

Brief Course Description.
Sociology 360 202:
Sociology and Natural Resources

Term 2: January - April 2021
Location: Online Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30pm - 5:00pm

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BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide an introduction and overview to sociological thinking about, and research on, "the interrelation of society to the natural environment". We will examine a range of sociological issues pertaining to natural resources. This overview will include an examination of theory, research methods, and substantive issues.

Some issues to be explored include: the "Tragedy of the Commons"; the social characteristics of resource communities; the rise of the environmental movement and environmental politics; the role that resource industries and the landscape (more generally) have played in shaping Canadian culture. Some of the theoretical perspectives we will consider in examining such issues include: the Treadmill of Production, Ecological Modernization, and Social Constructionism.

The main learning objective of this course is to provide students with the ability to draw upon sociological theory and research methods in order to think analytically about society-environment issues. To this end, you will have the opportunity to write a term paper where you will be asked to apply a sociological perspective to a natural resource issue. Alternatively, you will be asked to evaluate a research article on a natural resource topic. Your ability to apply sociological thinking to natural resource problems will also be tested on the final exam.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Provide an introductory overview to the sociology of natural resources.
- Provide an overview of key sociological topics related to natural resources such as social inequality, the social construction of environmental issues, political economy, socialization and the formation of public opinion, social movements, and community resilience.
- Students will learn to describe and apply key theoretical perspectives (e.g. social constructionism, ecological modernization, the treadmill of production) to natural resource topics. They will also be encouraged to link these insights to policy issues.

Textbooks and Other Readings:

Nathan Young. 2015. *Environmental Sociology for the Twenty-First Century*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Young (2015) is the main textbooks. But additional articles, chapters, reports, and videos will be assigned, and will normally be accessible through the library system, or will be made available by the instructor. (Some videos may be accessible through other sources.)

Format of the Course:

The format of the class will involve a mixture of lectures, videos, guest lectures, and tutorials. We will watch a several documentary videos. Some guest speakers will be invited to speak. We will undertake several interactive group exercises.