



CAMOSUN COLLEGE
School of Arts & Science
Social Sciences

**SOC 120 – SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND
THE ENVIRONMENT**

Spring, 2011

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor Information

- (a) Instructor: Dr. Peter Maidstone
- (b) Office hours: TBA
- (c) Location: Paul 230
- (d) Phone: (250) 370-3369
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Calendar Description:

In this course social relations are seen within a larger biophysical context. Sociological analysis is applied to the understanding of the ideological and social-structural aspects of environmental sustainability. Economic activity, public policy, and social movements are analyzed by focusing on specific environmental issues at the regional and global levels.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

At the end of course the student will be able to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of the major global environmental issues such as climate change, declining biodiversity, and water scarcity, as well as those specific to Kerala and Goa India.
- Employ a sociological perspective to critically assess the neoliberal, political economy, and ecological paradigms' explanations of the environmental issues.

Course Objectives:

The aim of the course is to utilize a sociological viewpoint as a means of critically examining the range of perspectives which seek to account for the relationship between humans and their biophysical environments. By comparing both the arguments of the readings and the critical responses to them, the course will

attempt to arrive at some conclusions as to the most viable accounts of human agency and social structure with respect to the current state of the environment, how it came about, and the prospects for change. The course will place the perspectives and issues that are examined, in both an Indian and a global context.

Course Content and Schedule

May 2nd – Globalization

May 3rd – The Sociology of the Environment

May 4th – The Intersection of the Environment and Development

May 5th – Environment and Development in India and Kerala

Mid Term Exam (1 hour)

May 8th – May 29th : Field School (see attached itinerary)

Evaluation Procedures:

Mid-Term, May 5 th	(20%)
Presentations in India	(10%)
Field School Quizzes	(30%)
Field Notes, Ethnographic Journal and Summary	(40%)

Mid-Term: The mid-term will be held at the beginning of the class on May 5th and will consist of an essay style question. This exam will form 20% of your total grade.

Presentation: Each student will be responsible for presenting material that is based on reading a novel of choice. The novel must be by an Indian author, must be set in the 20th or 21st Century, and must be set in India. The student will present her/his research and analysis for approximately 15 minutes. This assignment will be worth 10% of your total grade. Presentations will be conducted in India.

Field School Quizzes: While in India you will be examined after each week of studies. There will be three quizzes in total and they will take the form of essay style questions. This assessment will be based on in-class lectures and guest lectures. Each quiz will be worth 10% of your grade.

Ethnographic Journal, Field Notes and Summary: While in India, you will be expected to produce three documents: Field Notes, an Ethnographic Journal and a Summary. The Field Notes will consist of your immediate observations of Field School activities. Each evening you will be required to summarize your Field Notes in an Ethnographic Journal that will provide an analysis of your observations and recordings. Towards the end of the Field School, you will prepare a three-page Summary that will offer a brief overview of your ethnographic experience and any conclusions that you have made. All three documents will be handed in to the instructors on May 28th. This assignment will be discussed more fully in class. It will form 40% of your total grade.

Grading System

The following percentage conversion to letter grade will be used:

A+ = 90 - 100%	B = 73 - 76%	D = 50 - 59%
A = 85 - 89%	B- = 70 - 72%	F = 0.0 - 49%
A- = 80 - 84%	C+ = 65 - 69%	
B+ = 77 - 79%	C = 60 - 64%	

Required Reading:

Black, Maggie. The No Nonsense Guide to International Development, 2nd ed. Toronto: Between the Lines, 2007.

The student will be required to read all of the text, as well as on-line and reserve reading materials.

LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College Calendar, Registrar's Office or the College web site at <http://www.camosun.bc.ca>

ACADEMIC CONDUCT POLICY

There is an Academic Conduct Policy. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, Registration, and on the College web site in the Policy Section.

www.camosun.bc.ca/divisions/pres/policy/2-education/2-5.html