

Community And Environmental Sociology 140: Introduction to Community & Environmental Sociology FALL 2024

Fall 2025
Course Location: 1520 Microbial
Sciences
Course Time: T/TH 11:00-12:15 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Michaela Hoffelmeyer
Pronouns: they/she
E-mail: hoffelmeyer@wisc.edu
Office: Ag Hall Room 308, Room G
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-2:30 p.m. or by
appointment

Teaching Assistant: Rebecca Laurent
Pronouns: she/her
E-mail: rllaurent@wisc.edu
Office: Ag Hall Room 308, Room A
Office Hours: Friday 1:00-2:00

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Sociological examination of the linkages between the social and biophysical dimensions of the environment. Key topics include community organizing, local food systems, energy transitions, environmental justice, resource dependence, and sustainable development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Understand how social science arguments are constructed and evaluated.
2. Learn and practice core elements of sociological reasoning, including making connections between a social phenomenon and its larger context, evaluating the “situated” nature of knowledge, and recognizing the paradigms, or knowledge frameworks, that structure our thinking about social issues.
3. Gain experience critically evaluating various sources of knowledge and data about social issues.
4. Become familiar with key concepts such as: “community,” “development,” “growth,” “economic security,” “environmental justice,” “sustainability,” “globalization,” and “neoliberalism;” learn how these concepts are involved in contemporary debates about what is fair, just, and desirable for the places where we live and the world as a whole.
5. Become familiar with important actors in the social processes that affect our communities and environment, including government, corporations, transnational institutions, and social movements; also learn about historical shifts in the relationships among these actors,
6. Develop skills and frameworks for analyzing how social processes disparately affect different groups of people.
7. Make connections between sociological theories and concepts and your own experiences.

READINGS:

- All course readings can be found on the CANVAS site in modules designated for each course week.
- Please check the course schedule to determine which readings will be covered during each specific class meeting.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Three Reflection Essays (30 percent):

- There are three reflection essays required for this course. You are tasked with connecting the assigned readings to questions and concerns raised in class. I will post a writing prompt on the course Canvas page 10 days before the due date.
- Some of the essays will ask you to explore the contributions of the authors in shaping a topic of community and/or environmental studies; others might ask about your reflections on the readings as they apply to your own personal story.
- You should prepare to submit original work that you write independently. I encourage you to seek support from the UW Writing Center for help with development or copy edits. While there are specific grading rubrics for each paper, in general, they will be evaluated based on the following: 1) clarity and originality of ideas; 2) accurate use of concepts and themes from the readings; 3) logic and argument; and 4) writing style and technical aspects of presentation (such as grammar, citations, and spelling).
- Remember, we are evaluating your comprehension of key themes and topics, and whether you can apply them accurately in an original way. Each paper will require an analysis of approximately 600 words and up to 750 words.
- Writing prompts will be posted on Canvas 10 days prior to their deadline. Print a paper copy and be prepared to submit your essay during the discussion section. Include citations in the American Sociological Association style (ASA) or American Psychological Association (APA) style. Double-space your essay.

Deadlines: October 6th, November 3rd, and November 24th, all at 11:59 p.m.

Mid-Term Exam (20 percent): The Mid-term exam is scheduled for in-person during class. The midterm exam is based on the first half of the semester's materials. Multiple-choice questions will be provided. This is not an open book or open notes exam. You will take the exam in the class on your computer or tablet device. You should prepare by studying the concepts and ideas covered in lectures, films, and readings. **Date: October 17th**

Lecture Attendance (20 percent): Attendance will be recorded through class-based activities administered randomly throughout the semester. For example, in-class polls and surveys will be used, and responses will be recorded as attendance. There is no way to make up these points. If you have a concern about extended absences, please meet with the TA or instructor.

Final Exam Paper (20 percent): Students will write one final paper for this course. The exam writing prompts will be posted on Tuesday, December 10th. The deadline to submit the final exam essay via Canvas is Tuesday, December 17, at 11:59 p.m.

Section Attendance & Participation (10 percent): You are required to participate in your enrolled section. Your TA will discuss with you how points are divided. Please attend your enrolled section only.

Extra Credit (optional): Students will be offered extra credit options that count no more than 1% towards your final grade. Attending one pre-approved event hosted by the CES department, Sociology department, or Nelson Institute will provide you with a 0.50% bump on your final grade. To receive credit, please write a 500-word reflection on your experience, providing details of the event and its relationship to one of the assigned readings. Submit the extra credit assignment to your TA.

COURSE POLICIES

LATE ASSIGNMENT: If you have a medical emergency or other valuable reason that you cannot submit a paper, you should contact your TA as soon as possible. You are not guaranteed an extension, but we will consider your request.

If your paper is late and you have not notified either your TA or your professor, your assignment will automatically be deducted 5% per day, including weekends, and will not be considered for evaluation after 15 calendar days.

GRADE APPEALS

If you wish to appeal a grade on a paper in this course, you must take the steps below. **Depending on the evidence, an appeal may result in a lower grade, the same grade, or a higher grade.**

- 1) Wait one week after receiving the grade to make an appeal.
- 2) Present a written argument to the TA explaining the strengths of your work in fulfilling the assignment.
- 3) Set up an appointment with the grader to discuss the appeal.

If you wish to appeal your final grade in this course, you must take the steps below. **Depending on the evidence, an appeal may result in a lower grade, the same grade, or a higher grade.**

- 1) Gather together all of your written work in the course.
- 2) Submit a written request explaining in detail which part of the grade you are contesting. If you are contesting the grade on an exam or a paper, you must present written evidence and argument explaining how your paper or exam answered the assigned question or fulfilled the aims of the assignment.

You may **not**

- 1) Make a personal appeal before you have collected your written work and submitted a written request for a grade change.
- 2) Present new evidence after your initial written request.

CLASSROOM WORKING AGREEMENTS (Additions from class are welcome!)

Working agreements are procedures for classroom discussion and climate.

1. When class begins, please put away other devices or distractions (phones, etc.). You may use your computer to take notes. However, there is now considerable empirical evidence that taking notes by hand leads to much greater retention than using a laptop, so you might consider adopting this practice. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>
2. You may eat in class but try to limit the distraction for other students as best you can.
3. Be prepared to contribute by writing, speaking, and being visually present.
4. Respect classmates, guests, the instructor, and yourself. Presume positive intentions. Provocative ideas and questions are encouraged; do not be afraid to voice your opinion just because it may be different. However, avoid language whose sole purpose is to provoke or disparage others.

NAME AND PRONOUN POLICY

- Please let me know if the name that is listed on the class roster is not the name you would like to be called. You can let me know in class or through email at any time in the semester. You are encouraged to correct any mispronunciations of your name as soon as possible in class or via email.
- Please refer to your classmates' names and pronouns in the way that your classmates are most comfortable with.
- If you have any concerns regarding your pronouns, you are welcome to email or visit me during office hours at any point in the semester.

EMAIL POLICY & OFFICE HOURS

- If you have a logistics question, please first consult the syllabus and CANVAS. If you missed a lecture, first contact a fellow student for notes.
- If you have concerns about discussion sections regarding attendance or assignment extensions, please contact your TA, Rebecca, at rllaurent@wisc.edu.
- **Email** me (hoffelmeyer@wisc.edu) with "**C&E SOC 140**" in the subject line about accommodations, to schedule an appointment, or with concerns.

ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE USE OF AI

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities: Brainstorming your ideas and checking grammar and style. The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities: Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose reflections assigned to you, writing a draft of assignments, and writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers. You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC CALENDAR & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

[Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)

Establishment of the academic calendar for the University of Wisconsin-Madison falls within the authority of the faculty as set forth in [Faculty Policies and Procedures](#). Construction of the academic calendar is subject to various rules and laws prescribed by the Board of Regents, the Faculty Senate, State of Wisconsin and the federal government. For additional dates and deadlines for students, see the [Office of the Registrar's pages](#). Students are responsible for notifying instructors within the first two weeks of classes about any need for flexibility due to [religious observances](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary [sanctions](#) include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

Please talk with me at any time during the semester if your learning needs change, even if you are still working with the Student Disability Resources Office to formalize accommodations.

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their enrolled courses and their learning experience. Most instructors use AEFIS a [digital course evaluation](#) survey tool. In most instances, students receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that anonymous course evaluations are available. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STATEMENT

Students often experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and personal well-being. These may include mental health concerns, substance misuse, sexual or relationship violence, family circumstances, campus climate, financial matters, among others.

Students are encouraged to learn about and utilize UW-Madison's mental health services and/or other resources as needed. Visit uhs.wisc.edu or call University Health Services at (608) 265-5600 to learn more.

- UHS 24-hour Crisis Line 608-265-5600 (option 9)
 - If you're thinking about suicide, or if you're concerned for the well-being of someone you know, call UHS to speak with an on-call crisis counselor who will help address your most pressing concerns, assess your safety, and connect you with follow-up service needs. We care about you, and want you to get connected to the support you need. **The crisis support line is available 24/7, 365 days a year.** They receive calls from students, family members, partners, friends, roommates, faculty, housing staff, and other campus community members who are concerned about a student. (<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/suicide-prevention/mh-resources/>)
- Survivor Services
 - UHS Survivor Services provides free, confidential support services to UW– Madison student survivors of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual

harassment, sexual exploitation, and/or stalking. Read our [FAQs](#) for more information. For a comprehensive guide to rights and resources for survivors of sexual and relationship violence, access the [UW–Madison Sexual Misconduct Resource and Response Guide](#).

- Open Seat Food Pantry
 - The Open Seat is the only student-led food pantry on campus that supplies any *self-identified food insecure UW-Madison students* with free nutritious and healthy produce, dairy, canned, and hygiene products. All that is required is a sign-in when you stop in during our pantry hours!
 - We are located on the third floor (Room 3203) of the Student Activity Center at 333 East Campus Mall.
 - For hours, check: <https://kb.wisc.edu/84346>

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS & THE USE OF AUDIO RECORDED LECTURE STATEMENT

View [more information about FERPA](#).

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in courses may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, students are not authorized to record lectures without permission unless they are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability who has an approved accommodation that includes recording. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities, with the exception of sharing copies of personal notes as a notetaker through the McBurney Disability Resource Center. Students are otherwise prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

STUDENTS' RULES, RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

[Rights & Responsibilities](#)

TEACHING & LEARNING DATA TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students' personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully reviews and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through [learning analytics](#), and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university's full teaching and learning [data transparency statement](#).

COURSE CALENDAR

*Note all dates are subject to change. The instructor will communicate any changes ASAP via *Canvas*. Please turn on Canvas notifications to ensure you are up to date.

Date	Materials	Assignments
Week 1: September 5 <i>Introduction to course</i>	No outside materials	
Part 1: Sociological Theories, Approaches, & the Sociological Imaginary		
Week 2: September 10 <i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	Barkan, Steven. 2021. "Chapter 1: Sociology and the Sociological Perspective" in <u>Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World</u> , 3 rd edition.	
September 12	C. Wright Mills. 1959 "The Promise" in <u>The Sociological Imagination</u> .	
Week 3: September 17 <i>Situating Community & Environmental Sociology</i>	Barken, Steven. 2021. "Chapter 4: Groups and Organizations" in <u>Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World</u> , 3 rd edition. Hill Collins, Patricia. 2010. "The New Politics of Community." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 75(1): 7-30.	
September 19	Bell et al. 2020. "Chapter 1: Environmental Problems and Society" in <u>An Invitation to environmental Sociology</u> 6 th edition.	
Week 4: September 24 <i>Environmental (in)justice</i>	McGurty, Eileen Maura. 1997. From NIMBY to civil rights: The origins of the environmental justice movement. <i>Environmental History</i> 2(3): 301-323.	
September 26	Murdock, E. G. 2020. "A history of environmental justice: Foundations, narratives, and perspectives" in <i>Environmental justice</i> . Wisconsin PFAS https://wisconsinwatch.org/2023/10/wisconsin-alabama-toxic-pfas-firefighting-foam-cleanup-landfill/	
Week 5: October 1 <i>Environmental (in)justice Indigenous Approaches</i>	Liboiron, Max. 2021. <u>Pollution is Colonialism</u> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction Chapter including footnotes. 	

October 3	Liboiron, Max. 2021. <u>Pollution is Colonialism</u> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3. Badger Amo History: https://badgerhistorgroup.org/overview	Reflection Essay #1 Due at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday October 6
Week 6: October 8 <i>Queer(y)ing Human-Nature Relations</i>	Bell et al. 2020. "Chapter 7: The ideology of Environmental Domination" in <u>An Invitation to environmental Sociology</u> 6 th edition.	
October 10	Carmen, Butler. 2017. "A Fruitless Endeavor: Confronting the heteronormativity of environmentalism" in <u>Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment</u> .	
Week 7: October 15	Review for midterm: No new material	
October 17	MIDTERM IN-CLASS	
Part 2: Trending Topics in Community & Environmental Sociology		
Week 8: October 22 <i>Poverty & The Politics of Place</i>	Barken, Steven. 2021. "Chapter 6: Social Stratification" in <u>Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World</u> , 3rd edition. Sherman, Jennifer. 2006. "Coping with Rural Poverty: Economic Survival and Moral Capital in Rural America." <i>Social Forces</i> 85(2): 891-914.	
October 24	Cramer Walsh, Katherine. 2012. "Putting Inequality in its Place: Rural Consciousness and the power of Perspective." <i>The American Political Science Review</i> 106 (2): 517-532.	
Week 9: October 29 <i>Resource Curse? Coal Communities</i>	Bell and York. 2010. "Community Economic Identity: The Coal Industry and Ideology Construction in West Virginia." <i>Rural Sociology</i> 75(1): 111-143.	
October 31	Harlan County USA Documentary in-class	Reflection Essay #2 due Sunday November 3 rd at 11:59 p.m.
Week 10: November 5 (Election Day) <i>Resource Rich? Amenity-based destinations</i>	Winkler, Richelle. 2013. "Living on lakes: Segregated communities and inequality in a natural amenity destination." <i>The Sociological Quarterly</i> 54(1): 105-129.	
November 7	Pilgeram, Ryanne. 2021. Conclusion Chapter in <u>Pushed Out: Contested development and Rural Gentrification in the US West</u> . Guest Lecture from Dr. Ryanne Pilgeram, Regenerative Economies Manger at the Wilderness Society!	

Week 11: November 12 <i>Consolidation in Food & Agriculture</i>	Bell et al. 2020. "Chapter 4: Money and Markets" in <u>An Invitation to environmental Sociology</u> 6 th edition. Howard, 2019. "Increasing Corporate Control: From Supermarkets to Seeds" in <u>Twenty Lesson in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture</u> .	
November 14	Sexsmith, Kathy. 2022. The embodied precarity of year-round agricultural work: health and safety risks among Latino/a immigrant dairy farmworkers in New York. <i>Agriculture and Human Values</i> 39(1), 357-370.	
Week 12: November 19 <i>Governance, Power, & Health</i>	Three Part Series from Wisconsin Watch titled Hogtied Guest Lecture from Bennet Goldstein at Wisconsin Watch!	
November 21	Start Dark Waters in-class	Reflection #3 due Sunday November 24 th at 11:59 p.m.
Week 13: November 26 <i>Governance, Power, & Health continued</i>	Finish Dark Waters Read What's Fact and What's Fiction in Dark Waters https://slate.com/culture/2019/11/dark-waters-accuracy-fact-vs-fiction-teflon-dupont.html	
November 28	NO CLASS: UNIVERSITY BREAK	
Week 14: December 3 <i>Just Transitions & Futures</i>	Kojola, Erik and Agyeman, Jullien. (2021). "Just transitions and labor" in <u>Handbook of Environmental Sociology</u> .	
December 5	Bell et al. 2020. "Chapter 12: Living in the Just Ecological Society" in <u>An Invitation to environmental Sociology</u> 6 th edition.	.
WEEK 15: December 10 Final Day of Class	Final Exam Questions Discussed in-class	
Finals Week	Final Exam due via Canvas on Tuesday December 17th at 11:59 p.m.	

