



The University of Western Ontario  
**SOCIOLOGY 2155B-200**  
**Environmental Sociology**  
**Winter 2023**

**Wednesdays 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm**  
**Delivery Method – Blended**

**\*See Zoom tab in OWL for class meeting links\***  
**\*Exams will be held in person\***

**Instructor:** Dr. Kim Shuey

Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom

Email: [kshuey@uwo.ca](mailto:kshuey@uwo.ca)

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**Course Description:**

This class examines the social causes of environmental problems, their connection to economic activity, and the over-time consequences of human interactions with their natural environment. A sociological approach to these issues includes a discussion of power, social inequality and environmental justice and an exploration of individual, social, and political solutions.

***Prerequisite(s):*** None

***Antirequisite(s):*** Sociology 2220A/B, Sociology 2298A/B taught in 2020/2021

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:**

In this class you will be introduced to a sociological approach to understanding the ways humans interact with and are connected to their natural environments. This course will allow you to explore individual, social, and political solutions to environmental destruction as well as the role of social factors such as consumption, technology, politics, and population size.

This course will include both synchronous and asynchronous learning, as well as guided experience-based learning activities to help you engage and reflect on environmental issues that we are discussing in class. **NOTE:** Class meetings will be held via Zoom (see OWL site for links) and involve structured lectures, activities, and class discussions of course material. It is expected that you use a webcam and share video during our class meetings. Exams will be held in person.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the link between environmental problems, social problems, and social inequality
- Recognize and explain the ways in which health, consumption, the economy, science, technology, development, and population shape environmental conditions
- Understand the influence of political institutions on environmental practices

- Recognize and explain how culture, ideology, moral values and social relations shape our thoughts and actions with regard to the environment
- Identify some practical solutions to bring about a just ecological society
- Draw on the “environmental sociological imagination” to understand their own behaviour and experiences related to the environment and to join the dialogue regarding practical solutions

### **Course Material:**

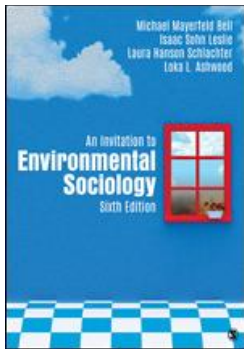
#### **Technical Requirements:**

Stable internet connection, computer with working microphone and webcam.

#### **Required Text(s):**

Bell, M., Ashwood, L., Leslie, I., and Schlachter, L. (2020). [An Invitation to Environmental Sociology](#), Sixth Edition. Sage. ISBN: 9781506366005

A number of options for purchase or rental are available from the UWO bookstore at: SOC2155B [https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2022B&courses%5B0%5D=200\\_UW/SOC2155B](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2022B&courses%5B0%5D=200_UW/SOC2155B)



Any additional required materials, including short videos and additional readings, will be available online or posted on OWL.

### **Communication:**

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates and for any posted resources. This is the primary method by which information and announcements will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Contact me via email at [kshuey@uwo.ca](mailto:kshuey@uwo.ca)

## **Method of Evaluation:**

The course is based on class lectures and readings. Lectures also cover material that is not discussed directly in the course readings, but for which you are responsible. Conversely, you also are responsible for the material covered in the readings even if the material is not reviewed in class. The mid-term and final examinations will include multiple choice, short answer questions, and short essays.

The evaluation methods described below in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

### ***Evaluation Breakdown:***

Midterm: March 1, in-person, in assigned classroom (UC-2105)	30%
Final exam: April Exam period - TBA	30%
Reflection paper 1, uploaded prior to class time on 2/15	15%
Reflection paper 2, uploaded prior to class time on 3/29	15%
Attendance (see below)	10%

### **Exams:**

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. The course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test. See section on Absences below for further details.

**Midterm exam:** 30% The 2-hour exam will be held in person, during class time, in the originally scheduled classroom. It is mixed format, including a range of types of questions (multiple choice, short answer, longer answers) that cover all elements of the course to date.

**Final Exam:** 30% The 2-hour exam will be held in person. It is mixed format, including a range of types of questions (multiple choice, short answer, longer answers). Multiple choice questions will only cover material since the midterm. Essay questions might ask questions geared towards assessing your engagement with the course materials across the semester.

### **Reflection Papers:** 2 x 15%

The purpose of these assignments is for you to develop your 'Environmental Sociological Imagination' and critical thinking skills by applying what you are learning in class. Each Reflection Paper involves a combination of preparatory research to provide context and a community-focused application. Topics, length, and additional instructions will be provided in class. Assignments should be submitted in OWL by the start of class on the day they are due.

**Attendance: 10%**

Class attendance and participation are important to learning. This element is meant to reward students who come to class and take part in the group learning experience, while also providing the flexibility to miss a few classes for health or other reasons. The scale allows for 2 free absences to still receive full marks, and therefore I do not need to know about any short-term illness or conflicts. Attendance will be taken either at the beginning or end of class. We will meet a total of 11 times, not including the midterm exam date.

Attending 9, 10 or 11 classes = 10 points

Attending 7 or 8 classes = 7 points

Attending 5 or 6 classes = 5 points

Attending 4 or fewer classes = 0 points

**\*\*It is expected that you use a webcam and share video during our class meetings and discussion. Please let me know if there are reasons this is not possible. If you are on campus and have difficulty finding a quiet spot, the course does have a classroom assigned that is available for you to use during class time.**

**Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning:**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

**Student Absences:**

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

***Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:***

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Please also contact me immediately to make me aware of the situation and discuss an approved extension.

***Unexcused late assignments:***

Unexcused late assignments will receive a 5% late penalty per day for up to 5 days past the due date. At that point the assignment will no longer be accepted.

### ***Absences from Final Examinations:***

Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to their Home Faculty Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible. Academic Counselling will determine eligibility to write a Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

**Note:** missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

### **Course Schedule and Readings**

January 11	Introduction to the course
January 18	Chapter 1: Environmental Problems and Society
January 25	Chapter 2: Health and Justice
February 1	Chapter 3: Consumption and Materialism
February 8	Chapter 4: Money and Markets
February 15	Chapter 5: Technology and Science
**Reflection 1 due**	
February 22	READING WEEK
March 1	MIDTERM
March 8	Chapter 6: Population and Development
March 15	Chapter 7: The Ideology of Environmental Domination
March 22	Chapter 8: The Ideology of Environmental Concern
March 29	Chapter 10: Mobilizing the Just Ecological Society
**Reflection 2 due**	
April 5	Chapter 12: Living in the Just Ecological Society

## **Important Policies**

***Academic Consideration for Missed Work:*** Students must provide valid medical or supporting documentation in order to receive accommodation for missed work worth 10% or more of the final grade in the course. All required documentation for absences must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty. Individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds or for other reasons.

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). The student medical certificate is available at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

***Religious Accommodation:*** When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

***Accessibility Options:*** Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD

[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)), which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

[www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

***Scholastic Offences:*** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

***A Note on Plagiarism:*** Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

***Plagiarism Checking:*** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

***Mental Health:*** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western ([www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic_counselling/).

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).