



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Faculty of Arts
Department of Sociology
Sociology Department Home Page: <http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca>

SOCIOLOGY 309 (Alberta Society)

Course Outline, Winter 2019

Safewalk/Campus Security: 220-5333, ANYTIME (Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus)

This course makes use of **Desire2Learn** to communicate information to students. To access D2L go to: d2l.ucalgary.ca OR my.ucalgary.ca

Instructor: Tom Langford **Office:** SS 1006

langford@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., or by appointment (please send me an email).
NOTE that office hours are cancelled on February 19 because of the Term Break.

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., Are questions based upon the presentation of a guest speaker included on the mid-term test?) or to book an appointment outside of the scheduled times for office hours. For more complicated questions and discussions, please speak to me in person.

- **Days and Time for classes:** TR 2:00PM - 3:15 PM
- **Location:** Administration Building 142

COURSE DESCRIPTION and LEARNING OUTCOMES

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." Key ideas from Urry's book, *Climate Change and Society*, will be presented as part of the course introduction.

The first part of the course will involve an overview of the main features of contemporary Alberta society. This will include a consideration of the significance for Alberta society of the production of a number of natural resources (conventional oil and gas, gas from fracking, oil from bitumen, coal, and forest products). The overview also examines Alberta's current population profile, class structure, ethno-cultural composition, urban vs. rural divide, poverty rate, levels of economic inequality and religious preferences and practices. A theme running throughout the overview will be how First Nations and Métis peoples, new immigrants, recent migrants from other parts of Canada and temporary foreign workers fit into contemporary Alberta society.

The second part of the course will be concerned with understanding the developments and conflicts between 1800 and 1947 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 third part 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 hydraulic fracking for natural gas throughout Alberta dominating the provincial economy, and carbon-based energy companies playing an oversized role in 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 approximately 410 ppm today, 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 bitumen. 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 conclusion to the course we will return to John Urry's book *Climate Change & Society* in order to "Alberta-ize" his ideas on models of potential future societies that could develop in the middle years of the 21st century as a consequence of the climate crisis.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- * identify, describe and critically discuss the major features of contemporary Alberta society in relationship to its dependence on the production of fossil fuels and other natural resources
- * identify and explain the reasons for distinctive features of Alberta society
- * sketch and critically discuss the long-term implications for Alberta society of the colonial and neo-colonial subjugation and resistance of First Nations and Métis peoples
- * explain how developments and conflicts between 1800 and 1947, and then again during the 72 years since the discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947, have had lasting consequences for Alberta's present day social institutions, patterned social inequalities, culture and politics
- * identify and critically discuss different models for how the climate crisis, and the likely shift to a post-carbon economy, may affect the character of Alberta society in the last half of the 21st century

CLASSROOM DECORUM

We should all conduct ourselves in ways that are respectful of everyone else in our learning environment. How this general principle applies to coming to class late, using electronic devices during lectures, chit chatting with the person next to you, attempting to multitask during lectures, etc., will be discussed at our first class and whenever needed throughout the term. As the lecturer, I will let you know (often right on the spot) if something you are doing disrupts my concentration. In addition, since you should be paying attention to lecture material at all times, I will not hesitate to ask you a question coming out of the flow of the lecture, whether you seem to be paying attention or not! I know that this is a fairly large class, but you should stay on your toes and always be prepared to participate since you never know when I will call upon you. In any particular class I sometimes invite participation from students sitting in a particular row or zone of the classroom. This is a way to include everyone in classroom discussions on a rotating basis.

REQUIRED BOOKS

None

REQUIRED READINGS, LISTENINGS AND VIEWINGS

A schedule of required readings, listenings and viewings will be posted and updated periodically on D2L.

Since we will only be reading two chapters from John Urry's book *Climate Change & Society*, the University of Calgary has purchased copyright clearance so that I can post these two chapters on D2L. In addition to the chapters 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 D2L. (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 will be able to access them through a direct link that will be provided in the schedule of readings. Still other readings are unpublished and are not covered by any copyright, so I am able to post digital copies of them on D2L. Finally in terms of readings, there are single chapters from older books that have not been digitized. If I cannot get copyright clearance to provide a digital copy of such a chapter through D2L, a paper copy will be placed on reserve in the TFDL and designated RESERVE in the schedule of readings.

I will also assign you to listen to some audio files and view some videos as part of your workload for this course.

STUDENT EVALUATION

(1) **Mid-Term Test # 1, Tuesday 12 February, 14:00 to 15:30**

(A) **Format:** True/false, multiple choice and short answer questions on material covered between 10 January and 12 February. This includes lecture content, assigned readings and assigned audio or video files.

(B) **Value:** 30% or 40%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(2) Glenbow Museum Visit (centred on the Blackfoot Gallery -- “Niitsitapiisinni: Our Way of Life”) and Follow-up Assignment

(A) Date/Time. The museum visit must be completed and your completed assignment posted to the D2L Drop Box sometime between Friday 15 February and Sunday 3 March ([see Glenbow Museum hours to help plan your visit](#)). Please note that a visit to the museum will only cost \$12 + GST as long as you remember to bring your student ID card.

(B) Time to Budget for the Museum Visit. You should leave yourself at least two hours to tour the Blackfoot Gallery at the Glenbow, and to find the relevant parts of the Mavericks Exhibit.

(C) Bonus Group Tour of “Niitsitapiisinni: Our Way of Life” led by an Indigenous Educator.

While you are welcome to undertake this museum visit at your convenience (either on your own or in conjunction with other students in the class), if there is sufficient demand I will organize one or two group tours of the Blackfoot Gallery which will be led by a Indigenous educator who works for the Glenbow Museum. For one of these special tours to run, I believe we will need a minimum of 15 students to sign up. We will sort out the details for potential bonus group tours sometime around the beginning of February. Please note that if you decide to take part in the bonus group tour led by an educator, there will be a small additional charge (amount to be determined since I am asking the Department of Sociology to help subsidize this additional charge). Those taking part in the Bonus Group Tour also will be responsible for paying their own museum admission.

(D) Glenbow Student Membership? The cost for a single entry into the Glenbow Museum is \$12 + GST if you present a valid student card. However the cost for a student membership for an entire year (includes unlimited entries to the Museum) is only \$20 plus GST. If there is any chance that you might want to visit the Glenbow again in 2019, I'd recommend purchasing the student membership.

(E) Assignment. Before you go to the Glenbow, print off the assignment questions that will be posted on D2L no later than 14 February. This will give you guidance on what to look for when you tour the Blackfoot Gallery and Mavericks Exhibition.

(F) What to hand in through D2L. (1) Your answers to the assignment questions. (2) A scan of your receipt for admission to the museum (not necessary if you take part in a bonus group tour since I will take attendance on those occasions). You can also show me a copy of your receipt immediately after class one day if you don't have access to a scanner.

(G) Value. 15%. (Those who take part in a Bonus Group Tour will receive a 2% bonus mark.)

(3) Mid-Term Test # 2, Tuesday 26 March, 14:00 to 15:30

(A) **Format:** True/false, multiple choice and short answer questions on material covered between 14 February and 26 March This includes lecture content, assigned readings, assigned audio or video files and the Glenbow Museum visit.

(B) **Value:** 30% or 40%, whichever is most favourable to you.

(4) Final Quiz, Thursday 12 April, 14:00 to 15:30

(A) **Format:** True/false, multiple choice and an essay question on material covered between 28 March and 12 April as well as Chapter 1 from Urry's *Climate Change & Society*. This includes lecture materials, assigned readings, and assigned audio or video files.

(B) **Value:** 10%

(5) Participation in Small-Group, In-Class Discussions During the Term

(A) **When:** On a few occasions during the term we will hold small-group, in-class discussions. These could take place at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of our 2:00 to 3:15 p.m. time slot. The date on which discussions will take place will not be announced ahead of time.

(B) **Value:** 5%

(C) **How your mark will be calculated:** If you participate in a small-group discussion from start to finish in a particular class, you earn a "participation credit" for that discussion. I don't know how many small-group discussions will take place during the term; most likely it will be in the range of four to seven discussions. Your mark will be calculated according to the following formula:

$$[(\# \text{ of participation credits earned} + 1) / (\text{maximum number of possible participation credits})] \times 5\%$$

Note that you can miss one of the small-group discussions and still get 5% in this course component. Also note that if you earn the maximum number of possible participation credits you will get a mark higher than 5% on this course component.

NOTE. There is no registrar-scheduled final examination in this course.

GRADING SCALE

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	95 - 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 - 94%	4.0	Excellent-superior performance
A-	85 - 89%	3.7	
B+	80 - 84%	3.3	
B	75 - 79%	3.0	Good - clearly above average performance
B-	70 - 74%	2.7	
C+	67 - 69%	2.3	
C	63 - 66%	2.0	Satisfactory - basic understanding
C-	59 - 62%	1.7	
D+	55 - 58%	1.3	
D	50 - 54%	1.0	Minimal pass - marginal performance
F	<50%	0	unsatisfactory performance

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

IMPORTANT NOTES

(1) Late Penalty. Except in the cases of documented illness, or extenuating circumstances brought to the instructor's attention prior to the due date of the Glenbow Museum assignment, a penalty of 10% of the assigned mark per day will be assessed on late assignments.

(2) A student who has a legitimate reason for being unable to write a scheduled mid-term test or the final quiz must discuss an alternate 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. **In almost all cases the instructor will 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.

(3) All requests for deferral of a mid-term test or an extension on the Glenbow Museum assignment due to health reasons must be accompanied by the written documentation required by the university -- either a statutory declaration with one of the Commissioners for Oaths on campus, or a medical note. Please note that travel arrangements, holiday plans, misreading the syllabus, and scheduling conflicts with other classes or employment are not normally valid reasons for requesting a deferral or an extension. However in the case of exceptional circumstances the instructor will entertain requests for a deferral or an extension. Please contact him as early as possible to discuss such circumstances.

(4) How to arrange for deferred work at the end of a term.

Deferred Final Exam Form: Please note that requests to defer a Registrar-scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information about deadlines, and where paperwork should be taken, is available on the form, which can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/student-forms>. Once an extension date for deferred term work has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Arts Students' Centre (SS 102) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

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

(6) "Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge" (see section K.4 of the Academic Regulations in the 2018-19 *Calendar*, found on the U. of C. website). Please review the University of Calgary's policies for dealing with student misconduct, particularly plagiarism and cheating, found in section K.5 of the Academic Regulations in the *Calendar*.

(7) Handing in assignments outside of class, return of tests and assignments, and release of final grades.

1. Please note that you are required to submit an electronic copy of the Glenbow Museum assignment through the Dropbox in D2L. Please do not submit a paper copy of your assignment either to the instructor or the main Sociology Department office. Indeed the Sociology Department main office does not accept paper submissions from students.

2. Mid-terms and the final quiz will NOT be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place (i.e. outside an instructor's office, the department office etc.). A marked copy of your assignment will be returned to you through the Dropbox facility in D2L. Marked copies of your mid-terms will be returned in class. Students who want mid-terms or the final quiz returned by mail must supply a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the instructor. Otherwise unclaimed mid-terms and final quizzes will be available for pick-up only from the instructor's office during scheduled office hours or by appointment.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.

(8) Ethics of 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 Faculty 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.

(9) Academic Accommodation

Students who require academic accommodation because of a disability or health condition need to register with Student Accessibility Services (MSC 452, telephone 220-8237) in

accordance with the Student Accommodation Policy found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

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. Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than disability or health condition should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the instructor.

(10) *Emergency evacuations*. In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of our classroom in the Administration Building, please proceed to the emergency assembly point at Social Sciences -- Food Court. You can check the emergency assembly point locations for all of your classes at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

(11) **Student Representation**. The 2018-19 Students' Union VP Academic is Jessica Revington (suvpaca@ucalgary.ca). For more information, and to contact other elected officials with the Student's Union, please visit this link: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/> You may also wish to contact the Student Ombudsperson for help with a variety of University-related matters: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/contact>.

(12) **Safewalk**. The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-53333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

(13) **Student Resources links**

[SU Wellness Centre](#)

[Campus Mental Health Strategy](#)