

# Environmental Sociology



## **SOCI 3312: Environmental Sociology**

Instructor: Roslyn Schoen, PhD

Office: Visits will be scheduled via WebEx during spring 2021

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### Course Description and Objectives

#### **Catalog Course Description:**

This course examines relationships and interactions between society and the environment. This includes inquiries into how the natural world and its degradation influence the way societies are organized by studying human communities as part of natural ecosystems.

#### **Detailed Course Description:**

(WI) This course examines relationships and interactions between society and the environment. This includes inquiries into how the natural world and its degradation influence the way societies are organized by studying human communities as part of natural ecosystems. Using the sociological perspective, the materials presented here demonstrate the ways in which environmental issues are fundamentally structural and must be understood as such in order to be addressed. We will focus on the sociological aspects of environmental issues, drawing from literature in political economy, social inequality, social constructionism, sociology of knowledge, and social movements. We will also consider issues of development and globalization to bolster our understanding of the relationship between structural conditions and lived experiences in our own country and abroad.

#### **Course Objectives:**

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the intellectual and pragmatic issues concerning the relationship between people and the environment. By the end of the course students should be able to:

- understand the role of social structure and state policy in environmental issues
- discuss the various definitions of nature and the environment and understand how those definitions inform how we approach environmental issues
- apply the major theories used to describe and analyze the relationship between humans and the environment
- identify how environmental problems intersect with social inequalities
- think critically about environmental movements and social change
- demonstrate college-level ability in written work, including ability to revise according to instructor feedback
- demonstrate improved ability in oral communication, specifically in the form of public presentation

This is a **Writing Instructive** course so writing will be an integral part of measuring student mastery of course content. This also means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills. Revising is fundamental to improving writing skills, so this semester you will receive feedback on your writing that you should use to revise and improve toward producing a final version. If you have any questions about this part of the course, please do not hesitate to ask!

#### **Contacting your professor:**

The best way to contact me is through email ([roslyn.schoen@tamuct.edu](mailto:roslyn.schoen@tamuct.edu)). I check email every day during the week and often on the weekends as well. I do not respond to email after 7 PM; if you email in the middle of the night, please look for my response the following day. I am on campus during my office hours should you need to talk to me in person.

The best way to refer to your professor in email or in person is as “Professor Schoen” or “Dr. Schoen,” pronounced *SHANE*.

#### **Required Textbook/Readings:**

- Leslie King and Deborah Auriffeille. 2020. *Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action*, 4<sup>th</sup> Rowan & Littlefield Publishing
- Mark Everard. 2020. *The Ecology of Everyday Things*. Taylor & Francis/CRC Press. ISBN: 9780367636319

- Other materials listed on the syllabus will be available through Blackboard or the course eReserves page.

## COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University-Central Texas has adopted policies and practices to minimize virus transmission. All members of the university community are expected to adhere to these measures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses, course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.) and co-curricular programs:

- **Self-monitoring**—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction. Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.
- **Face Coverings**— **Face coverings must be worn inside of buildings and within 50 feet of building entrances on the A&M-Central Texas Campus.** This includes lobbies, restrooms, hallways, elevators, classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, break rooms, non-private office spaces, and other shared spaces. Face coverings are also required in outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not maintained. The university will evaluate exceptions to this requirement on a case by case basis. Students can request an exception through the Office of Access and Inclusion in Student Affairs.
  - If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the Office of Student Conduct. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.
- **Physical Distancing**—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in the course and course-related activities.
- **Classroom Ingress/Egress**—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- The university will notify students in the event that the COVID-19 situation necessitates changes to the course schedule or modality.

## WARRIOR SHIELD

### Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account.

Connect to Warrior Shield by [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### Course requirements:

Below is a description of the main activities for this course. More information beyond these descriptions is available on our course Canvas page.

1. **Reading assignments and other materials:** Students are expected to complete the reading assignments before coming to class. Additional readings beyond the texts listed above will be available on the course E-Reserve page. These are listed in the course schedule as “Online” readings and are just as important as the readings from your book. Your professor will also provide you with links to news articles or video clips to consider throughout the semester.
2. **Discussions:** Students will participate on our course discussion board, with graded discussions taking place during 5 of the 16 weeks this semester. Your primary/initial postings will address my weekly discussion question(s) and should be made by midnight (11:59 PM CST) each Thursday. Once several initial posts have been made, you will move on by reading and responding to at least two of your peers’ primary posts. Response posts commenting and reflecting upon the comments of your peers should be made by midnight (11:59 PM CST) each Sunday. Further details on discussion boards and our netiquette statement can be found on the Canvas page “[instructions for discussion boards](#).”
3. **Quizzes:** Students will take 5 quizzes at regular intervals throughout the course. Quizzes are worth 40 points each and will cover the readings and other material assigned since the last quiz. Quizzes will be given during class time or, if we are short on classroom time, online using Canvas.

4. **Writing project:** Students will engage in a writing project that asks them to examine the various frames through which a single environmental issue is communicated to audiences. Students will select their own topic in environmental sociology and conduct an analysis of how the issue is communicated across the following five areas/spaces: published scientific articles from **climate scientists**, **sociological** literature in environmental sociology, **journalistic** reporting on climate science, **political** claims about environmental issues, and how science and climate issues are discussed in everyday **conversation** including on social media. Detailed instructions for the steps involved with this project will be available on Canvas.

Assignment	Points
Discussions (5 @ 20 points)	100
Quizzes (5 @ 40 pts)	200
Writing project	200
<b>Total:</b>	<b>500</b>

### Posting of Grades:

- All student grades will be posted using the Canvas gradebook and students should monitor their grade status through this tool.
- Students should always refer to the syllabus for total points and points possible. The Canvas gradebook tool has been known to misinform students from time to time.
- Grades will usually be posted within 7-10 days of due dates. Some assignments, like our research paper, require more personalized instructor feedback. These assignments could take longer to grade and so you may need to be patient.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

*Assigned chapters are from your book, Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action. Readings not in your book are available online. These reading assignments are available on our course eReserve page.*

#### Week 1.

Topic	Read	Other
Course orientation and Introduction to Environmental Sociology	Syllabus, course intro	
	Auriffeille & King's Introduction: "Environmental Problems Require Social Solutions" p.1 Film - <i>Dry Season: Living Dangerously</i>	<b>Introductions</b>

#### Week 2.

Topic	Read	Other
What is nature?	Angelo and Jerolmack, "Nature's Looking Glass" <b>Online:</b> Čapek, Stella M. "The Social Construction of Nature: Of Computers, Butterflies, Dogs, and Trucks"	<b>Rhetorical genre activity</b>

#### Week 3.

Topic	Read	Other
Nature and Society	Chapter 1 "The Nature of Modern Society" in Everard	<b>Quiz 1</b>

<b>Online:</b> William Cronon's "The Trouble with Wilderness"
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**Week 4.**

Topic	Read	Other
Theories of Environmental Sociology	<b>Online:</b> Barbosa, Luiz C. "Theories in Environmental Sociology" p. 25-46 Chapter from <i>Twenty Lessons in Environmental Sociology</i> .	
	2. Foster's "Why Ecological Revolution?" p.35  4. Longo & Clausen, "The Tragedy of the Commodity: The overexploitation of the Mediterranean Bluefin Tuna Fishery" p.63	<b>Discussion board</b>

**Week 5.**

Topic	Read
Knowledge production	<b>Online:</b> Bonds, Eric. 2011. "The Knowledge-Shaping Process: Elite Mobilization and Environmental Policy." <i>Critical Sociology</i> .  WI focus week.

**Week 6.**

Topic	Read	Other
Political Economy	5. Benjamin Vail, "Ecological Modernization at Work? Environmental Policy Reform in Sweden at the Turn of the Century" p.81  6. York et al. "A Tale of Contrasting Trends: Three Measures of the Ecological Footprint in China, India, Japan, and the United States" p.97  Chapter 2 "Reading the Tea Leaves" in Everard	<b>Writing project topics due</b>  <b>Discussion board</b>

**Week 7.**

Topic	Read	Other
Environmental Inequalities	7. Clark, Auerbach, and Zhang, "The DuBois Nexus" p.113  10. Bryson et al. "Turning Public Issues into Private Troubles: Lead Contamination, Domestic Labor, and the Exploitation of Women" p.159  Chapter 3 "My Trendy Tee Shirts" and Chapter 4 "Yesterday's Papers" in Everard	<b>Quiz 2</b>

**Week 8.**

Topic	Read
Framing environmental conversations	Read Part V Media: 11 "Media Framing of Body Burdens" and 12 "Legitimizing the Environmental Injustices of War" 1 to 204

**SPRING BREAK****Mar 15-19 No class this week.****Select university dates and deadlines:**

February 3, 2021	Deadline to drop 16-week Classes with No Record
February 26, 2021	Deadline to Drop 16-Week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)
March 15-19, 2021	Spring Break (University Closed)
May 15, 2021	Spring Commencement Ceremony at 7 PM (tentative)
May 18, 2021	Final grades submitted by this day

For all university dates, see: [TAMUCT Academic Calendar](#)

## COURSE POLICIES

### Make-up and late policies

This is an online hybrid course. You are responsible for managing your time to make sure you complete all assignments on time. In the event that a student experiences an illness, injury, or other emergency that causes them to miss a discussion board or quiz, the student has the right to an alternative assignment to make up missed points. The instructor will choose the alternative assignment. In this case, the student must provide official documentation that includes their name and the dates of the illness or emergency (e.g. doctor's note, police report).

A student may only make up an **exam** if there is illness, injury, or another *documented* excuse. If a student misses an exam due to illness, injury, something out of their control they must 1. Provide documentation (doctor's note, police report, etc), 2. Notify Dr. Schoen as soon as possible of intent to take a make-up exam, and 3. Prepare to take the make-up exam within 1 week of the excused absence. Students who miss an exam with no excused absence will receive a zero for that exam. If the student foresees that s/he will be unable to complete the course, then s/he should drop the course or accept the posted grade.

### Plagiarism policy

Plagiarism on any assignment (discussion boards, quizzes, journals, etc) will not be tolerated. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes plagiarism. If you are confused, please ask me.

If an assignment is found to be plagiarized, the student will receive a zero for that assignment and a referral to Student Affairs.

If the plagiarism is egregious, the student will receive an F for the course. See also: section below on Academic Integrity.

## UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

### Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://dynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com/casAuthentication.aspx?InstID=eaed95b9-f2be-45f3-a37d-46928168bc10&targetUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2FSubmit%2FForm%2FStart%2F53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

*Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student.* The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

### Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, working with others in an unauthorized manner, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](#), [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0), [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout\_id=0].

### **Academic Accommodations**

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required) [https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717]

\*Please note that accommodations are not retroactive so if you need Dr. Schoen to accommodate you, please contact Dr. Normal as soon as possible. Your professor cannot adjust your grades based on an accommodation letter produced at the end of the semester.

### **Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf) online, please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

### **Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, on a remote online basis. Visit the Academic Support Community in Canvas to view schedules and contact information. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, success coaching, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 501-5836, visit the Office of Student Success at 212F Warrior Hall, or by emailing [studentsuccess@tamuct.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@tamuct.edu).

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

### **University Writing Center**

The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free service open to all TAMUCT students. For the Spring 2021 semester, all services will be online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. The UWC is also offering hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via [WConline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

### **University Library**

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance

may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

**For Spring 2021, all reference service will be conducted virtually. Please go to our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index] to access our virtual reference help and our current hours.**

### **A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas**

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html].

### **Behavioral Intervention**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout\_id=2].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5800.

### **Copyright Notice.**

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material, including lecture notes and teaching materials, is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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