

University of Manitoba
Department of Sociology
Selected Topics: Ecology and Society
SOCIOLOGY 077.346, L02
3 Credit Hours, Second Term 2005/06

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TEXTS

Broszimer, Franz. Ecocide: A Short History of the Mass Extinction of Species
Kovel, Joel. The Enemy of Nature
Harper, Charles. Environment and Society, 3rd edition
Davidson, Debra and Kierstin Hart. Consuming Sustainability

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be evaluated by way of the following activities:

First In Class Test	- 20%
Second In Class Test	- 20%
Third In Class Test	- 20%
Book Review	- 10%
Letter to the Editor or Commentary	- 10%
Term Paper	- 20%

The tests are 70 minute essay type. Study questions will be provided at least one week before the test. There will be some choice of questions for each test. The Book Review, Letter to the Editor/Commentary, and Term Paper assignments will be discussed in class and guidelines will be provided. You will have a wide range of topics to choose from for the non-test assignments to ensure that you are focusing on topics of interest to you. You have the option of “bundling” the three non-test activities together on a single topic.

DUE DATES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

FIRST TEST **February 7th**
READINGS: Broszimer: entire book
 Harper: chapters 1- 3
 Kovel: chapters 1 -6

BOOK REVIEW DUE February 28th

future ever more precarious, violent, unjust, and turbulent as we approach the nadir of human existence and risk oblivion.

GRADING PROCEDURES

The following description of my grading scheme should make it possible for you to calculate your final grade in the course. You are urged to make your own computations to ensure that I have not made an error.

I find the normal grading system too constraining, so I have modified it to a limited extent by introducing the minus grade (e.g. A-, B-, C-). In the final grade submitted, however, I must conform to the university scheme.

Your answers are being evaluated on a letter grade system, not on a point system which is converted to a letter grade. The main benchmarks for the grade ranges can be described as follows:

D/F = an answer which is factually weak, faulty analysis, and very poor organization.

C= an answer which is mostly complete in terms of facts but suffers from poor analysis, organization and integration. Knowing the facts is a good start, but only a beginning.

B= answer is factually accurate and mostly complete as well as organized and integrated.

A= answer factually complete, well organized, sophisticated analysis which demonstrates a good degree of comprehension.

There is no grading curve used in the evaluation of our answers, as class could do very well or very poorly, I feel no obligation to artificially manipulate the distribution into a bell curve. Each letter grade has been assigned a numerical value to allow for averaging and the calculation of a final grade. The numerical value has been assigned to convert the letter grade into an interval scale. Thus a C is 30% rather a C is equidistant from a C+ (4) and a C- (2) on the scale; a C is a factually complete answer which suffers from limited analysis. Mechanically, you assign each of your letter grades the comparable numerical weight in your calculation in the following way:

A+ = 10	B+ = 7	C+ = 4	D = 1
A = 9	B = 6	C = 3	F = 0
A- = 8	B- = 5	C- = 2	

On a test with two questions, which received a letter grade of A- and C+, your average grade is $8 + 4 \div 2 = 6$ or B. I take all of your tests and assignments and calculate them together, as weighted by their relative value and derive a final numerical value for the course. The final cutting points for your letter grade are very important, because the minus grades must now disappear. They give you

a higher final numerical grade because a weak A answer was an A- instead of a B+. But in the final analysis, all A- would become a B+. You would need some A or A+ grades to pull you over the cutting point. The cutting points are:

A+	(9.6 - 10)	exceptional
A	(8.3 - 9.5)	excellent
B+	(6.6 - 8.2)	very good
B	(5.3 - 6.5)	good
C+	(3.6 - 5.2)	satisfactory
C	(2.3 - 3.5)	adequate
D	(0.5 - 2.2)	marginal
F	(0.0 - 0.4)	failure a grade of F

This grading scheme gives you the benefit of the buoyancy of the minus grade. If you fail to make it over a threshold, even by a fraction, it is unlikely that I will raise your grade unless you have shown significant improvement over the term; have submitted an exceptional piece of work, or have made positive contributions to class discussion. Otherwise, an 8.24 will remain a B+ and not an A.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I encourage collaborative and cooperative work ethics. Feel free to discuss your thoughts with other members of the class and thereby develop your comprehension and critical analysis. But remember, when it is time to submit your assignment, do your own work. The written material of your colleagues is the fruit of their labour and under no circumstances should you avail yourself of it when preparing your own answers. Likewise the printed work of other scholars must be properly recognized. Acts of academic dishonesty or plagiarism are serious offenses and are subject to academic discipline. Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on 'Examinations: Personations' (pg. 25) and 'Plagiarism and Cheating' (pp. 26-7) found in the Undergraduate Calendar. The Faculty of Arts also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.