

SOCA2065: Environment and Society

Online

Semester 1 - 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description	Develops a sociological approach to environmental issues. Deals critically with environmental controversies within social science, within the environmental movement and within society at large. Key areas include environmental problems of present society, environmental injustices, the role of capital/ism, debates around green capitalism/economy, the capacity of green technologies and strategies for moving to an ecologically sustainable society; gender and the environment; indigenous populations and the environment; deep ecology; eco-socialist, eco-feminist, green new deal, and eco-anarchist approaches; politics of climate change, and the environment in developing countries. The course covers aspects of the Key Learning Area (KLA) of Human Society and Its Environment for primary and high school teachers.
Academic Progress Requirements	Nil
Requisites	This course replaces SOCA3060. If you have successfully completed SOCA3060 you cannot enrol in this course.
Assumed Knowledge	40 units of study at 1000 level.
Contact Hours	Online Lecture Online 1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) Workshop Online 1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s)
Unit Weighting	10
Workload	Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	Online Dr Jai Cooper jai.cooper@newcastle.edu.au Consultation: by appointment
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences Social Sciences Building Callaghan HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Environmental problems today and the response of major social institutions. How do people, governments and environmentalists respond to environmental problems?2. Environmental technologies and the social context of implementation. Are alternative technologies viable in today's economy?3. Aboriginal peoples, indigeneity and environmental issues.4. The developing world and environmental issues. How does the world economic structure contribute to environmental problems in developing countries?5. What have societies historically done to maintain sustainability or to generate their own collapse?6. The social movements associated with environmentalism such as environmental justice movements, eco-feminism; deep ecology; social ecology; socialist environmentalism. What reforms and utopias do these movements propose?
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Course Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this course, students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Recognise different relationships humans have with the environment.2. Describe current sociological theories as they apply to environmental problems.3. Identify the role of social structures in the distribution of impacts and responses to environmental issues.4. Differentiate possible future implications of societal approaches to the environment.
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Course Materials	All weekly content is accessible online in the course website FutureLearn via an LTI link on the Canvas website. Guidelines for assessment tasks are found under 'Assessments' in Course Canvas site. Some additional materials to assist with assessment tasks will be provided in Canvas.
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SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	Peak Doom - The Social Construction of Environmental Problems	FutureLearn - The Call of Nature	
2	4 Mar	Risking it All - Reflexive Modernity and Risk Society	FutureLearn - The Call of Nature	
3	11 Mar	If a Tree Falls - Key Debates in Environmental Ethics	FutureLearn - The Call of Nature	
4	18 Mar	Carbon Crunch - Energy Alternatives	FutureLearn - Production Lines	Quiz 1 opens Saturday March 23
5	25 Mar	Eating the Planet - Food and the Environment	FutureLearn - Production Lines	Annotated Bibliography (30%) due Monday March 25, 11.59pm Quiz 1 closes Friday March 29, 11.59pm
6	1 Apr	Green Consumption - Eco-habitus and Cultural Capital	FutureLearn - Production Lines	
7	8 Apr	The Majority World - Environmental Justice	FutureLearn - Planet of the People	
Mid-Semester Recess				
Mid-Semester Recess				
8	29 Apr	Working with the Willing - Governmentality and the Environment	FutureLearn - Planet of the People	Vodcast (25%) due Monday April 29, 11.59pm Quiz 2 opens Saturday May 4
9	6 May	Eco-activists - Social Movements for the Environment	FutureLearn - Planet of the People	Quiz 2 closes Friday May 10, 11.59pm
10	13 May	On Leviathan - Historic Collapses and Indigenous Perspectives	FutureLearn - About Time	
11	20 May	Checkmate - Imagining and Applying Economic Alternatives	FutureLearn - About Time	
12	27 May	De-evolution - Looking to Fiction and to the Future	FutureLearn - About Time	Quiz 3 opens Saturday June 1
13	3 Jun	No exam for this course	n/a	Quiz 3 closes Friday June 7, 11.59pm
Examination Period				Article (30%) due Monday June 10, 11.59pm
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Annotated Bibliography	Monday March 25, 11.59pm	Individual	30%	2, 3, 4
2	Vodcast	Monday April 29, 11.59pm	Individual	25%	1, 3
3	Article	Monday June 10, 11.59pm	Individual	30%	2, 3, 4
4	Online Quizzes x 3	Quiz 1 closes Friday March 29, 11.59pm Quiz 2 closes Friday May 10, 11.59pm Quiz 3 closes Friday June 7, 11.59pm	Group	15% (3x15%)	2, 3

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Annotated Bibliography

Assessment Type

Literature Review

Purpose

An annotated bibliography helps you to understand and interpret sources on a topic. Annotated bibliographies are designed to answer the question: "What would be the most relevant, most useful or most up-to-date sources for this topic?" As an assignment, an annotated bibliography allows you to engage in the work of scholarship in a critical fashion, encouraging the student to utilise their knowledge, research and critical thinking skills.

Description

In this assessment task, you are expected to source four quality academic sources relevant to the course materials. You will then annotate each source including correct (Harvard) referencing and a summary and critique of the source.

For details, refer to guidelines provided under the 'Assessments' tab in the Course Canvas site.

Topics are the four content areas within FutureLearn:

- The Call of Nature
- Production Lines
- Planet of the People
- About Time

Weighting

30%

Length

1000-1200 words (up to 1500 max. with referencing)

Due Date

Monday March 25, 11.59pm

Submission Method

Online via Turnitin in Canvas – follow instructions provided there.

Assessment Criteria

See marking rubric in Canvas assessment pages.

Return Method

Online via Canvas

Feedback Provided

Online - Within two weeks of submission date. Feedback from this assessment task will help to inform further tasks..

Assessment 2 - Vodcast

Assessment Type

Presentation

Purpose

The Vodcast engages you with current communications technology while presenting quality information. The Vodcast assesses how well you have understood a topic relevant to environmental sociology. One of the most effective ways of clarifying your own knowledge is the planning and recording of an explanation of a topic so that it can be watched/listened to critically by an audience.

Description

The Vodcast is an opportunity to present information with a combination of audio and visual material. For details, refer to guidelines provided under the 'Assessments' tab in the Course Canvas site including 'recording', 'upload' and 'submission' instructions.

Weighting

25%

Length	6 minutes maximum
Due Date	Monday April 29, 11.59pm
Submission Method	Online via Canvas - follow the instructions provided there.
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubric in Canvas assessment pages.
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - Within two weeks of submission date. In addition to individual comments, a combined class feedback will be provided..

Assessment 3 - Article

Assessment Type	Written Assignment
Purpose	The Article requires the development of a reasoned argument about a topic of relevance in environmental sociology. This task applies the social construction of environment issues: topics are not specified and will be generated by students.
Description	This assessment replaces the traditional 'essay' task with a form of journalism. You are still required to engage with sociological theories, concepts and research to address a topic of relevance within environmental sociology. You may extend the topics you have investigated in previous assessment tasks or generate a new topic. For details, refer to guidelines provided under the 'Assessments' tab in the Course Canvas site. Further details and suggestions will also be provided through FutureLearn course materials
Weighting	30%
Length	1500 words max; 2-5 images suggested
Due Date	Monday June 10, 11.59pm
Submission Method	Online via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	See marking rubric in Canvas assessment pages.
Return Method	Online via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Online - Within two weeks of due date.

Assessment 4 - Online Quizzes x 3

Assessment Type	Quiz
Description	Students will complete three quizzes throughout the course, each worth 5%. Quiz 1 covers sessions 1-4, quiz 2 covers sessions 5-8, and quiz 3 covers sessions 2012. There will be ten multiple choice questions in each quiz, with each answer worth 0.5 of a mark (total 5 marks). Marks are not subtracted for incorrect answers. You will only be able to attempt each quiz once, so you should ensure that you have a reliable internet connection and no disruptions. 30 minutes is allowed to complete each quiz (it is usually completed within 20 minutes). After 30 minutes, if you have not submitted, you will be logged out and your answers will be submitted automatically. Be sure to have completed the readings and listened to the lectures before you log on and begin. For further details, refer to guidelines provided under the 'Assessments' tab in the Course Canvas site.
Weighting	15% (3x15%)
Length	30 mins for each quiz (10 questions each)
Due Date	- Quiz 1 closes Friday March 29, 11.59pm - Quiz 2 closes Friday May 10, 11.59pm - Quiz 3 closes Friday June 7, 11.59pm
Submission Method	Online via Canvas
Assessment Criteria	Correct answer selection
Return Method	Online via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Online marks posted in Canvas

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances

system;

3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at

<https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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