



Environmental Sociology
SOVI 328 Spring 2022
Dr. J. Carlee Purdum
jcarleepurdum@tamu.edu
MWF 9:10am to 10:00am
Office Hours: SCOATES 121
Mon 3:00 to 4:30pm
Tues. 10:00am to 11:30

Course Description and Learning Objectives

Environmental sociology is the study of the interactions between society and the environment. This statement seems simple enough until we begin to examine the blurry, socially defined edges of either of those concepts. In this course, we will explore those edges in great detail, especially as they correlate to conceptions of the human and the non-human and power and justice. We will ask questions about how society defines the environment (or the non-human) and how conceptions of environmental problems shape our understanding of the boundary between society and the environment as well as boundaries between humans.

Virtues of Engagement:

This class is a place where everyone is expected to express their thoughtful opinions, questions, and suggestions as a way to think through the material. We are all respected for who we are and what ideas and experiences we bring to the table. Thus, I encourage everyone to engage in active debate with the material; this means asking for clarity of someone else's comments and discussing and debating the perspective they present. I expect everyone to try on different perspectives, like trying on different clothes, and see whether something you always discounted may fit pretty well. There is an enormous difference between disagreeing with someone's perspective and attacking them as a person. The first is the hallmark of scientific inquiry; the second will not be accepted in this space. We will strive to construct a safe and inclusive environment by respecting each other's dignity and privacy. We treat one another fairly and honor each member's experiences, beliefs, perspectives, abilities, and backgrounds, regardless of race, religion, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identification, ability status, socio-economic status, national identity, or any other identity markers. Bullying, hateful ideas, violent language, belittling, racial slurs, and other disrespectful or "othering" language or behavior will not be tolerated.

Textbook and/or Resource Material

1. Required: Carolan, Michael. 2020. *Society and the Environment: Pragmatic Solutions to Ecological Issues*. 3rd edition. Routledge: New York and London.
2. Required: Taylor, Dorceta. 2014. *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility*. New York University Press: New York.
3. Assigned articles on ecampus.

Attendance Policies

Class attendance and participation is an individual student responsibility. Students taking traditional face-to-face courses are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments by stated due dates. To be considered for an excused absence the student must notify the instructor in writing (e-mail is acceptable) prior to the day of absence. In cases where advanced notification is not possible, the student must provide notification by the end of the second business day after the last date of the absence. This notification must include an explanation of why notice could not be sent. Refer to the Student Rules regarding excused absences and other applied TAMU policies at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu>.

Grading Policies & Scale

We will engage through reading and discussion in a part lecture/part seminar format.

Late work: All assignments must be turned in on the scheduled date and time. Work that is turned in late with no prior notification will not be accepted. Late or missing assignments/exams can only be made up by documented university- approved excused absence (e.g. doctor's note) within one week of the deadline date.

Attendance	20 points (5%)	Points Grading Scale:
In Class Quizzes & Activities	40 points (10%)	Out of 400 assignable points:
Book Review	60 points (15%)	A = 360-400 points
Discussion Leader	60 points (15%)	B = 320-359 points
Midterm Take-Home Exam	70 points (17.5%)	C = 280-319 points
Final Take-Home Exam	70 points (17.5%)	D = 240-279 points
Final Research Project	80 points (20%)	F = <240 points

Attendance: You can miss 3 classes without missing any points. If you miss more than 20% of classes you will receive zero points for attendance. Refer again to above attendance policy.

Quizzes and Activities: will be graded for comprehension of the material and thoughtful engagement in class.

Book Review (15% of grade):

Review of one environmental sociology or sociology of disaster book. Books must be written by a social scientist (sociologist, psychologist, anthropologist, or economist) and cannot be an edited volume. You will submit the name and author of your book for approval. An example book review will be on ecampus.

You will present your book in 5 minutes to the class. Book reviews are 3 pages double-spaced and must include:

- Full citation
- Overall research question
- Research methods
- Description of each chapter (if more than 10 chapters, general description of topics)
- Who the book is targeted toward
- Discussion of theory from class used in the book
- Your recommendation
- Preferably new books (2010 or more recent)

Discussion Leader (15% of grade):

In groups (size to be determined by enrollment), you will lead the class discussion twice during the semester. Groups and dates will be assigned on the third day of class. You will be evaluated on your ability to keep discussion

from stalling, ability as the “expert” on the week’s topic, your discussion questions, and organization of the material. Preparing to lead the discussion will take time, so plan to meet with your group in advance of your day leading. The group’s overall grade will count for 10% and your individual contribution will count for 5%.

If you do not come to class prepared to present on the material you signed up to present, you will either get a zero for that day’s grade, or you can find a day that has an available slot open for a presenter. If there are none, they must join another group. However it is the student’s responsibility to find that date and talk to the students already signed up to present, it is their choice as to whether they will allow the additional students to join their presentation group. Regardless, points will be deducted from student’s discussion leader grade for not coming prepared.

Leading discussion may include:

- Three thought-provoking discussion questions (required)
- Bringing in outside material including video clips (shorter than 10 minutes), pictures, and/or articles.
- Creating a class activity for in-class project points.

Take Home Exams (Together worth 35% of grade):

There will be two essay exams to be completed at home. You will be given 6 questions and will choose 4 to complete. You will have 1 week to turn in the exam. It must be typed, double-spaced, and include references and citations. An acceptable essay answer will take up approximately 2-3 typed pages (4-8 paragraphs) and incorporate multiple class readings.

Research Project:*

We will discuss the format of a content analysis research project on day 1 and decide by day 3. We will either complete a group project among the whole class as chosen by me, or you will complete your own chosen content analysis project. This will include development of an abstract, literature review, methods section, results, and conclusion in the style of an academic journal article. Detailed assignment guidelines will be provided in week 2. We will present our results during our final exam period.

*Graduate students see me to discuss ways to incorporate this project into your degree goals.

Other Pertinent Course Information

As the instructor, I reserve the right to change this syllabus at any time. A notification will be sent to enrolled students.

University Statement on Covid19

To help protect Aggieland and stop the spread of COVID-19, Texas A&M University urges students to be vaccinated and to wear masks in classrooms and all other academic facilities on campus, including labs. Doing so exemplifies the Aggie Core Values of respect, leadership, integrity, and selfless service by putting community concerns above individual preferences. COVID-19 vaccines and masking — regardless of vaccination status — have been shown to be safe and effective at reducing spread to others, infection, hospitalization, and death.

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student’s academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

Academic Integrity Academic Integrity:

You will get out of this course what you put in. Thus, cheating, as cliché as it sounds, most importantly limits your benefit from this course. Plagiarism is the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of another person's academic or scholarly work. Done on purpose, it is cheating. Done accidentally, it is no less serious. Regardless of how it occurs, plagiarism is a theft of intellectual property and a violation of an ironclad rule demanding "credit be given where credit is due." Plagiarism is easily avoided by using citations and quotations appropriately. Discuss with me if you are concerned about what is and is not plagiarism.

For additional information please visit: <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

COURSE SCHEDULE AND IMPORTANT DATES

Week	Topic	Required Reading (Subject to Change)
#1 8-26	Introduction to Course	
#1 8-28	What is Environmental Sociology?	Assigned Reading Catton & Dunlap Read through the ASA Environment & Technology Section website: http://envirosoc.org/wordpress/about/
#1 8-30	What is Environmental Sociology?	Assigned Reading Dunlap & Marshall 2007
#2 9-02	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 1
#2 9-04	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 2
#2 9-06	Environmental Problems & Solutions	No Class—Extra Credit Resilience Rising
#3 9-09	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 3
#3 9-11	Environmental Problems & Solutions	No Class
#3 9-13	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 4
#4 9-16	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 5
#4 9-18	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 6
#4 9-20	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 7
#5 9-23	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 8
#5 9-25	Environmental Problems & Solutions	Carolan Ch. 9
#5 9-27	Environmental Problems & Solutions	No Class-work on book review.
#6 9-30	Class cancelled	No class-work on book review.
#6 10-02	Environmental Sociology Theory	Carolan Ch. 10
#6 10-04	Environmental Sociology Theory	Discuss Book Reviews in class—no reading
#7 10-07	Environmental Sociology Theory	Labor and the Environment
#7 10-09	Environmental Sociology Theory	Carolan Ch. 11

#7 10-11	Environmental Sociology Theory	Carolan Ch. 12/Assigned Reading Barbosa
#8 10-14	No Class	No Class—At Home assignment
#8 10-16	Environment, Disaster, and Inequality	Assigned Reading
#8 10-18	Work Day	No Class—Exam 1 due Friday @ 5pm
#9 10-21	Environment, Disaster, and Inequality	Social Construction of Disasters
#9 10-23	Environment, Disaster, and Inequality	Understanding Social Vulnerability to Disaster
#9 10-25	Environmental Justice	Poverty and Disasters in the United States
#10 10-28	Environmental Justice	Taylor Introduction & Chapter 1
#10 10-30	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 2
#10 11-01	Environmental Justice	No Class—Extra Credit
#11 11-04	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 3
#11 11-06	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 4
#11 11-08	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 5
#12 11-11	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 6
#12 11-13	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 7
#12 11-15	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 8
#13 11-18	Environmental Justice	Taylor Chapter 9
#13 11-20	Wrap Up	Taylor Chapters 10 & Conclusion
#13 11-22	Wrap Up	Carolan Ch. 13
#14 11-25	No Class—Enjoy Your Holiday!	Exam due Tuesday @ 5pm—No Class
#14 11-27	No Class—Happy Thanksgiving!	
#14 11-29	No Class—Happy Thanksgiving!	Projects Due & Presentation
#15 12-02	Wrap Up & Presentations	Presentations
#15 12-04	Last day of class!	Presentations