



The University of Western Ontario  
**SOCIOLOGY 2155B-200**  
**Environmental Sociology**  
**Winter 2025**  
**Delivery Method – Blended**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kim Shuey  
Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom  
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*This is a DRAFT only. Please see the course site for the final version.*

**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.

***Anti-requisite(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.

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

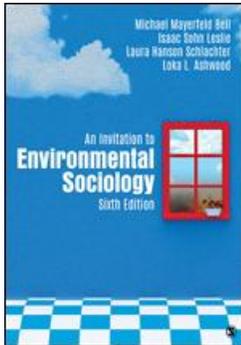
**Course Material:**

**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). Options for purchase or rental are available from the UWO bookstore. \$236.60 Hard copy or \$113.00 Ebook.



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 Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) and their Western email on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information 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 in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

**Evaluation Breakdown:**

Midterm: February 26, 2 hours, in-person	35%
Final exam: April Exam period TBA, 2 hours, in-person	35%
Assignment 1, required submission <u>before</u> the midterm exam, due date flexible	15%

Assignment 2, required submission before the last class meeting, due date flexible 15%

**1. Midterm exam:** 35%, February 26, in-person

The 2-hour exam will be held in person, during class time, in the 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. 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.

**NOTE:** Instructors are permitted to designate one assessment per course per term as requiring supporting documentation to receive academic consideration. For this course, the midterm exam has been designated as **requiring supporting documentation**. Those with approved medical accommodation for absence will be required to write the departmental make-up exam at the scheduled time.

**2. Final Exam:** 35%

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. 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.

**3. Assignments:** 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 Assignment involves a combination of preparatory research to provide context and a focused application. Topics, length, and additional instructions will be provided in class. Students will submit their assignments under the designated Assignments tab in OWL Brightspace.

**NOTE:** Please note that flexibility is built into this assignment. *The first assignments must be submitted before the midterm, and the second, before our last class meeting.* Within those parameters, students can choose the date of submission. Because of this flexibility, *submission dates are firm* and additional requests for academic consideration will not be granted.

**Student Absences:**

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

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. 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.

### **Course Schedule and Readings:**

Will be provided on OWL Brightspace at the start of the term

### **Artificial Intelligence:**

Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic, with students expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. Essays, written assignments and/or lab reports should reflect the student's own thoughts and independent written work. Students should also generate

their own figures (e.g., graphs, diagrams) rather than using AI generated ones. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and all them to produce original written contributions. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the writing the essays and other written assessments.

### **Academic Policies:**

**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)

**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.

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/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

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.

**Copyright:** Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

**Absence from Course Commitments:** Students must familiarize themselves with the Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that **supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams)** and for practical laboratory and performance tests

typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the Student Medical Certificate [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

**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 Academic Counselling Office.

**Missed Tests and Exams:** Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a make-up test. 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. Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test/exam slots.

Students with an approved absence from a final exam in December or April will be required to write a makeup exam known as a Special Examination. Permission to write a Special Examination may be granted on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documentation provided to the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

**Religious Accommodation:** Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

**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 Brightspace 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.

**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: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf). 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).

**Mental Health:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:** Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website [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).

**Additional resources:**

Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <http://westernusc.ca/services>

**Course Selection:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite courses they may have taken.

If a student enrolls in a course for which they do not have the prerequisites, they may be removed from the course and have it deleted from their record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to their fees in the event that they are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

If a student takes a course that is antirequisite to a course previously taken, they will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Please visit your Home Faculty Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty\\_academic\\_counselling.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html).

**Bookstore:** Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>