



Sociology of the Environment (SOC 149) Syllabus

Course Information

Course Description	This course is an introduction to the field of environmental sociology. Sociology is the study of society and includes the study of institutions, communities, and inequalities. The environment is defined as the ecosystem and includes our society, wildlife, and the planet. In this course, we will unpack the major themes of environmental sociology. During our time together I will encourage you to develop and apply the environment to your sociological imaginations. We will discuss the many ways scholars and people observe and theorize the very complicated dynamics of environmental sociology. We will continually relate the ideas we encounter to our everyday lives, the contemporary social world, the San Diego metro area, and the UC system.
Credits	<i>4 units/12 hours (3 class time hours and 9 studying hours)</i>
Instructor	<i>Camila Alvarez</i>

Course Learning Outcomes

- *Students will be able to recognize social institutional actors—such as the state, corporations, US military, labor unions, or community organizations—involved in environmental challenges.
- *Students will be able to identify major theories of environmental sociology.
- *Students will be able to use environmental-indicator platforms to assess local pollution and/or climate change risk.

Course Format

Students are expected to complete assigned readings by class, attend lectures, participate in class activities and discussion, complete course content, and visit office hours.

A Typical Week in This Course

Our class meets on MWF for 50 minutes.

Overall Course Expectations

What you can do to support your success in the course:	What I will do to support your success in the course:
Read the syllabus and stay current with course information	Be prepared and bring my enthusiasm for teaching to each session
Keep up with readings and lab assignments, as each one builds on the previous one.	Respond to emails within one working day, and provide timely feedback on assignments / submissions.
Contribute to the learning environment with fairness, cooperation, and professionalism	Establish a learning environment with fairness, cooperation and professionalism, and will take action if these principles are violated.
Treat your classmates, instructional assistants and myself honestly and ethically	Treat you honestly and ethically, and will address any concerns you might have
Commit to excel with integrity ¹ . Have the courage to act in ways that are honest, fair, responsible, respectful & trustworthy.	Uphold integrity standards and create an atmosphere that fosters active learning, creativity, critical thinking, and honest collaboration.
Manage your time, so you can stay on track with the course and complete tasks on time	Only assign work that is vital to the course, and will work to meet the standard credit hour allotment for the course.
Communicate with me if you determine that a deadline cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances	Consider requests for adjustments and will make reasonable exceptions available to all students when approved

1. Please read UC San Diego's [Policy on Integrity of Scholarship](#) and take the [integrity pledge](#)!

Course Materials and Tools

Required Text/Readings/Other Material

PDFs on Canvas

Assignments, Projects, and Grading

- Reading journals: 5 points (x 3) = 15 points (15%)
- Exams: 15 points (x 3) = 45 points (45%) in Week 4, 7 and finals
- Socio-environmental imagination project -- Group work participation and presentation: 40 points (40%)
 - Peer review: 5%
 - Group participation: 5%

- Other tasks: 15%
- Group presentation: 15%
- All points above equal a grand total of 100 points

Reading journals

The purpose of reading journals is to structurally encourage students to read and prepare for class discussion. Throughout the term, you must submit three reading journals. The reading journal should **summarize and analyze** the week's readings. Entries must range between 400-500 words. Because you only submit three throughout the quarter, this means you choose which weeks to submit the entries. Entries must be submitted on Canvas before the class corresponding to the assigned reading.

Course content exams

Exams will evaluate course content and readings. Exams will occur in Week 4, Week 7, and Finals Week.

Socio-environmental imagination project

Throughout the term, students will work in a group to prepare a 10-minute presentation in week 10. Instructions will be given in class.

Late Work:

Late work will receive a 10% deduction for each day post deadline.

Grading Scale

A = 90-100% **B** = 80-89% **C** = 70-79% **D** = 60-69% **F** = 59%-below

*+/- are not reflected in the grade breakdown.

Instructional Team: Who Are My Instructors?

Instructor:

Hello, my name is Camila Alvarez and I am an assistant professor of sociology. Please call me Professor Alvarez or Dr. Alvarez. You can contact me at: calvarez10@ucsd.edu

Office hours:

Office hours are a time where you can meet with me to discuss anything pertaining to the course material such as help on assignments or clarification on lecture material. I highly encourage you to visit office hours.

Wednesday 10-12PM (in-person in office SSB 489)

Principles of Community

We will maintain a collaborative learning environment together. In our shared spaces we will value, embrace, and support diversity, and this class will work to uphold [the UCSD Principles of Community](#).

Resources for Support and Learning

There are a variety of resources available to students at UC San Diego, which are designed to address needs and enhance the student experience. In this section, the course is connected to the broader university community by services and programs for students. If there are resources specific to the course, school, department and/or topic, be sure to include those here.

Learning and Academic Support	
<p><u>Ask a Librarian: Library Support</u> <i>Chat or make an appointment with a librarian to focus on your research needs</i></p> <p><u>Course Reserves, Connecting from Off-Campus and Research Support</u> <i>Find supplemental course materials</i></p> <p><u>First Gen Student Success Coaching Program</u> <i>Peer mentor program that provides students with information, resources, and support in meeting their goals</i></p> <p><u>Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS)</u> <i>Intellectual and personal development support</i></p>	<p><u>Writing Hub Services in the Teaching + Learning Commons</u> <i>One-on-one online writing tutoring and workshops on key writing topics</i></p> <p><u>Supplemental Instruction</u> <i>Peer-assisted study sessions through the Academic Achievement Hub to improve success in historically challenging courses</i></p> <p><u>Tutoring – Content</u> <i>Drop-in and online tutoring through the Academic Achievement Hub</i></p> <p><u>Tutoring – Learning Strategies</u> <i>Address learning challenges with a metacognitive approach</i></p>
Support for Well-being and Inclusion	
<p><u>Basic Needs at UCSD</u> <i>Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live is encouraged to contact: foodpantry@ucsd.edu basicneeds@ucsd.edu (858) 246-2632</i></p> <p><u>Counseling and Psychological Services</u> <i>Confidential counseling and consultations for psychiatric service and mental health programming</i></p>	<p><u>Community and Resource Centers Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</u> <i>As part of the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion the campus community centers provide programs and resources for students and contribute toward the evolution of a socially just campus (858).822-.3542 diversity@ucsd.edu</i></p> <p><u>Get Involved</u></p>

<p>Triton Concern Line Report students of concern: (858) 246-1111</p> <p>Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) Supports students with disabilities and accessibility across campus</p>	<p><i>Student organizations, clubs, service opportunities, and many other ways to connect with others on campus</i></p> <p>Undocumented Student Services Programs and services are designed to help students overcome obstacles that arise from their immigration status and support them through personal and academic excellence</p>
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Campus and Course Policies

Campus Policies

UC San Diego policies and statements to include within your syllabus.

- [UC San Diego Principles of Community](#)
- [UC San Diego Policy on Integrity of Scholarship](#)
- [Religious Accommodation](#)
- [Nondiscrimination and Harassment](#)
- [UC San Diego Student Conduct Code](#)

Course Schedule

- **Week 1:** Introduction to course and discovering our socio-environmental imaginations.
 - Assigned Readings: Chapter 1: The Ecological Crisis from Foster, John Bellamy. [1994] 1999. The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press.
 - Monday (1/6/24)
 - Wednesday (1/8/24)
 - Friday (1/10/24)
- **Week 2:** A brief history of societies and their interactions with nature.
 - Assigned Readings: Chapter 2: Ecological Conditions Before the Industrial Revolution from Foster, John Bellamy. [1994] 1999. The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press.
 - Monday (1/13/24)
 - Wednesday (1/15/24)
 - Friday (1/17/24)
- **Week 3:** Anthropological drivers of global climate change and environmental indicators
 - Assigned Readings: Chapter 3: The Environment at the Time of the Industrial Revolution from Foster, John Bellamy. [1994] 1999. The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment. New York, NY: Monthly Review Press.
 - Monday (1/20/24): Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday – No class
 - Wednesday (1/22/24)
 - Friday (1/24/24)
- **Week 4:** There is no planet B: The rise of environmental movements.

- Monday (1/27/24)
- Wednesday (1/29/24): Exam review
- Friday (1/31/24): In-class exam
- **Week 5:** State representation: The role of the government and civil society.
 - Assigned Readings: Chapter 11: Toward a National Environmental Policy from Andrews, Richard N. L.. 2020. Managing the Environment, Managing Ourselves. Hartford, CT: Yale University Press.
 - Monday (2/3/24)
 - Wednesday (2/5/24)
 - Friday (2/7/24)
- **Week 6:** The cost of national security: Environmental contamination from military sites.
 - Assigned Readings: Frey, R. Scott. 2013. "Agent Orange and America at War in Vietnam and Southeast Asia." Human Ecology Review 20(1): 1-10.
 - Monday (2/10/24)
 - Wednesday (2/12/24)
 - Friday (2/14/24)
- **Week 7**
 - Monday (2/17/24): Presidents' Day Holiday – No class
 - Wednesday (2/19/24): Exam review
 - Friday (2/21/24): In-class quiz
- **Week 8:** Environmental justice
 - Assigned Readings: "California Climate Change Bill AB 32: Case Study of Policy Advocacy." From Tracy Penkins. 2022. Evolution of a Movement: Four Decades of California Environmental Justice Activism. University of California Press.
 - Monday (2/24/24)
 - Wednesday (2/26/24)
 - Friday (2/28/24)
- **Week 9:** The built environment: Cities and redevelopment
 - Assigned Readings: "The Politics of Environmental Repair." From Lindsey Dillon. 2024. Toxic City: Redevelopment and Environmental Justice in San Francisco.
 - Monday (3/3/24)
 - Wednesday (3/5/24)
 - Friday (3/7/24)
- **Week 10:** Group presentations
 - Monday (3/10/24)
 - Wednesday (3/12/24)
 - Friday (3/14/24)
- **Finals Week**
 - Wednesday (3/19/24): In-class exam at 8AM