

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
The Department of Sociology**

**SOCI 3239 Issues in Environment and Society  
Term 2, 2022 - 2023**

Date: Every Thursday  
Time: 16:30 – 18:15  
Venue: Sino Building UG06  
Mode of teaching: Face-to-face

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### **Course Overview**

This course is designed to help students acquire fundamental knowledge and skills to examine and analyze the various environmental challenges in contemporary societies from a sociological perspective. Recognizing that environmental problems are often intricately connected with the conditions of societies that they are situated in, we will explore the processes underlying social and environmental changes as well as the consequences that those processes may entail at national, regional, and global levels. Substantive topics to be covered include limits of growth and development, sustainable production and consumption, climate change and global governance, and environmental movement. The course also aims to promote an awareness and understanding of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) framework put forward by the United Nations in 2015 so as to facilitate a broader discussion and reflection on how individuals and societies can work together and find solutions to those environmental challenges.

### **Course learning outcomes**

1. Describe and explain the major sociological concepts, theories, and approaches that examine the relationship between environment and societal development
2. Identify and critically analyze the processes underlying social and environmental changes as well as the consequences that those processes may entail at national, regional, and global levels
3. Understand the United Nation's framework of Sustainable Development Goals
4. Reflect on their own potential and capability to act for sustainable development

## Assessment

### 1. Short response exercise (30%)

In the short writing exercise, students will be asked to analyze an environmental issue in a society as reported in academic or media journal. Students are expected to analyze the environmental issue by identifying and applying the relevant and significant concepts, theories, and perspectives learned in the course. Further instruction for the short writing exercise will be announced to all students toward the middle of the term.

Due date: **To be announced (Veriguide Assignment Number 1)**  
Word limit (maximum): English 1,000 words (excluding end-of-text reference list)  
中文 1,500 字 (不包括文末參考書目)  
Format: Font size 12 and double-line spacing

### 2. Final take-home essay (40%)

In the final take-home essay, students will be asked to demonstrate their critical understanding of the concepts, theories, and perspectives learned throughout the course. It is necessary to engage in dialogue with major sociological debates in the relationship between environment and society. Further instruction for the final take-home essay will be announced to all students toward the end of the term.

Due date: **To be announced (Veriguide Assignment Number 2)**  
Word limit (maximum): English 2,000 words (excluding end-of-text reference list)  
中文 3,000 字 (不包括文末參考書目)  
Format: Font size 12 and double-line spacing

#### Important notes for the submission of written assignments are as follows:

1. Please submit the soft copy of the assignment to **Veriguide** system on or before the due date.
2. Please rename the assignment file in the following format before you make your submission to the system: Surname + first name + assignment number (e.g. Chan\_Ho\_Man\_1)
3. Late submission will be subject to penalty. The grade of the submission will be lowered by one subgrade for each day of late submission (e.g. late for one day, from B+ to B; submission late for less than a day will also be treated as a submission late for one day).
4. Please submit the soft copy of the signed Veriguide receipt for the assignment to the submission portal on Blackboard on or before the due date.
5. Please rename the Veriguide receipt file in the following format before you make your submission to the system: Surname + first name + assignment number +

receipt (e.g. Chan\_Ho\_Man\_1\_receipt)

6. Your assignment must include proper **in-text citation** and **end-of-text reference list**. The citation style for this course is the most updated version adopted by American Sociological Association (ASA), or American Psychological Association (APA). Your attention is drawn to the following documents:
  - Honesty in Academic Work: A Guide for Students and Teachers:  
[https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng\\_hm\\_files\\_\(2013-14\)/p03.htm](https://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_hm_files_(2013-14)/p03.htm)
  - Guideline for proper citation format by Department of Sociology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong:  
<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/soc/citation.pdf>
7. Please make sure that your essay has a **cover page** with the following information: **course code, course name, your full name, student identification number, and a word count (excluding end-of-text reference list and cover page)**

### **3. Tutorial Group presentation and participation (30%)**

Students will be invited to form smaller groups in your tutorial class for your group assessment. The number of students in each group will depend on the size of the tutorial class. Each group will select a topic of interest that discusses the relationships(s) between environment and society in local, national, regional, and/or global context(s). Each group will then give a presentation on the chosen topic and lead a discussion with fellow classmates, which aim to promote better understanding on the topic. Further instruction be announced to all students in the first tutorial session.

## Regarding honesty in academic work

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.

Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

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## Regarding grading system

### Grade Descriptors

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.
- F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.