

# Environmental Sociology

Development Sociology 3240

Spring 2022

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:40-10:55am, B73 Warren Hall

## Instructor

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Make an appointment:

<https://calendly.com/jzinda/>

## Teaching Assistant

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Mann Library Foyer

## Course Overview

Humans have fraught relationships with the animals, plants, land, water – even geological processes – around us. People struggle over who gets to use what, which resources to use or to keep intact, what scientific claims are true and worthy of action. Every environmental concern is on some level a social concern, and more social concerns than we often realize are environmental concerns. In this course, we will examine how people make and respond to environmental change and how groups of people form, express, struggle over, and work out environmental concerns. We will probe how population change, economic activity, government action, social movements, and changing ways of thinking shape human-environmental relationships. Through these conversations, we will explore possibilities for rich and durable ways of living together in our social and material world.

Our goal in this course is to give you knowledge, analytical tools, and expressive skills that help you feel confident to address environmental concerns as a social scientist and a citizen. We will work together so that by the end of the course you will be able to

- explain different perspectives about how people create and resolve environmental concerns
- discuss key debates in the sociology of environmental change, communicating the theoretical claims and empirical evidence one can use to test those claims
- use sociological concepts and tools to analyze the emergence, dynamics, and outcomes of environmental controversies
- express your knowledge and reasoning in engaging written communication

*Note: We are constantly on the lookout for materials that are current and helpful to you. As a result, this syllabus may change at the instructors' discretion.*

## Text

Gould, Kenneth A., and Tammy L. Lewis. 2020. *Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology*. 3rd edition. Oxford University Press.

*Note: The text is on reserve at the Mann Library. If you use an electronic version, you will be responsible for locating content indicated by page numbers in the paper edition. Do not use an earlier edition: several chapters are new to this edition.*

Other materials will be provided on Canvas.

## Course Requirements and Grading

To get a good grade in this course, not to mention get the full benefit of the ideas we'll share, you will need to come to class fully prepared, participate thoughtfully, and do a good job on assignments.

### Participation

You will get something out of this class—a grade, and a measure of interest and enjoyment—to the extent that you're *there, really there*: coming prepared, listening thoughtfully, and making helpful contributions. We encourage your there-ness by doing our best to provide engaging material and also by making there-ness matter for your grade. We understand that everyone has 'off' days. We also understand that students start from different places and speaking in class makes some students uncomfortable. We will provide varied opportunities to show your there-ness: discussions, group activities, and your class notebook. Each day you will receive a ✓+, ✓, or ✓- for participation, or 0 if you are absent. The rubric below gives a broad sense of the aspects of participation to keep in mind. The lowest 2 will be dropped, effectively allowing 2 absences without penalty.

Criterion	Excellent - thanks! (✓+)	Room to improve (✓)	Needs to change (✓-)
Attendance, preparedness for class	Present, has all needed materials, has evidently done the required reading, and is ready to start when class does.	Brings most or all needed materials, does required reading, arrives on time.	Has not completed the reading or brought materials. Is not ready when class starts, arrives late, or is absent.
Contributions (quantitative)	Contributes on a regular basis. Converses without dominating.	Contributes occasionally. Alternatively, verges on dominating discussion.	Does not contribute, or contributions are poorly considered.
Contributions (qualitative)	Expresses useful general impressions, relevant and clarifying questions, responses to classmates' points, or specific and thoughtful criticisms. Shows understanding of assigned materials. Uses concepts and terminology appropriately.	Provides ideas or questions that are constructive and occasionally insightful, but sometimes are general, are not relevant, repeat what has been said, or reveal a lack of preparation. Mostly uses appropriate terminology.	Makes comments that are off topic or uninformative, not expressing concepts accurately. Relies on opinion and personal taste, e.g., "I love it" or "It's bad" without evidence or integration of new information. Shows a lack of preparation.
Presence	Demonstrates engagement: not only speaks, but also listens attentively.	Makes a bit of effort: is awake, paying attention.	Is distracted, distracts classmates, falls asleep.

### Short Assignments

On 2 occasions you will receive a prompt to write a short paper (less than 1,000 words). Short assignments will apply ideas we have discussed or read about. Some will contribute to developing ideas for your final article. They will be graded on fulfillment of the prompt, strength of argumentation, and writing quality. We will provide a detailed rubric with the assignment.

### Reading Guides & Miscellaneous Assignments

To help you work through readings, we provide reading guides, either on paper or in the Canvas quiz function. Completing other small assignments and class polls also contributes to this item.

### Group Review

Within a group of classmates, you will pose and answer questions to review one segment of the course. Later, class members will work together to answer each group's questions.

### The e-Zine

The field of environmental sociology emerged in efforts to understand how people struggle over public health hazards, weighing conservation against development, and taking on technological risks. As an environmental-sociologist-in-training, over the course of the semester you will get familiar with an environmental controversy. Through a series of assignments, you will examine this issue using tools environmental sociology provides. You will also hone your ability to tell stories with the written word, presenting facts and viewpoints with accuracy and integrity. This work will culminate an online publication on Medium, in which you will have the option to include your article.

### Assignment Submission

**Every written assignment is due by 11:59PM on the date listed in the syllabus**, uploaded into the appropriate dropbox on Canvas. It is your responsibility to make sure it is effectively submitted.

### The Numbers

**NOTE: DO NOT rely on the automatic calculation in Canvas, which will not accurately reflect your grade.** To calculate your grade, use the figures below. We will periodically provide estimates of your current total grade on Canvas.

Assignment	Percent
Participation	10
Reading Guides & Misc. Assignments	20
Short Reflections (2x8 points)	16
Group Review	10
e-Zine Project:	44
Proposal	2
Concept Resource Summary	7
Full Draft	10
Peer Review	2
Presentation	3
Revised Draft	20
Total	100

Letter	Range	Point
A+	97-100	100
A	94-96	95
A-	90-93	92
B+	87-89	88
B	84-86	85
B-	80-83	82
C+	77-79	78
C	74-76	75
C-	70-73	72
D+	67-69	68
D	64-66	65
D-	60-63	62
F	0-59	55

### Extra Credit Policy

Out of concern for fairness, we do not offer extra credit. An activity that merits grade credit necessarily requires time and effort. But not all students have time available. As a result, extra credit opportunities bring a bias in favor of students who can take extra time. Since this luxury isn't available to all, we aim to give everyone a reasonable chance to do well by meeting the evaluation criteria within this syllabus.

## Making a Good Learning and Teaching Environment

We want to foster a classroom environment that is as conducive as possible to everybody's learning. That requires that all students have an equitable chance to pay attention and take part in dialogue and that we can communicate without difficulty. Our approach is based on our experiences of what does and does not help make this possible.

**Course Citizenship.** We want this to be a place where everybody is able to share their reasoning and experiences so that together we can come to fuller understanding. This is hard to achieve. To do it, we need to facilitate discussion thoughtfully, and you need to participate mindfully. As a course citizen, we expect you to make a good faith effort to listen and express yourself in ways that build other people up. That includes making it known when something said in class strikes you as hurtful or harmful. It also includes being willing to let your own assumptions be questioned. At any time, please let us know if you think we could do a better job facilitating this.

**Communication.** We strive to show respect for your time, and we will do our best to ensure that our messages to you are clear and leave you ample time to respond. We will provide notifications through email and Canvas; please check both regularly. We are available and eager to help you succeed, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us. When doing so, please communicate clearly and with courtesy. We will do our best to respond to email within 48 hours. It will be easiest to reach us during work hours (8am-5pm weekdays). On nights and weekends we may be harder to reach due to personal and family commitments outside of work. *To ensure that we promptly identify and address your email, please include the text "DSOC 3240" in the header.*

**Office Hours.** Conditions permitting, we will hold in-person office hours during the times listed. If you need to meet outside scheduled office hours, email us to make an appointment. *If you have questions about content or assignments, please ask them during class so we can all benefit from clarification.*

**Lecture Slides.** We will post lecture slides on Canvas about once a week, after presenting them. Slides provide a broad outline; being attentive and taking notes in class will help you retain what we cover.

## Meeting Your Needs

**Students with Disabilities:** Your access in this course is important to me. If you have or think you may have a disability, please contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion: [sds\\_cu@cornell.edu](mailto:sds_cu@cornell.edu), 607-254-4545, <https://sds.cornell.edu>. Please request your accommodation letter early in the semester, or as soon as you become registered with SDS, so that we have adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodations.

Once SDS approves your accommodation letter, it will be emailed to both you and me. Please follow up with me to discuss the necessary logistics of your accommodations. If you experience any access barriers in this course, such as with printed content, graphics, online materials, or any communication barriers, reach out to me or your SDS counselor right away. If you need an immediate accommodation, please speak with me after class or send an email message to me and SDS at [sds\\_cu@cornell.edu](mailto:sds_cu@cornell.edu).

If you are experiencing undue personal or academic stress at any time or need to talk with someone about a personal problem or situation, we encourage you to seek support as soon as possible. We are

available to talk with you about stresses related to your work in our class. Additionally, we can assist you in reaching out to any one of a wide range of campus resources, including

- Your college's Academic Advising or Student Services Office
- Cornell Learning Strategies Center at 255-6310, <http://lsc.cornell.edu>
- Cornell Health at 255-5155, <https://health.cornell.edu/>
- Peer Support - Empathy Assistance & Referral Service at 255-EARS, <https://www.earscornell.org/>
- Cornell Writing Center <https://knight.as.cornell.edu/wc>

## Academic Integrity

Students enrolled in this course are expected to abide by the University's Code of Academic Integrity. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the code so that you understand clearly what constitutes plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination or assignment will have serious consequences, including a possible automatic "F" for the course. The Code of Academic Integrity and information on "Acknowledging the Work of Others" can be found at <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/academic-integrity/>.

**Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism, as well as our own manual review. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the [Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site](#).

## Class Schedule

Date	Theme	Readings	Assignments
25-Jan	Getting started		
27-Jan		20 Lessons Introduction	Canvas Survey
1-Feb	Confronting Environmental Injustice	Video selections; 20 Lessons 10: Environmental Inequality and Environmental Justice	
3-Feb		Pastor et al.	
8-Feb	Science, Society, and Environments	20 Lessons 6 The Science of Nature and the Nature of Science	
10-Feb	People, Land, and Development	20 Lessons 8: Population, Demography, and the Environment	
15-Feb		Cleaning Up the Carbon Mess; Zinda & Zhang	SA1
17-Feb	The Human Nature of Nature	Angelo & Jerolmack	
22-Feb		Kashwan etal 2021; TallBear	Proposal
24-Feb	Treadmills & Beyond	20 Lessons 3: The State and Policy	
3-Mar		20 Lessons 2: Theories in Environmental Sociology	
8-Mar		20 Lessons 15: Climate Change	
10-Mar		Freudenburg	
15-Mar		Liboiron; Heglar; Schor	Concept Resource
17-Mar		20 Lessons 11: Sociology of Environmental Health; Bernstein	
22-Mar	Environmental Social Movements	20 Lessons 18: Environmental Social Movements	
24-Mar		Obach; Brulle & Roberts	
29-Mar		20 Lessons 19: Environmental Movements in the Global South	
31-Mar		Ellingson	SA2
12-Apr		Mendez part 1	
14-Apr		Mendez part 2	
19-Apr	Risk & Disaster	Cordner	Full Draft
21-Apr			Speed Presentation
26-Apr		Tierney part 1	Peer Review
28-Apr		Tierney part 2	
3-May		20 Lessons 14: Understanding Disaster Vulnerability	Group Review
5-May	Group Review		
10-May	Wrapping Up	TBD	
TBD			Final Article