

**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
(www.soci.ucalgary.ca)**

SOCIOLOGY 309 (Alberta Society)

Course Outline, Winter 2014

Safewalk/Campus Security: 220-5333, ANYTIME

This course makes use of Blackboard to communicate information to students. To access Blackboard, go to: blackboard.ucalgary.ca OR my.ucalgary.ca

Instructor: Tom Langford Office: SS 924 langford@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours between Thursday 9 January and Tuesday 15 April: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 noon to 1 p.m., or by appointment (but CANCELLED during Reading Week, and on Tuesday March 4).

Email guidelines: Please use email to inform me of something important (e.g., you are sick and will be missing the mid-term test), to ask a question that I can answer with a simple Yes or No (e.g., Is the material on rural Alberta covered on the mid-term?) or to book an appointment outside of the scheduled time for questions. For more complicated questions and discussions, please speak to me in person

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course looks at the development of Alberta society from the 1800s up until the present time, and projects the potential trajectories of societal development throughout the 21st century as high carbon systems of production and consumption are increasingly called into question and likely replaced due to the adverse consequences of climate change.

The course is organized in line with sociologist John Urry's recommendation that "societies should be examined through the patterns, scale and character of their resource-dependence and resource-consequences." Approximately the first half of the course will be concerned with understanding the developments and conflicts between 1800 and 1950 that have had lasting consequences for Alberta's present day social institutions, patterned social inequalities and culture; special attention will be given to the colonial and neo-colonial subjugation and resistance of First Nations and Métis peoples. This 150 years can be divided between two eras: early low carbon forms of social organization that, beginning in the late 19th century, gave way to a nascent high carbon society centred on the production, distribution and consumption of coal.

The second half of the course will examine the high carbon social systems and social practices, and the petro-politics, which have characterized Alberta since the massive oil discovery at Leduc in 1947. This period extends up until the present day with tar sands mining in the Fort McMurray area and gas fracking throughout Alberta dominating the provincial economy, and carbon-based global energy companies shaping the provincial political agenda. Meanwhile, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels have risen from about 300 parts per million (ppm) in the mid 20th century to 400 ppm in 2013, evidence consistent with the theory of anthropogenic climate change. Alberta is the major carbon producer in Canada, and one of the world's leading producers of oil from tar sands. If John Urry is correct when he terms climate as "the key category of the twenty-first century," then understanding the present configuration and possible futures of Alberta society requires taking seriously the implications of climate change.

In the second half of the course we will read John Urry's book *Climate Change & Society*. In lecture periods and through supplementary readings we will "Alberta-ize" the content of Urry's book in order to begin to address the question of "Climate Change and Alberta Society." To take an example, we will trace the major changes in rural and urban social worlds with the ascendancy of high carbon systems and practices, and consider how post-carbon rural and urban social worlds would be different. As time permits, we will also delve into other distinctive features of contemporary Alberta society such as the patterns of religious affiliation and practice, the social organization of care for young children, and the contemporary importance for the Alberta labour force of both temporary foreign workers and fly in/fly out workers from others parts of Canada.

REQUIRED BOOK

Urry, John. 2011. *Climate Change & Society*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

OTHER REQUIRED READINGS

In addition to readings from the Urry book, you will be required to complete a number of additional readings. Some of these readings are journal or magazine articles available online through the University of Calgary library. They are designated LIBRARY ONLINE in the schedule of readings posted on Blackboard. (Be sure to log into the U of C library web site before trying to access these readings.) Other readings have been published by Open Source publishers or magazines that operate without firewalls (e.g. www.thetyee.ca), so you can access them through a direct link that will be provided in the schedule of readings. Some other readings have been scanned and are available in the Course Documents section of Blackboard. Finally, there are chapters from books and articles from journal issues that have not yet been digitized. Paper copies of these readings will be placed on reserve in the TFDL and are designated RESERVE in the schedule of readings.

ASSIGNED LISTENING AND VIEWING

As an alternative to a reading, you will occasionally be required to listen to an audio file or watch/listen to a video file during the course of the term.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

The **Reading Schedule** is posted on Blackboard. There will be assigned reading (or listening/viewing) for each week that the course runs. I will try to assign a reasonable number of pages of reading in any one week. Given this, my expectation is that you will carefully read whatever is assigned. Please try to keep up with these assignments since it will enhance your understanding of the materials we cover in class and your ability to participate with insight in our classroom discussions. Also please keep in mind that you are responsible for and will be tested on material covered in assigned readings and assigned audio/video files even if there is no time to discuss that material in our classes.

STUDENT EVALUATION

(1) Field Trip with a Follow-Up Assignment (trip to the interpretive centre at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, on the Siksika Reserve 100 km. east of Calgary)

(A) Date/Time. The field trip will occur on Saturday February 1, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Attendance is **mandatory**, so please arrange your schedule so you can be sure to attend.

(B) Travel. We will travel by bus. The bus will leave the university (from the basement level outside the Social Sciences Building) at 9 a.m. Please arrive 10 minutes early. We plan to arrive back at the university by 4 p.m.

(C) Activities. (1) Either on your own or in small groups, you will tour the exhibits at the interpretive centre. Professor Langford will supply a few content questions to give your self-guided tour of the exhibits some focus. (2) Lunch (which you have to pack for yourself). (3) A special educational program that looks at Siksika life today and explores Siksika views of their present day connections with the government and people of Alberta.

(D) What To Bring. (1) Lunch and snacks. (The cafeteria at Blackfoot Crossing will be closed since it is the offseason.) (2) A notepad or a tablet on which to take notes. (3) Money to pay for the trip. (4) Clothes that match the weather forecast. (If time and weather permit, we may spend a few minutes outside to look at the Treaty 7 Monument and/or the gravesite of Chief Crowfoot.)

(E) Cost. Please plan for a tentative cost of \$30. Bring this cash with you on the bus. (The exact cost will be confirmed closer to February 1).

(F) Follow up Assignment. You will be required to complete a take-home assignment based upon what you learned during the field trip. The assignment will be posted on Blackboard on Sunday February 2 and must be submitted by Wednesday February 5 at 10 p.m. If you do not participate in the field trip, you will receive a mark of 0% on the assignment.

(G) Value. 15% total (10% for participation in the field trip; your assignment answers will be marked out of 5%).

(2) Mid-Term Test # 1, Thursday February 13, 2 to 3:15 p.m.

(A) Format: True/false, multiple choice and (possibly) short answer questions on material covered between Jan. 9 and Feb. 13. This includes lecture content, assigned readings, assigned audio or video files and the field trip.

(B) Value: 25% or 30%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(3) Mid-Term Test # 2, Thursday March 27, 2 to 3:15 p.m.

(A) Format: True/false, multiple choice and (possibly) short answer questions on material covered between 14 February and 27 March. This includes lecture materials, assigned readings, and assigned audio or video files.

(B) Value: 25% or 30%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(4) Final Examination, to be scheduled by the Registrar in the April 17-29 period

(A) Format: The final exam will consist of two parts:

(1) True/false, multiple choice and (possibly) short answer questions on material covered between 28 March and 14 April. This includes lecture materials, assigned readings, and assigned audio and video files.

(2) Essay questions on the topic of “Climate Change and Alberta Society.” You will be given a short list of essay questions no later than the last day of classes (14 April). The essay questions that appear on the final examination will be drawn from this list.

(B) Value: 25%, 30% or 35%, whichever is most favourable to you

IMPORTANT NOTES

(1) Late Penalty. Except in the cases of documented illness, or extenuating circumstances brought to the instructor’s attention before the due date of the assignment, a penalty of 10% of the assigned mark per day will be assessed any late work.

(2) A student who has a legitimate reason for being unable to write a mid-term test must discuss an alternative course of action with the instructor. At his discretion, the instructor will transfer the percentage weight to another component of the course, or set a make-up test. Make-up tests must be written as soon as possible at a scheduled Department of Sociology make-up test session. This term make-up tests must be written on Tuesday evenings starting at 5 p.m.

(3) *Deferred Term Work Form:*

Deferral of term work, including the take-home final examination, past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out. It's available at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 102) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

(4) The quality of a student's writing is a factor in the evaluation of a student's work in this course.

(5) "Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge" (*Calendar 2013-14*, p. 52). Please review the University of Calgary's policies for dealing with student misconduct, particularly plagiarism and cheating (see pp. 52-55 of the *Calendar*).

(6) Handing in papers outside of class, return of final papers, and release of final grades.

1. Students are requested to use the Digital Drop Box to submit the assignment. Please do not pass in any work at the Sociology Main Office. Assignments will be returned by email.
2. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

(7) **Ethics Research:** Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

(8) **Academic Accommodation**

Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with Student Accessibility Services (MSC 452, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. **It is a student's responsibility to register with Student Accessibility Services and to request academic accommodation, if required**

(9) The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

(10) **Emergency evacuations.** In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of the lecture classroom (SS 109), please proceed to the assembly point in the Professional Faculties Food Court. The back-up assembly point is the Education Block Food Court.

(11) **Student Representation.** The 2013-14 Students' Union VP Academic is Emily Macphail; email: suypaca@ucalgary.ca. The Faculty of Arts has four SU representatives who may be contacted at any of the following email addresses: arts1@ucalgary.ca, arts2@ucalgary.ca, arts3@ucalgary.ca, and arts4@ucalgary.ca. You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds/role>.

LETTER GRADE ASSIGNMENT

At the end of the course numerical marks are totalled and a final letter grade is assigned on the following basis:

Percentage Range	Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Letter Grade
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49 or less	F	85-89	A-
50-53	D	90-94	A
54-58	D+	95 or higher	A+
59-62	C-		
63-66	C		
67-71	C+		
72-75	B-		
76-79	B		
80-84	B+		