

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
Department of Sociology
SOC 4170: Environmental Sociology
Spring, 2024, T/TR 2:00-3:20, Gate, Room 142

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Office Hours: by appointment

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I. Learning Objectives

- A. To gain knowledge of the current environmental issues facing the U.S. and world
- B. to identify factors that have contributed to current global environmental problems
- C. to understand social causes of environmental injustice
- D. to understand the influences that shape people's viewpoints regarding an environmental crisis
- E. to identify potential solutions to the global environmental problems

II. Learning Components

- A. Readings: To help meet the objectives, the following books are required reading (available on Amazon.com and at UNT bookstore):

Stuart, Diana (2021). What is Environmental Sociology? Medford MA: Polity Press.

Hannigan, John (2022 or 2014). Environmental Sociology (4th or 3rd edition). New York: Routledge.

- B. Class time: will be focused on the objectives through class lectures, discussions, videos, and when it can be arranged professionals speaking to the class

III. Course Policies

- A. Class Attendance: regular and punctual class attendance is expected. It will be difficult to master all the material if class is missed. While students will not usually be penalized for missing class they will be penalized for coming to class late or leaving class early since these disrupt the class. If you will need to come late or leave early, please let me know. Students can gain extra credit points by attending class (see below). Students who miss a lot of class will be given NO leeway in grading and may lose points while students who miss no or only a few classes will be given MUCH leeway in grading and may gain points. For example, a recent student missed more than half the classes, had a test grade average of 69, and wanted one point added to their final grade in order to receive a "C". The student got a "D". Another student missed only a few classes had an average grade of 88 and was given two extra points to receive an "A".

- B. Academic integrity: as the student guidebook points out, academic integrity is required. Plagiarism and cheating will result in failure and a report to the Dean. This includes the use of AI for course assignments turned in.
- C. Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior (including continual texting during class) will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>
- D. Mental Health and Special Needs: UNT's counseling center provides free career and personal counseling to UNT students (up to 8 sessions per year). Appointments can be made by calling 940-565-2741. For our class, appropriate adjustments and auxiliary aid are available for persons with disabilities. See me and/or call 817-565-2456 (TDD access 1-800-735-2989).
- E. Cell Phones and texting: you should know that many professors and instructors find it insulting when a student is constantly texting or otherwise using their phones during class. Consequently, if the time comes that the student could use some "leeway" in her/his grade, and the student has constantly used his/her phone during class, no leeway will be given and points could be removed.
- F. Laptops: if you use a laptop in class, please refrain from using it for anything other than our class.
- G. Office Hours: I enjoy meeting with students. I learn a lot and I hope they do as well. Please email me (yeatts@unt.edu) so we can find a day/time that works for both of us. I will be happy to discuss the course material, your progress in the class, your plans for the future, personal issues, need for a letter of recommendation, or anything else of interest/importance to you. Some students will meet with me just to introduce themselves and share a bit about their activities and progress at UNT and I enjoy these meetings as well.
- H. If unexpected problems develop for you during the semester (e.g., health, emotional issues, family disruptions, death or illness in family), please contact me as soon as these become apparent. I can then work with you to develop a plan that will assist you. Students, who approach their instructors/professors when problems develop, are much more likely to receive help and consideration. Don't wait until the end of the semester to inform the professor of problems because it will be too late to find a solution. This is a good rule-of-thumb for any class you take.

I. Grading: final grades will be based on the following:

1. Four (4) tests will be given worth 25% each of your final grade. The tests are cumulative only to the extent that it may be difficult to understand one chapter without having read and understood the previous chapters. The format will be four or five discussion questions per test unless told otherwise. Potential discussion questions will be provided on my webpage (www.yeatts.us).

You are responsible for using the restroom prior to the beginning of a test so **do not ask to use the restroom** in the middle of a test (unfortunately a few of us would use this as an opportunity to review our notes in the middle of taking the test).

2. Test Dates:

Feb. 13 (Tuesday)	Test 1	25%
March 7 (Thursday)	Test 2	25%
April 9 (Tuesday)	Test 3	25%
May 9 (Thursday)	Test 4 1:30-3:30am Test 4 (during exam week)	25%

3. Make-up Tests: may be allowed within one week from the original exam day. The test score will be reduced by one letter grade unless there is documentation or other means of verifying an illness, personal issue, or other serious situation. On the other hand, if you have **not missed any or very few classes** and you oversleep and miss the test (or some other less serious situation), this may be excused or very few points deducted.
4. Class Participation: Those who contribute meaningful, thoughtful, and knowledgeable comments/ideas may receive extra points added to their final grade if their final grade is close to the next higher grade (unless the student has missed a lot of class). For example, an 88 could be raised to a 90. Similarly, those who attend all (or almost all) classes may receive extra points.
5. Extra Credit Opportunity: Please see “**Opportunity for Extra Credit**” below for details.

I. How to Study for Tests:

1. Read carefully and give thought to the assigned chapters to be covered on the test (ideally keep up weekly; there are not a lot of pages to read but there is a lot of information and thought provoking ideas within the pages).
2. Learn the major concepts and ideas presented in the chapters.
3. Learn the information provided during class and on Power Point slides provided on Dr. Yeatts’ webpage (www.yeatts.us).

IV. Schedule of Class Topics and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (January 16 and 18):

Overview of class

How is Environmental Sociology related to science (what is science?)

Stuart, Chapter 1: Environmental Sociology in Uncharted Waters

Week 2 (January 23 and 25):

Stuart, Chapter 1 (continued)

Week 3 (January 30 and February 1):

Hannigan, Chapter 1: Planet in Peril

Week 4 (February 6 and 8)

Hannigan, Chapter 1 (continued)

Test 1, February 13 (Tuesday), covers readings: Stuart Chapter 1 and Hannigan Chapter 1 and PowerPoint slides

Week 5 (February 15):

Stuart, Chapter 2: The Social Dimensions of Environmental Impact

Week 6 (February 20 and 22):

Stuart, Chapter 2 (continued)

Week 7 (February 27 and 29):

Yeatts handout on Sustainable Community Development

Week 8 (March 5)

Yeatts handout (continued)

Test 2, March 7 (Thursday), covers Stuart Chapter 2 and Yeatts handout

Week 9: SPRING BREAK (March 10 – 17)

Week 10 (March 19 and 21)

Stuart, Chapter 3: Examining Drivers of Environmental Impacts

Week 11 (March 26 and 28)

Stuart, Chapter 3 (continued)

Hannigan, Chapter 3: Social Construction of Environmental Issues Problems

Week 12 (April 2 and 4):

Hannigan, Chapter 3 (continued)

If time allows we will review a case study—The Great Lakes

Test 3, April 9 Tuesday, covers Stuart, Chapter 3 and Hannigan, Chapter 3 (and case study if we have time to review it)

Week 13 (April 11)

Stuart, Chapter 4: Identifying solutions

Week 14 (April 16 and 18)

Stuart, Chapter 4 (Continued)

Week 15 (April 23 and 25)

Stuart, Chapter 5: Moving Forward

Week 16 (April 30) **No class on May 2, it's a UNT reading day for exams**

Stuart, Chapter 5 (continued)

If time allows we will review a case study—Los Angeles

Test 4 on exam day assigned by UNT (May 9, Thursday, 1:30-3:30), covers Stuart Chapters 4 and 5 (and case study if we have time to review it)

Opportunity for Extra Credit

Students will obtain one extra credit point for each class period that they attend and participate in class. Participation might include watching a film in class or a small group activity during class. For example, students may be asked to work in groups of two to five during class to answer one or more questions and then each student will turn in their own answer(s) to the questions before the end of class and the student will receive one extra credit point.

There will be an opportunity for one extra point during each class period, assuming you do not come to class late or leave early. The extra points you obtain will be added to your next test grade. Students who come to class late will not get an extra point unless they have notified me that they would be late. Similarly, students who leave class early will not be eligible for these extra points unless notifying me. A student who does not miss class will typically accumulate 6 points to be added to their next test grade. So, if you get an 85 on the test but have six points accumulated, you would receive a 91 for that test.

*****If our class is moved on line (as what happened at the beginning of the pandemic), we will keep everything as it is currently planned but have our classes through zoom. I will email the class with further instructions at that time.**