

Sociology 470  
**Society and Environment**

Professor Becky Richards  
*Spring 2008*

W 3:10-6:00  
SS 362

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*Office Hours:*

**1:10 -2:40 p.m. M, W  
or by appointment**

***Course Description:*** This course introduces a subfield of sociology, namely, the interconnectedness of society and the environment or how people influence, and are influenced by, environmental conditions. We examine this interconnectedness from the perspective of people not only as individuals but as social institutions and social movements. In doing so, we explore both micro-level factors, such as beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as macro-level factors, such as the distribution of political and economic power and cultural social control. Our primary focus is on the latter, i.e., the social forces that change, and are changed by, environmental processes and natural constraints.

***Course Objectives:*** Upon completion of this course, you should be able *in oral discussion and written examinations* to:

- 1. Identify, describe, and discuss the main theories and concepts in environmental sociology. This includes demonstrating both a familiarity with the main issues and debates in the field and an ability to critically evaluate the various methods and assumptions underlying theories and concepts.**
- 2. Use the theories and concepts above in summarizing the arguments of assigned readings and applying these in your own analysis of a society/environment issue and/or problem. This includes demonstrating an awareness of the methodological and theoretical limitations in fully explaining such issues and/or problems.**

We will be referring to these two course objectives often, especially in class discussion, and collectively assessing mastery of them throughout the semester.

**Expectations and Requirements:**

***Late Arrivals and Early Departure***

Both are disruptive to the class and should be minimized at all times. Let me know if you have circumstances that will cause you to come late or leave early. **I reserve the right to deduct points from your class attendance/participation (as described above) if I believe late arrivals and/or early departures have become a problem.** It is imperative that you be here on time and stay for the duration of the class.

***No cell phones should be left on in class!***

I reserve the right to deduct class attendance/participation points for cell phone abuse.

***University Reminder***

**All students must practice academic honesty.** Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

***Course Grades on Cyberbear***

Your final course grade will be posted on Cyberbear and **will not be available before it is posted** there. Please do not e-mail me or call for your final grade.

***Group Work vs. Individual Assignments***

This course requires small in-class group work followed by individually written out-of-class assignments that involve your participation and require you to hand in a writeup/summary afterwards. **Your written work will only be given credit when you complete the written assignment yourself.** In other words, you cannot submit one written assignment as a pair/group and receive credit.

***Written Work: Hardcopy and Due Dates***

Unless you secure approval from me before a due date, **no credit will be given to any written work (assignments/exams etc.) submitted to me by e-mail attachment. You must turn in printed hardcopy at the specified time (beginning of class, 3:10 p.m.) on the due date to receive credit unless you have made prior arrangements with me.** This means that if you have difficulty completing or printing your work, you must plan ahead in order to receive credit for the work.

***Communicating***

I check e-mail regularly and I encourage you to use it (see e-mail address above). I also encourage you to see me during office hours. Observe the following:

- Your return address should be clearly your name
- Include a clearly relevant-to-the-course subject line, e.g., “Class attendance on March 1” or I may delete your message as junk mail spam.
- Avoid junk mail subject lines like “Hello” or “Hi” or no subject line at all.
- Be clear in e-mail and write complete sentences with punctuation, not all capital letters, and other conventions of clear writing.

If you can't make the assigned office hours, please make an appointment.

***Required Course Readings:*** Required readings are available online. Each reading is hot linked in the Course Schedule at the end of this syllabus. You can access the syllabus electronically at the Department of Sociology website at [www.umt.edu/sociology](http://www.umt.edu/sociology). You should read each week's readings ***before*** we begin the relevant unit (see the attached schedule).

**Required Texts**

- Hannigan, John. 2006. *Environmental Sociology* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). New York: Routledge.
- Jamison, Andrew. 2001. *The Making of Green Knowledge: Environmental Politics and Cultural Transformation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

**Hot Link Readings on the Syllabus**

Be aware that download times may take longer from off campus. **You are responsible for completing the readings and the reading assignments even if you encounter access or download problems so plan ahead.**

**Exams:** You will have two written essay exams in this course as noted in the course schedule. Exams will consist of essay and short, open-ended questions based on review questions on the readings and lectures that you will be given each week. **There are NO EARLY OR LATE exams unless a truly dire, documentable emergency occurs and I am notified of it before the exam and make prearrangements with you.** Make-up exams will be permitted only under extreme circumstances such as severe illness or family emergency and at my discretion. Make-up exams may be a week or two later than the regularly scheduled exam. In addition, while covering the same exam period material and no longer in length, make-up exam questions will also differ from those of the regularly scheduled class exam.

**Small Group Discussion Exercises and Individual Write-up Summaries.** Six course days are scheduled for applying sociological theories to environmental problems via video, DVD, and web based exercises. You will be given questions regarding the case problems to discuss in small groups. Each scheduled day that you attend and participate in the small group exercise is worth 20 points. **There are no makeup discussions and you may or may not be excused based on prior discussion with me.** In general, if you miss a small group discussion day you lose the 20 points unless there is a dire emergency.

Individual summary “writeup” assignments will be due at the beginning of the class indicated on the schedule below. Each writeup is also worth 20 points. Summary writeups are graded on completeness, composition (coherence), and critical thinking. **There are NO substitute group discussion work or makeup or late writeup assignments unless you have contacted me PRIOR to the date each is scheduled (e-mail is best) AND made arrangements with me ahead of time. Leaving a voice message without making arrangements with me directly is NOT prior approval. However, if you have a true emergency, let me know and be able to provide documentation afterwards (just note that this does not necessarily mean approval for a makeup).** Exercise descriptions and writeup instructions will be handed out the day of the scheduled exercise. **If you miss class the day the exercise is held, you will automatically lose exercise writeup points for that particular exercise per the above.**

**Student Panel Presentation Assignment:** You will need to participate in one of six scheduled student panels during the course (see Course Schedule). A sign-up sheet will be passed around in class during the second week so you can sign up for a panel of your preference (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> preferences). I will then organize the preference sheet so you will

be assigned to one of the panels of your 3 preferences. Each panel will consist of approximately 3 students who will **each** develop a 10 minute presentation on the group topic. As a group, you will need to coordinate your topics (order, sequence, etc.) but **each** of you is responsible for and will give an individual presentation. More details on panel assignments will be given during the early weeks of the course.

***Student Panel Presentation Attendance:*** You will be given 30 points for attending each full student panel day and completing panel feedback forms (60 points total).

***Final Presentation Paper:*** You will turn in a final paper based on your panel presentation complete with citations and references using ASA (or other prior approved style) on the scheduled date/day of the final (Wednesday May 7 at 3:20 p.m.). Paper instructions will be given later in the course.

### ***Grading Scale***

<b>Graded Components:</b>	<b>Points</b>
Exam 1	50
Exam 2	50
Small Group Discussion and Writeups (6 at 20 points each)	120
Student Panel Assignment	60
Student Panel Attendance	60
Final Panel Paper	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>

### **Grading Scale:**

***Note: No plus or minus letter grades will be given***

90% and above	A
80% to 89%	B
70% to 79%	C
60% to 69%	D
59% and below	F

### ***Graduate Increment:***

If you are taking this course for graduate credit, you will need to do see me regarding a final paper for graduate increment credit. Your total point base will be the 360 above plus another 200 points for the complete research paper (including preliminary work) or a 560 base. The grading scale remains the same.

## SOC 470 SCHEDULE

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
21 Jan	22 Jan	<b>23 Jan</b>	24 Jan	25 Jan
		<i>Week 1</i> Overview of the course What is environmental sociology? Introduction to social construction Reading: Hannigan Chapters 1 and 2 Reading: Jamison, Introduction and Chapter 1		
28 Jan	29 Jan	<b>30 Jan</b>	31 Jan	1 Feb
		<i>Week 2</i> Social Construction of Nature Reading: Hannigan Chapter 5 Reading: Jamison, Chapters 2 and 3 <i>Cane Toads</i> Small Group Discussion #1		
4 Feb	5 Feb	6 Feb	7 Feb	8 Feb
		<i>Week 3</i> <i>Cane Toad Summary #1 Due</i> Materialism and the Treadmills of Production and Consumption Reading: Gould, Kenneth. 2005. The treadmill of production: The case of nanotechnology. <a href="http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/files/calendar/4951/GouldCornellDGNnanotech.pdf">www.einaudi.cornell.edu/files/calendar/4951/GouldCornellDGNnanotech.pdf</a> Reading: BBC News "Misery Creep" <a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7189947.stm">http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7189947.stm</a>		
11 Feb	12 Feb	13 Feb	14 Feb	15 Feb
		<i>Week 4</i> <i>Pots of Gold</i> Small Group Discussion #2		
18 Feb	19 Feb	20 Feb	21 Feb	22 Feb
<i>Holiday</i>		<i>Week 5</i> <i>Pots of Gold Summary #2 Due</i> Political Ecology and Environmental Rights Reading: Hannigan Chapter 4 Reading: McCay, Bonnie and Alan Christopher Finlayson. The Political Ecology of Crisis and Institutional Change: The Case of the Northern Cod. <a href="http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/NatResources/cod/mckay.html">http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/NatResources/cod/mckay.html</a>		
25 Feb	26 Feb	27 Feb	28 Feb	29 Feb
		<i>Week 6</i> <i>Land and How It Gets That Way</i> Small Group Discussion #3		

3 Mar	4 Mar	5 Mar	6 Mar	7 Mar
		<i>Week 7</i> <i>Land and How It Gets That Way Summary #3 Due</i> <i>Exam One</i>		
10 Mar	11 Mar	12 Mar	13 Mar	14 Mar
		<i>Week 8</i> <b>Environmental Justice</b> Reading: Hannigan Chapter 3 National Public Radio. Report Sees Rise in Environmental Racism (listen) <a href="http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=9135023">http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=9135023</a> <i>Dust to Dust Small Group Discussion #4</i>		
17 Mar	18 Mar	19 Mar	20 Mar	21 Mar
		<i>Week 9</i> <i>Dust to Dust Summary #4 Due</i> <b>The Risk Society</b> Reading: Hannigan Chapters 6, 7, and 8 <i>Three Mile Island Small Group Discussion #5</i>		
24 Mar	25 Mar	26 Mar	27 Mar	28 Mar
		<i>Week 10</i> <b>Spring Break</b>		
31 Mar	1 Apr	2 Apr	3 Apr	4 Apr
		<i>Week 11</i> <i>Three Mile Island Summary #5 Due</i> <b>The Green State, Green Business, and Ecological Modernization</b> Reading: Jamison Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 Reading: Buttel, F.H. Ecological modernization as social theory. <a href="http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&amp;_udi=B6V68-3YF9W5N-6&amp;_user=5041250&amp;_rdoc=1&amp;_fmt=&amp;_orig=search&amp;_sort=d&amp;_view=c&amp;_acct=C000052291&amp;_version=1&amp;_urlVersion=0&amp;_userid=5041250&amp;_md5=1241a4cfa2d7555cbd4242f8fbfe7a3f">http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&amp;_udi=B6V68-3YF9W5N-6&amp;_user=5041250&amp;_rdoc=1&amp;_fmt=&amp;_orig=search&amp;_sort=d&amp;_view=c&amp;_acct=C000052291&amp;_version=1&amp;_urlVersion=0&amp;_userid=5041250&amp;_md5=1241a4cfa2d7555cbd4242f8fbfe7a3f</a>		
7 Apr	8 Apr	9 Apr	10 Apr	11 Apr
		<i>Week 12</i> <b>Resource Scarcity and Global Environmental Problems</b> Reading: Hannigan Chapters 9 and 10 Download: UChannel: Energy Crisis: Resource Scarcity, Oil Wars and Climate Change <a href="http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1940">http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=1940</a> <i>Climate Change Video (TBA): Small Group Discussion #6</i>		

14 Apr	15 Apr	16 Apr	17 Apr	18 Apr
		<b>Week 13</b> <i>Climate change Video (TBA) Summary #6 Due</i> <b>Exam Two</b>		
21 Apr	24 Apr	23 Apr	24 Apr	25 Apr
		<b>Week 14</b> <i>Student Panel Presentations</i>		
28 Apr	29 Apr	30 Apr	1 May	2 May
		<b>Week 15</b> <i>Student Panel Presentations</i>		
5 May	6 May	7 May	8 May	0 May
		<b>Week 16</b> <b>Presentation Final Paper Due at 3:20 p.m. in my office (scheduled final date)</b>		