

NRSM 475: Environment and Development

Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 am – 12:20 pm in the Native American Center 011

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Office hours: *By appointment only.* I strongly encourage you to talk with me if you have questions or if I can be of help in any way. I'm happy to brainstorm with you and help work through any issues you are having with the course material. Please sign up for a meeting time at (you can find this link on the course Moodle page as well): <https://marisela-chavez.youcanbook.me>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environmental problems and their solutions are today widely discussed around the world, both by specialists and everyday people. But what is considered a “problem” and a “solution” is based on how each are perceived, and this varies by context, historical moment, and ones’ position/place in the world. Understanding root causes and real solutions of environmental problems are therefore extremely complex. In the past, the dominance of biophysical experts and their perspectives in the field has meant that solely “environmental” processes have been studied and considered relevant, including associated perspectives and research methods (i.e., largely studying phenomena that are directly observable and quantifiable). But bringing in social science expertise entails attention to different social forces such as culture, economics and politics, and an assortment of different paradigms, assumptions and research methods. Addressing politics is particularly challenging as many scientists by training have viewed “science” as apolitical and may be unwilling (and unable) to understand how power and politics are deeply intertwined with how individuals and societies think about, value and use the material world, often in highly conflictual ways. Apprehending these intersections entail attention to both material and symbolic (subjective) processes that are only sometimes empirically observable and always entail attention to multiple scales—from individual to societal levels of action, historical to future time horizons and across geographical space and places. These also include engagement with “big” and complicated processes such as colonialism, development, capitalism, globalization and the messy world of conservation. Lastly, even when diverse social forces are acknowledged as necessary to understanding environmental problems and proposed solutions, there is a tendency to emphasize a familiar (social) force or approach over others, and even to disregard those that challenge deeply held views especially when they demand attention to politics and conflict.

In this course we will use a critical environmental sociological lens to examine the historical roots, challenges and offered solutions to a variety of “environmental” issues. We will examine how the “human” is often very present into what is nonetheless labeled “natural.” We will explore how particular histories, framings and assumptions about society, environment and development have led to different assumptions of what is a “problem” and a “solution,” and how the latter itself creates its own set of conflicts (including what constitutes “conservation” according to whom!). We will pay close attention to the *politics* of environment, development and conservation, and to theories that have arisen to better illuminate these forces such as environmental justice and conservation approaches, including fortress, participatory, community-based and market-based ones. Each entails a trajectory of how environmental “goods” and “bads” are distributed, and who makes the decisions about rules and institutions for governing access to and control over them, including deleterious impacts on particular classes, races,

genders, regions and livelihoods. We will investigate the opportunities and challenges offered by recent approaches such as sustainability, resilience, food democracy/sovereignty and environmental justice towards re-envisioning and re-creating society, environment and development as more mutually beneficial for ecology and society.

The emphasis in this course is on learning **to understand, analyze and write critically** about social forces in environment and development. It is not intended to cover all of the major environmental issues or conservation strategies in the world today; focal examples change each year. You have the opportunity to pursue a particular issue or resource in your final paper. But be prepared that the approach taken in this class is complex and will likely challenge you to rethink your own views and ideas. The instructor will help explain difficult and new concepts, and ground them in current issues and real life experiences. By enrolling in this class you are agreeing to do your best to undertake these challenges and to let the instructor know when you do not understand something or wish to examine it further.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- **Describe** key social forces influencing society-environment-development-conservation interactions;
- **Analyze** different perspectives on the causes, consequences and potential solutions to a variety of environment and development issues today, and
- **Evaluate** the opportunities and challenges of strategies, programs and policies to reconcile tensions between environment and development, and their variable costs and benefits for different social groups and ecologies.

REQUIRED READINGS

In addition to articles and other material posted on our course Moodle site, there is one required book:

- Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Milkweed Editions.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

The course involves lectures, class discussions, videos, in-class exams and a final project. The instructor will provide background on readings and key concepts. Students are expected to participate in all required activities, take responsibility for their own educational development, and contribute towards a healthy learning community.

Course Format: Given the ongoing Covid-19 surges, this course will be conducted virtually through Thursday, February 24th, 2022. This will involve logging into class on Zoom during assigned class meeting times and completing assignments through Moodle. **Our first in-person class meeting will be on March 1st, 2022**, or as announced.

Expectations for reading-based reflection and discussion: Classroom time is structured around students' engagement with the assigned readings (see below), so it is imperative you read and think about the material before each class, so you are prepared to contribute to professional discussion. To help you prepare for each class, please consider the following:

1. What questions do you have about this reading? Bring questions to class.
2. How does this reading challenge your assumptions? (Describe your "aha!" moments.)

3. How does this reading connect to other readings in this course?

I recognize that there are many readings, especially in the beginning and you are likely to find them challenging. I encourage you to bring your questions to class where our in-depth discussions and other learning activities can assist you to understand the material. ***All views are welcome in class but they must be communicated in a civil manner.***

GRADING POLICY AND ASSIGNMENTS

Please mark exams and assignment due dates on your calendar and plan accordingly. Please note that extensions require my prior approval and that in the absence of such approval (and presuming no serious emergency), a zero will be given if you fail turn in an assignment or quiz on time. This class is offered for traditional letter grade only; it is not offered under the credit/no credit option.

Assignment	Due Date	Total Points	% of Final Grade
Participation	Throughout	45	15
Reflections (4 @ 15 pts each)	As assigned, by groups (see Moodle)	60	20
Quizzes (2 @ 30 pts each)	Feb. 15 th and March 17 th	60	20
Paper/Project Abstract	Feb 17 th	15	5
Paper/Project Presentation	April 26 th	15	5
Paper/Project	May 3 rd	45	15
Final Exam	May 13 th	60	20
Total possible points		300	100

Grades will be allocated using the following scale:

A	93-100	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 and below

PARTICIPATION (15% of final grade): I do not believe in taking attendance, but I do believe in participation through in class-participation and reflection. Your participation grade will be determined by your response at the beginning of class to prompts that will be based on the readings, or themes discussed to stimulate your thinking as we start class. These prompts will not be available outside of the time allotted for them during our class meeting time, so it will be your responsibility to be present to complete them to earn your participation grade. Your attentiveness, effort, ideas/opinions, and questions during class discussions will also be considered into your participation grade. Your participation grade is not based on knowing the "right" answers or the quantity or length of your comments but rather your willingness to contribute, evidence that you have completed and engaged in material presented in the reading, and the increasing quality of your contributions.

REFLECTIONS (20% of final grade):

Your main job in this course is to do the readings thoughtfully and to help us discuss them in class. In order to help you read carefully and to facilitate class discussion, you will write four short papers in which you react to the readings assigned. These papers must be typed and should be 2-3 double spaced

pages (12-point font, 1-inch margins) in length. Students will be assigned to groups to turn in reflections papers throughout the semester (see course schedule and Moodle, it is your responsibility to look up and keep track of the group you've been assigned to).

TWO QUIZZES (20% of final grade):

These will involve a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions based on the readings, guest lectures, and videos.

FINAL PAPER/PROJECT (25% of final grade, broken down): In this course, you can do either a traditional term paper or you can choose to do a more action-oriented project. The term papers or projects provide an opportunity for you to delve more deeply into a topic that interests you. Much more will be said about these papers/projects in class. You will report your findings in presentations, papers and/or other products due at the end of the term. You will submit an abstract with five references (5% of grade), conduct a presentation of your findings to class (5% of grade), and submit a final paper /project portfolio (15% of grade).

Option A: Term Paper. The purpose of the final paper is for you to assess a local or regional initiative working at the nexus of environment and development (i.e., working towards creating “sustainable” and/or “resilient” societies and environment). You will describe, analyze, and evaluate the issue(s) addressed by the initiative according to criteria, lessons and evidence learned from class and your own readings, videos, and discussions. The final paper should be 8-10 pages in length (12-point font, 1-inch margins).

Option B: Project. These projects (which may be done in small groups of no more than 4 people) are intended to give you an opportunity to engage in an action or community service learning related to an environment and development issue. I will share ideas in class. Unless you and I agree on an alternative plan, projects will be reported on through an annotated portfolio that presents your work. Portfolios include a description of your project, details on your activities, and any materials that were generated as a result of the work (e.g., videos, factsheets, photos, posters). Portfolios must include a 2 to 3-page reflection paper (12-point font, 1-inch margins) about what you learned in the course of doing your work (e.g., What were your successes? How did you push yourself? What challenges did you encounter? What would you do differently next time? What are your take home lessons?). When projects are conducted in teams, each student should write their own reflection paper on the process.

- *Abstract (5% of grade):* The purpose of the abstract is to ensure that you have selected a topic you would like to research and have found some materials that will support that process. Summarize, in one, double-spaced page, the issue that you have selected and provide a very brief description of what you plan to examine. Include *five references* you will use in completing the requirements for the case study.
- *Class presentation (5% of grade):* The purpose of the presentation is to give you an opportunity to organize and articulate some of your case study findings so far and get some feedback from your classmates before you finish writing your final paper/project portfolio.
- *Final Paper/Project (15% of grade):* Due Tuesday, May 3rd by noon via Moodle. You will receive your graded papers/portfolios back by Tuesday, May 10th via Moodle as well.

FINAL EXAM (20% of final grade): Part of the final is intended to evaluate students on the last section of the course. The second part will be cumulative in nature (you will be tested on key concepts from prior quizzes over the course of the semester). It will involve a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. No need to bring blue books.

COURSE SCHEDULE

#	Date	Topic	Readings/Assignment Due
1	Tues. 1.18.22	Introduction and our approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review syllabus, expectations, etc. Introduction to each other 	
How did we get here? Key Macro- Historical Processes			
2	Thurs. 1.20.22	Instituting the Development Project: Colonialism, Decolonization, Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMichael, P. 2012. <i>Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective</i>. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Chap 2 McMichael, P. 2012. <i>Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective</i>. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Chap 3 <p>Group 1 Reflections</p>
3	Tues. 1.25.22	Examining our Assumptions: “What is development? What is progress? Can humans control nature? Who suffers (most) from ecological disasters? Are there limits to growth?”	Video #1: <i>Cadillac Desert: Mulholland’s Dream</i>
4	Thurs. 1.27.22	Globalizing International Development: Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hebron, L. and Stack, J.F. 2017. <i>Globalization: Debunking the Myths</i>. Rowman & Littlefield. Chaps 2,3,4 <p>Group 2 Reflections</p>
5	Tues. 2.1.22	Globalization Debates & Dilemmas: What “counts” and what is left out of development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revkin, A.C. 2005. “A new measure of well-being from a happy little kingdom.” <i>New York Times</i>. November 4, 2005. (7 pgs). Hebron, L. and Stack, J.F. 2017. <i>Globalization: Debunking the Myths</i>. Chap 5 <p>Group 3 Reflections</p>
6	Thurs. 2.3.22	Women, Water, Work & Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everett, J. and S.E.M Charlton. 2014. <i>Women Navigating Globalization</i>. Chap 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 <p>Group 4 Reflections</p>
7	Tues. 2.8.22	Case Study. Socio-ecological Impacts of Colonialism,	Video #2: <i>Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai</i>

		Development and Globalization in Kenya: The Green Belt Movement	
8	Thurs. 2.10.22	Socio-ecological impacts (contd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hebron, L. and Stack, J.F. 2017. <i>Globalization: Debunking the Myths</i>. Chaps. 7,8,9 <p>Group 5 Reflections</p>
9	Tues. 2.15.22	Quiz #1	
Major Socio-Environmental Problems			
10	Thurs. 2.17.22	The Role of Population in Development and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell, M.M. and L.L. 2016. "An Invitation to Environmental Sociology." Sage Pub. chap 5, p. 131-162 • Hardin, G. 1968. "The tragedy of the commons." <i>Science</i> 162:1243-1248. <p>Group 1 Reflections</p> <p>Paper/Project Abstract</p>
11	Tues. 2.22.22	Consumption and Materialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell, M.M. and L.L. 2016. "An Invitation to Environmental Sociology." Sage Pub. chap 2, p. 49-77. • <i>Additional Reading/Resource: TBD (see Moodle)</i> <p>Group 2 Reflections</p>
12	Thurs. 2.24.22	Corporate Power in the Transportation and Energy Sectors	Video #3 in class: <i>Taken for a Ride</i>
13	Tues. 3.1.22	Corporate Power in the Transportation and Energy Sectors (contd.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carolan, M. 2017. "Society and the Environment." Westview Press. chap 7, 135-158 • Shogren, E. 2017. "Rooftop revolution: solar advocates win a surprising victory in Nevada." <i>High Country News</i>, August 21, 2017. p. 12-17. • Thompson, J. "The bid for a big grid." <i>High Country News</i>, August 21, 2017. p. 18-21 • Dunbar, J. 2016. "The "Citizens United" decision and why it matters." The Center for Public Integrity. <p>Group 3 Reflections</p>
14	Thurs. 3.3.22	The Politics of Feeding the Planet and Environmental Degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foley et al. (2011), NY times article from <i>Saving the Planet with Pesticides and Plastic</i>.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dennis T. Avery. Indianapolis: Hudson Institute, 2000. Chapter 11: "Is high-yield farming sustainable?" Pp. 213-237. • Carolan, M. 2017. <i>Society and the Environment</i>. Westview Press. chap 8, 148-168. <p>Group 4 Reflections</p>
15	Tues. 3.8.22	Climate Change and Capitalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpt from Naomi Klein <i>This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate</i> • <i>Additional Reading/Resource: TBD (see Moodle)</i> <p>Group 5 Reflections</p>
16	Thurs. 3.10.22	Case Study. Political Economy of Tropical Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dove, M. 1993. "A revisionist view of tropical deforestation and development." <i>Environmental Conservation</i> 20(1): 17-24, 56. • Hoskins, M.W. "Gender and the roots of community forestry." In: Colfer, C.J, B.S. Basnett and M. Elias. 2016. <i>Gender and Forests</i>. Routledge/Earthscan p.17-32. • <i>Additional Reading/Resource: TBD (see Moodle)</i> <p>Group 1 Reflections</p>
17	Tues. 3.15.22	Case Study. Forest Struggles in North America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster, J.B. 1993. "The limits of environmentalism without class: lessons from the ancient forest struggle in the Northwest." <i>A Monthly Review/Capitalism, Nature, Socialism Pamphlet</i>, pgs. 3–34. • Case example: Montana - Rob Chaney. 2016. "Can Montana's timber industry outgrow its history?" series. • Kelly, E. and J. Bliss. 2009. "Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities." <i>Society & Natural Resources</i> 22:519-537 • <i>Additional Reading/Resource: TBD</i> <p>Group 2 Reflections</p>
18	Thurs. 3.17.22	Quiz #2	
	Week of 3.21.22	SPRING BREAK	
Towards Sustainable / Resilient Societies and Environments			
19	Tues. 3.29.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. ix-62

		Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Practice (TEKP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Berkes, F. 1999. "Context of traditional ecological knowledge." In: Berkes, F. 1999. <i>Sacred Ecology</i>, 3–15. Taylor and Francis. <p>Group 3 Reflections</p>
20	Thurs. 3.31.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 2 Reciprocity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 63-120 <p>Group 4 Reflections</p>
21	Tues. 4.5.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 3 Reciprocity vs. modern ecological movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 121-166 <p>Group 5 Reflections</p>
22	Thurs. 4.7.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 3 (contd.) - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 167-215 <p>Group 1 Reflections</p>
23	Tues. 4.12.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 4 (contd.) Plants, people, and restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 216-267 <p>Group 2 Reflections</p>
24	Thurs. 4.14.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 4 (contd.) - 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 268-340 <p>Group 3 Reflections</p>
25	Tues. 4.19.22	Braiding Sweetgrass, Section 5 (contd.) Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>, pgs. 341-379 King, L., and D. McCarthy. 2005. "Introduction: Environmental problems require social solutions." In: <i>Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action</i>. ed. L. King and D. McCarthy, xi–xxi. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. <p>Group 4 Reflections</p>
26	Thurs. 4.21.22	Sustainable Development, Sustainability: Sustaining what, for whom? Who Decides?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Károly, Kiss. 2011. "Rise and Fall of the Concept Sustainability." <i>Journal of Environmental Sustainability</i>. 1(1): 1-12. Schmitz, H. and I. Scoones. 2015. "Accelerating sustainability: why political economy matters." Evidence Report No 152, Institute for Development Studies (IDS). <i>Additional reading/resource: TBD (see Moodle)</i> <p>Group 5 Reflections</p>
27	Tues. 4.26.22	Class Presentations	
28	Thurs. 4.28.22	Conservation in the Anthropocene: Parks, Protected Areas, Working Landscapes,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schmidt-Vogt, D. 2005. "Our second nature: a reflection on conservation paradigms." <i>Historic Environment</i> 19, 1-17.

		Land-sparing vs Land-sharing Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brockington D, Wilkie D. 2015. "Protected areas and poverty." <i>Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B</i> 370: 20140271.
29	Tues. 5.3.22	Case Study. Colombia Peace Agreement: Conservation or development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Readings/Resources TBD (see Moodle)</i> <p>Final Paper/Project Due</p>
30	Thurs. 5.5.22	Market-Based Conservation: Fairtrade and Certification Schemes, Environmental Services and Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairtrade International 2010. "Fairtrade's contribution to a more sustainable world." • <i>Additional reading/resource: TBD (see Moodle)</i>
	Friday, May 13 th	Final Exam	8:00 – 10:00 am

ADVISING

I encourage you to e-mail or schedule time during my office hours. I also welcome you to make an appointment outside of my office hours (schedules permitting). I encourage you to talk with me as soon as you have questions or difficulties with the material. Do not wait until the day before an exam or an assignment is due.

WRITING SUPPORT

The University of Montana Writing Center welcomes all students in all disciplines to take advantage of free support as they write for any course. To make an appointment and learn more about The Writing Center's by-appointment and drop-in hours, visit the **Writing Center** or call 243-2266.

ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications.