

# Introduction to Environmental Studies: Social Sciences- CRN 40876

## Summer 2013 Syllabus

**Instructor:** Kaitlyn Grigsby  
**Office:** Columbia 240  
**Office Hours:** By appointment

Weeks 1-4, Monday - Friday, 12 - 1:50 PM  
**Class Location:** Columbia 142  
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**Course Description:** What are the root causes of environmental problems? What are the consequences of these problems? Specific social conditions, including economic, social, and cultural systems, produce human behavior that perpetuates climate change and other international environmental and social justice issues. This course explores societal circumstances that produce environmental and social consequences. This course also examines social approaches to solving environmental problems, including ideas such as sustainability, market-based environmental policies, conservation, and social movements that promote concepts such as environmental justice, ecofeminism, and deep ecology.

**Course Objectives:** This course is designed to facilitate your learning and practice of essential knowledge and skills for engaging in critical social and environmental inquiry. If you invest your time and effort fully in meeting course expectations and requirements, you should be able to do the following by the end of the term:

- Recognize and describe environmental problems
- Examine and diagnose social root causes of environmental problems
- Appraise potential solutions for addressing environmental problems
- Articulate viable courses of action for addressing environmental problems
- Use your own voice to contribute meaningful ideas to public discourse about environmental issues
- Summarize and critique major social scientific interpretations of environmental change

**Expectations:** *You can expect me* to work hard to facilitate your learning, be available to help you outside of class, and be dedicated to your success. Specifically, I will communicate clear expectations, criteria, and feedback for your efforts, demonstrate the value of course activities and requirements, and guide you in the completion of tasks in a timely manner so you can demonstrate your achievement and be successful. *You are expected* to be present for every class, complete class readings and assignments on time and in the manner required, check Blackboard announcements and your email regularly, and participate actively in class discussions and activities – meaning you will share your ideas openly, relate course concepts and skills to your interests and real world experiences, and work to synthesize information from a variety of sources. *All of us are expected* to respect everyone’s voice; listen to, read, reflect upon, and comment appropriately on each other’s contributions; challenge each other to clarify our ideas; and encourage each other to deepen our mutual learning.

**Classroom Etiquette and Academic Integrity:** During lectures and class discussions please refrain from activities that may distract your classmates and me. Please turn off your cell phone before class. Please do not text message or hold side conversations during class and please limit computer activity to note taking. With your cooperation, everyone will have the advantage of a

classroom environment conducive to learning. I will follow the University's formal procedures when I suspect cheating, plagiarism, or any other violation of the University's academic integrity policy. *Students found to have engaged in academic misconduct will fail the course.* You can find additional information about Academic Misconduct at [uodos.uoregon.edu](http://uodos.uoregon.edu). Feel free to talk to me if you have any questions about plagiarism or other academic issues.

**Absences, Make-ups, Late Papers, and Incompletes:** Please attend class. *Late papers and homework assignments will be docked half a letter grade if turned in late on the due date of the assignment and an additional half a letter grade for each additional day late.* Incompletes will only be given in the rarest of circumstances. Incompletes must be arranged and paper work filed prior to the end of the term.

**Accessible Education:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in accessibility related barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155, [uoac@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoac@uoregon.edu), or at [aec.uoregon.edu](http://aec.uoregon.edu).

**Grading:**

- Attendance: 10%
- Homework assignments: 20%
- Op-Ed Assignment: 15%
- Portfolio and Class Participation: 25%
- Final Exam: 30%

A = 94-100	C+ = 77-79
A- = 90-93	C = 74-76
B+ = 87-89	C- = 70-73
B = 84-86	D+ = 67-69
B- = 80-83	D = 60-66

**Assignments:**

*Attendance and Participation:* Students are permitted one unexcused absence. Each unexcused absence beyond one will lower a student's attendance grade by *five percentage points*. I expect students to be active participants in class discussion. Three late arrivals or early departures will equal one absence. If you need to be absent for health reasons or for family emergencies, please notify me ASAP. This course will be highly interactive and will include various opportunities for active engagement during each class session, including exploratory writing, organized discussions, thinking exercises, small group work, question and answer sessions, and so on. Activities that include writing may be collected and reviewed as part of your participation grade. It is therefore essential that you come to class prepared to engage the instructor and your peers and to contribute your thinking and voice to class activities. Your participation will be graded based on the consistency and thoughtfulness of your contributions, and on your alert and respectful interaction with others in the class. **You should also print all readings and bring them to class.**

*Homework Assignments:* Each student will complete four homework assignments. Each assignment will be different but each will likely include a short writing assignment that will require you to evaluate and reflect on assigned readings. Please turn in a hard copy of your homework assignment at the beginning of class on the day that it is due. One of the homework assignments will likely include a group component. A handout with more explicit instructions, including criteria for grading and submission requirements, will be distributed and discussed in class.

*Op-ed Assignment:* This is a (maximum) 750 word editorial style ‘open letter’ that will be due on the first day of the last week of class, **15 July**. This letter is your opportunity to voice your convictions about a particular environmental problem of deep concern to you. You will need to substantiate the problem, identify its primary cause or causes, explain why current efforts to address it are inadequate, and propose an alternative solution. This is not a research paper but a concise, compelling rhetorical statement, based on evidence and critical reasoning, which is intended to convince others to take action. As a class, we will discuss options for actual submission of your letter to proper venues (e.g. newspapers, blogs, etc.) so that they can reach a public audience. I will need to approve your chosen environmental problem by **1 July** and you will need to bring a typewritten draft to class on **8 July**. A handout with more details, including criteria for grading and a sample letter, will be distributed and discussed in class.

*Portfolio:* The portfolio serves two functions: it grades and structures daily in class assignments, and it assists me in evaluating student engagement. Students should incorporate all written work, including notes, into this portfolio. The portfolio is due during the final exam period. I will provide a handout with more information about this assignment.

**Course Outline:** All readings are on Blackboard unless otherwise noted. All readings are subject to change. You should print all readings and bring them to class.

Date	In-Class Topic	Readings/Assignments
<b><i>Week One: Root Causes of Environmental Crisis</i></b>		
24 June	Introduction to course and syllabus; social science perspectives on the environment	
25 June	Environmental crisis	Kolbert 2011 Foster 1999, pp. 11-33
26 June	Population	Ehrlich 2008 Kunzig 2011 Bates 2009
27 June	Technology	Gould 2009 Foster 1999, pp. 108-124 <b>Homework #1 Due</b>
28 June	Affluence, capitalism, individualism	Maniates 2002 Leonard 2010, pp. 144-181 Price 1996
<b><i>Week Two: Consequences – Climate Change, Resource Extraction, and other Ecological Problems</i></b>		
1 July	Global climate change	Henson and Clark 2008 Antoniades 2013 Green House Gas Calculator: <a href="http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/ind-calculator.html">http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/ind-calculator.html</a> <b>Op-Ed Topic Due</b>
2 July	Biodiversity loss	Whitty 2007

		Quammen 2006 Quammen 2008
3 July	Mountaintop removal and Tar Sands oil	Shnayerson 2006 Burns 2007 <b>Homework #2 Due</b>
4 July	<b>Independence Day - No Class</b>	
5 July	Hydraulic fracturing; <i>GasLand</i> <b>Class Optional</b>	Dobb 2013 Manning 2013
<b><i>Week Three: Changing Law, Changing Policy, Changing Practice - Mainstream Solutions</i></b>		
8 July	Economic growth, environmental economics, ecological economics, and international trade	Rees 2003 Miller 1994 Foster et al. 2010, pp. 73-87 <b>Op-Ed Rough Draft Due</b>
9 July	Conservation	Lopez 2008 Dowie 2008 Turner 2008
10 July	Environmental law and policy	Gore 2008 Merchant 2005, pp. 165-191 Rosenbaum 2011
11 July	Sustainable development	Redclift 2005 Gould and Lewis 2009 <b>Homework #3 Due</b>
12 July	Environmental justice	Bullard 2008 Di Chiro 1996 Mascarenhas 2009
<b><i>Week Four: Attacking the Roots - Social and Environmental Justice Movements</i></b>		
15 July	Political action and Socialist ecology	Lewis 2009 Merchant 2005, pp. 139-161 <b>Final Op-Ed Due</b>
16 July	Deep Ecology and Ecofeminism	Leopold 1949 Harding 1997 Merchant 2005, pp. 193-222
17 July	Bioregionalism and slow food	Berry 2008 Kingsolver 2008 Charles et al. 1981
18 July	Monkey wrenching and Ecoterrorism	Abbey 1975 (subject to change) Scipes 2008 <b>Homework #4 Due</b>
19 July	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Portfolio Due</b>

**\*All readings are on Blackboard unless otherwise noted. All readings are subject to change.**

### Readings:

Abbey, Edward. *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1975. Print.

- Antoniades, Andri. "Don't Panic, but Carbon Dioxide Levels Are the Highest They've Been in Human History." *Take Part*. May 2013. <http://www.takepart.com/article/2013/05/11/dont-panic-carbon-dioxide-levels-are-worst-theyve-been-human-history>
- Bates, Diane. "Population, demography, and the environment." In *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 107-124. Print.
- Berry, Wendell. "The Mad Farmer's Liberation Front." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 505-06. Print.
- Bullard, Robert D. "Dumping in Dixie." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 725-36. Print.
- Burns, Shirley Stewart. *Bringing Down the Mountains: The Impact of Mountaintop Removal on Southern West Virginia Communities*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2007. 118-140.
- Charles, Leonard, Jim Dodge, Lynn Milliman, and Victoria Stockley. "Where you At? A Bioregional Quiz." *Coevolution Quarterly* 32 (Winter 1981): 1.
- Di Chiro, Giovanna. "Nature as Community: The Convergence of Environment and Social Justice." *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. Ed. William Cronon. New York: W.W. Norton &, 1996. 298-320. Print.
- Dobb, Edwin. "The New Oil Landscape." *National Geographic* Mar. 2013: 28-59. Print.
- Dowie, Mark. "The Wrong Path to Conservation." *The Nation* 2008: 11-17. Web.
- Ehrlich, Paul R. "The Population Bomb." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 434-37. Print.
- Foster, John Bellamy. *The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1999.
- Foster, John Bellamy, Brett Clark, and Richard York. *The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2009. Print.
- Gore, Al. "Speech at the Kyoto Climate Change Conference." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. N. pag. Print.
- Gould, Kenneth A. "Technological Change and the Environment." In *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 269-289.
- Gould, Kenneth A. and Tammy L. Lewis. "The paradoxes of sustainable development: focus on ecotourism." In *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 95-106.
- Harding, Stephan. "What Is Deep Ecology?" *Resurgence* 1997: 14-17. Print.
- Henson Robert W. and Duncan Clark. *The Rough Guide to Climate Change*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. London: Rough Guides, 2008. Print.
- Kingsolver, Barbara. "Knowing Our Place." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 939-47. Print.
- Kolbert, Elizabeth. "Enter the Anthropocene - the age of man." *National Geographic* March 2011: 70-77.
- Kunzig, Robert. "Population seven billion." *National Geographic*. January 2011: 42-63.
- Leonard, Annie. *The Story of Stuff: How our Obsession with Stuff is Trashing the Planet, our Communities, and our Health - and a vision for change*. New York: Free Press, 2010.
- Leopold, Aldo. "The Land Ethic." *A Sand County Almanac*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1949. N. pag. Print.
- Lewis, Tammy L. "Environmental Movements in the Global South." In *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 244-254.
- Lopez, Barry. "A Presentation of Whales." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 696-715. Print.
- Maniates, Michael. "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" *Confronting Consumption*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 2002. 43-59. Print.
- Manning, Richard. "Bakken Business: The Price of North Dakota's Fracking Boom." *Harper's Magazine* Mar. 2013: 29-37. Print.
- Mascarenhas, Michael. "Environmental Inequality and Environmental Justice." In *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*, Kenneth A. Gould and Tammy L. Lewis, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 127-141.
- Merchant, Carolyn. *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World*. New York: Routledge, 2005. Print.
- Miller, Alan. "Economics and the Environment." In *Ecology*, Carolyn Merchant, ed. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1994. 78-87.
- Price, Jennifer. "Looking for Nature at the Mall: A Field Guide to the Nature Company." *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. New York: W.W. Norton &, 1996. 186-203. Print.
- Quammen, David. "An Endangered Idea." *National Geographic* Oct. 2006: 62-67. Web.

- Quammen, David. "Planet of Weeds." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. New York: Library of America, 2008. 874-97. Print.
- Redclift, Michael. "Sustainable Development (1987-2005): An Oxymoron Comes of Age." *Sustainable Development* 13 (2005): 212-227.
- Rees, William E. "Economic Development and Environmental Protection: An Ecological Economics Perspective." *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* 86.1-2 (2003): 29-45.
- Rosenbaum, Walter A. *Environmental Politics and Policy*. 8th ed. Washington DC: CQ, 2011. Print.
- Scipes, Kim. "It's Time for a Deep Green Vision for the United States - and the World." *Synthesis/Regeneration* 48 (Winter 2008).
- Shnayerson, Michael. "The Rape of Appalachia." *Vanity Fair*. May 2006.  
<http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2006/05/appalachia200605>
- Turner, Jack. "The Song of the White Pelican." *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Ed. Bill McKibben. New York: Library of America, 2008. 835-48. Print.
- Whitty, Julia. "Gone." *Mother Jones* May-June 2007: 36-45. Web.