Sociology 3480: Environmental Sociology
Fall 2010, Section 090, class number 16868

Syllabus and Course Outline

Instructor: Jennifer Givens
Class Meetings: online
Office Hours: by email and by appointment, 418 BEH S
Email: jennifer.givens@soc.utah.edu

Required Texts:
Foster, The Vulnerable Planet, Monthly Review Press, 1999, 9781583670194
Recommended Text: (but not required)

Course Summary
This course studies the environment from a sociological perspective. What are the links between society and the environment? How does the study of sociology help illuminate environmental problems, concerns, and the framing of discussions? Topics include climate change, public health, famine, and disease, access to food and food production, water issues, migration, urbanization, globalization, technology, biodiversity, education, economic development, population growth, national security and global stability, and the media. The course covers topics from the local to global.

A main component of this online course involves the 10 episode PBS series Journey to Planet Earth. This series, narrated by Matt Damon, explores “the fragile relationship between people and the world they inhabit.” Learn more about the series at http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/about/index.html Each week students will complete the assigned readings and/or view one 50 minute digitized episode of the Journey to Planet Earth series online via the course WebCT website (students may also watch the DVD version at the media center in the Marriot Library). Students will submit all assignments and tests online.

Course Objectives:
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:
- Understand how the sociological perspective illuminates discussions of the environment.
- Be familiar with specific areas of study within environmental sociology.
- Understand theoretical perspectives and be able to apply them to current issues.
- Identify specific forms of environmentalism and understand how these, combined with theoretical perspectives, frame environmental debates.

Grading Procedures
The final course grade will be determined by your performance on two exams, one quiz, eleven weekly postings on the readings and the videos, and a final paper. There is no comprehensive final exam in this course; the first exam will cover the material from the first 6 weeks of class, the second exam will cover the material covered in the second half of class. The two exams will consist of multiple choice, true-false type and short answer questions and will cover the assigned readings and Journey to Planet Earth videos and any additional materials noted by the instructor. Each exam is worth 100 points. The quiz is worth 10 points and will be given before the first exam so students will have an idea of the type of questions to expect on the exam. The weekly assignments are worth 10 points each for a total of 110 points. The final paper is worth 80 points for a grand total of 400 points.
The following schedule will be used to determine grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Course Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>372-400</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>292-307</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>360-371</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>280-291</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>348-359</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>268-279</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>332-347</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>252-267</td>
<td>63-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>320-331</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>240-251</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
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<td>308-319</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>0-239</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important Dates

Exam #1 – week of 10/4 (Episodes 1-5 and assigned readings)
Paper due: week of 12/6
Exam #2 – week of 12/6 (Episodes 6-10 and assigned readings)

Weekly Assignments
There will be 11 discussion questions requiring weekly postings to be posted on the WebCT discussion boards. I will post each week’s discussion questions by Monday mornings. Each week’s post should begin with a very brief summary of the readings and then respond to the questions by discussing both that week’s readings and video. You are expected to respond at least twice weekly, with original thoughts by Wednesday (by midnight) and one comment on another classmate’s post by Saturday (by midnight). Postings are required by Wednesday at midnight to give students several days to read each other’s posts and respond by midnight Saturday. The first posting of the week should respond to all elements of the prompt and/or question. The second, response posting should not simply be “I agree” but should extend the conversation in a meaningful way, either by providing additional examples or evidence for the point, by disagreeing respectfully and providing reasons why, by posing additional questions and ideas to consider, etc. More specific instructions will be posted on the course WebCT website. Responses will be graded from 0-10 points per week, with approximately 6 for the first post and 4 for the second. (11 x 10 = 110 points)

Quiz and Exams
One quiz will be given before the first exam so that students will have an idea of the types of questions to expect on the exam and also to become familiar with the online format. The quiz and the exams will be taken online. (Students who would like to take quizzes and exams at the testing center should email me in advance to make arrangements.) (1 x 10 = 10 points)

The first exam will cover the material from the first 6 weeks of class, the second exam will cover the material covered in the second half of class; there is no comprehensive final exam in this course. The two exams will consist of multiple choice, true-false type and short answer questions and will cover the assigned readings and Journey to Planet Earth videos and any additional materials noted by the instructor. Each exam is worth 100 points. (2 x 100 = 200 points total)

Paper
A final 4-5 page paper will be due in which a student will look more deeply into a specific topic of interest by reviewing the most recently published material on the topic. More details and instructions will be posted on WebCT. (80 points)
Learning Environment and Testing
The study of the environment is a timely topic. I will strive to make the course interesting and useful. I enjoy learning, teaching, and transferring this enthusiasm to students in the classroom – whether that classroom is physical or online and I am excited about the potentials of online education. I would ask that we all plan ahead so that we can avoid last minute technical difficulties. That being said, I would also ask that we are all patient should technical difficulties arise.

Student Code
All students are expected to maintain respectful and professional behavior in the classroom setting. Appropriate behavioral guidelines are spelled out in the student code found in the student handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the code. The code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on testes, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the responsibility of the faculty to enforce responsible classroom behaviors. Violations of the student code may result in a written warning, dismissal from the class, a failing grade, or dismissal from the university. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavioral Committee.

ADA NOTICE: University guidelines for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require the following to be included in all syllabi:

“The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

All written information in this course can be made available in alternate format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.”
Course Outline for Environmental Sociology

This is a basic outline of the episodes and readings covered to help you keep track of what is due and when it is due. Note that the episodes of Journey to Planet Earth are not in order on the website, therefore, make sure you check the schedule below for which episode is due that week. Thanks.

Week of August 23: First week of class. Please post a brief introduction to the discussion section, introducing yourself to me and the rest of the class, by Friday. More details about what to include in this posting are on the course WebCT website.
Watch episode 1, Rivers of Destiny, of the PBS series Journey to Planet Earth. (There is no assigned reading until the third week of class but you may want to use the first two weeks to begin the reading early.)

Week of August 30: Original post for episode 1, Rivers of Destiny, due by Wednesday, one comment on another post by Saturday.
(Always see WebCT for the weekly discussion prompt and/or questions.)

Week of September 6: Readings due: Gould & Lewis readings 1, 2 & 3, (optional: Bell 1)
Original post for episode 2, The Urban Explosion, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of September 13: Readings due: Gould and Lewis articles 4, 5 & 6, (optional: Bell 2 & 3)
Original post for episode 3, Land of Plenty Land of Want, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of September 21: Quiz on previous week’s readings and films, available 9/21-9/22
Readings due: Gould and Lewis article 7, 8 & 9, (optional: Bell 4)
Original post for episode 4, On the Brink, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of September 27: Readings due: Gould and Lewis articles 10, 11 & 12, (optional: Bell 5)
Original post for episode 5, Hot Zones, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of October 4: EXAM 1, available 10/4-10/6

Week of October 12: FALL BREAK!

Week of October 18: Readings due: Foster chapters 1-4 (Foster is a quick read.) (optional: Bell 6)
Original post for episode 6, Seas of Grass, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of October 25: Readings due: Foster chapters 5-7, (optional: Bell 7)
Original post for episode 7, Future Conditional, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of November 1: Readings due: Gould and Lewis articles 13 & 14, (optional: Bell 8)
Original post for episode 8, State of the Planet, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.

Week of November 8: Readings due: Gould and Lewis articles 15 & 16, (optional: Bell 9)
Original post for episode 9, State of the Planet’s Wildlife, and readings due by Wed, one comment on another post by Sat.
Week of November 15: Readings due: Gould and Lewis articles 17 & 18 (optional: Bell 10)
    Original post for episode 10, State of the Ocean’s Animals, and readings due by Wed,
    comment on another post by Sat.

Week of November 22: THANKSGIVING WEEK
    Week for catch-up in case of technical difficulties and final paper conferences

Week of November 29: Gould and Lewis articles 19 & 20 (optional: Bell 11)
    Final paper due Friday Dec. 10th by midnight.

Week of December 6: **EXAM 2, available 12/6-12/8**

*Schedule may be subject to change.
*Please note there is NO comprehensive Final Exam in this course
*Additional Information will be provided on WebCT.