

Sociology 360 Environment and Natural Resources**Course Outline****Instructor: Jordan Tesluk****University of British Columbia****Tuesday and Thursday: 11:00 am – 12:30 pm**Pre-requisites

Sociology 100, Sociology 300, Sociology 350 or three credits of second year sociology

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to sociological perspectives on the environment and natural resources. It examines relationships of exploitation and conservation between society and the environment, and places these relationships within the frames of past, present, and future-looking perspectives. The province of British Columbia and the northwest of North America provide the primary canvas for this class. As a subject of academic study, resource industries have revealed many lessons about our relationship between the environment (and human uses of it), and these lessons provide insight to some of the challenges that society faces as it moves forward. The BC forest industry is offered as a proxy for examining and critiquing the current and historical relationships between society and the environment. The forestry industry has not only served as the primary economic driver for British Columbia, but also acted as the venue for some of the most prominent environmental campaigns on the plane and formed a focal point Aboriginal rights movements.

Students will examine the challenge of resolving the role of forestry and other resource industries with various relationships between society and nature, while drawing upon a wide range of sociological literature. They will review historical relationships between BC resource industries and social organization, and examine the challenges that society faces in building the economy while managing environmental and social uncertainties in a continually changing world. The class will move from political economic analysis and review of classic sociological perspectives, to examining constructionist perspectives and contemporary views of human-nature relationships that focus on the risks and uncertainties faced in modern society.

This class takes a critical position, and seeks to confront issues, reveal problems, and question the dominant political economic order. However, the ultimate objective of the class is not to cast resource industries in a poor light. We will recognize the value that resource industries hold in society, and the central role they play in national, provincial, and local development strategies. Instead, the goal is to ask, how can we reconcile our needs as a resource-dependent capitalist society with the competing social, cultural, and biological imperatives that tie us to the environment? How can we learn from our past experiences, and create resource economies that satisfy our present needs, while protecting our future needs? What are the social forces and social movements affecting our efforts in this project, and how do they differ from those that have affected us in the past?

The class follow a course of structured lectures that will move forward in parallel with the progression of the readings from subject to subject. The readings will provide students with natural resource and environmental issues that will introduce them to key sociological concepts and theories, while exploring various dimensions of northwest social development.

Evaluation

Mid-term Exam 30%

Final Exam 25%

Term Paper 30%

Participation 5%

Assigned readings analysis (short paper) 10%:

Course Readings

Students are not required to purchase a textbook for this course. Access to the readings is provided through the Connect E-learning system at <http://elearning.ubc.ca/connect/>