the

Student of the purpose of the meeting. In the event that the Student refuses or fails to meet with the Instructor within a reasonable period of time specified by the Instructor, the Instructor shall, taking into account the available information, decide whether a report to the Dean is warranted. (CLRC 30 MAY 2002) (EXEC 7 APR 2003) (CLRC 27 NOV 2003)

30.5.4(2) If the Instructor believes there has been a violation of the Code, the Instructor shall, as soon as possible after the event occurred, report that violation to the Dean and provide a written statement of the details of the case. The instructor may also include a recommendation for sanction. (CLRC 27 NOV 2003).

Possible Sanctions

One or more of the following sanctions given in 30.4.3 (2) and (3) of the Code are commonly used for plagiarism, cheating, participation in an offence, and misrepresentation of facts.

30.4.3(2) a.i A mark reduction or a mark of 0 on any term work or examination for reason of Inappropriate Academic Behaviour (GFC 24 SEP 2007);

30.4.3(2) a.ii Reduction of a grade in a course 30.4.3(2) a.iii A grade of F for a course.

30.4.3(2) a.iv [A remark on a transcript of 8 \(or 9 for failing graduate student grades\), indicating Inappropriate Academic Behaviour](#) in addition to 30.4.3(2)a.i, 30.4.3(2)a.ii, 30.4.3(2)a.iii

30.4.3(3) b Expulsion

30.4.3(3) c Suspension

The following sanctions may be used in rare cases.

30.4.3(3) e Suspension of a Degree already awarded 30.4.3(3)

f Rescission of a Degree already awarded

30.6.1 Initiation of an Appeal

30.6.1(1) When a Student has been found to have committed an offence under the Code of Student Behaviour or an Applicant is found to have committed an offence under the Code of Applicant Behaviour (Section 11.8 of the GFC Policy Manual), whether or not that Student or Applicant has been given a sanction, the Student or Applicant may appeal that decision, except in the case of a decision of the Discipline Officer under 30.5.6(2)e.ii, which remains final and is not subject to appeal. In cases where a severe sanction has been recommended to the Discipline Officer, once the student receives the final decision of the Discipline Officer, the student can appeal the decisions of both Dean and the Discipline Officer at the same time. The written appeal must be presented to the Appeals Co-ordinator in the University Secretariat within 15 Working Days of the deemed receipt of the decision by the Student or Applicant. The finding that an offence has been committed, the sanction imposed or both may form the basis of appeal. The written appeal must also state the full grounds of appeal and be signed by the Appellant. The appeal shall be heard by the UAB. (CLRC 30 MAY 2002) (CLRC 25 SEP 2003) (EXEC 01 MAY 2006) (GFC 24 SEP 2007) (BEAC 17 OCT 2007)