

Instructor: Dr. J. Varghese

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**Calendar Title & Description:** *This course reflects sociological and anthropological interests in understanding societal-ecological interactions. The specific focus may include environmental/ natural resources/food systems and/ or environmental justice/ community sustainability. Students are encouraged to draw on established methodologies in the field, including ethnographic, comparative, and historical approaches. Attention is given to the ways that structure/power/ culture and class/ gender/ race/ ethnicity play out in at least one of the substantive topics comprising this field.*

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to get all of us to think in a dynamic, interdisciplinary way about how structure, culture and power impact our understanding of societal-ecological interactions. We will draw on decarbonization, decolonization, and political ecology lenses to critically consider various solutions to climate change including just transitions of food, energy, transportation and water systems.

**Pedagogical Approach:** The seminar approach is intended to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills, discussion facilitation skills and active engagement in collaborative learning. The format of seminars will include opportunities to lead and participate in group discussions to gain the substantive knowledge and process skills required to attain the course learning outcomes. The learning outcomes will be achieved through readings, multimedia sources, class discussions, class activities, and written and oral work. To meet the outcomes noted below, students are expected to attend all classes<sup>1</sup> (in person or virtually), actively read and engage with any assigned materials before class and be able to discuss them as required, participate actively and thoughtfully in class activities, take meaningful notes, and treat each other with respect.

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss issues and concepts of importance and controversy within environmental sociology/anthropology.
2. Appraise, critique, and defend anthropological/sociological arguments regarding prioritization and praxis in understanding and addressing societal-ecological interactions and transitions
3. Facilitate anthropological/sociological discussions of contemporary ideas on some of the most pressing societal-ecological issues of our time via seminar facilitation and presentation of knowledge mobilization project
4. Link macro-level forces to individual micro-level scales within seminar discussions and knowledge mobilization project
5. Demonstrate critical thinking and effective communication skills within oral, written and visual contributions, ability to manage time to complete weekly and longer-term elements, and facilitation skills during seminar lead(s).

**Course Materials:** Accessible via Library’s ARES Course Reserve System and through CourseLink.

**Assessments<sup>2</sup>:**

<i>Course Elements</i>	<i>Relative Weight (%)</i>
1. Seminar Preparation	20
2. Seminar Participation	15
3. Seminar Lead(s)	20
4. Knowledge Mobilisation Project	30
5. Allocate to either 2, 3 or 4 based on Individualized Learning Goal (determine by Week 2)	<u>10</u>
Total	100

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Please note that the course will be offered via face-to-face delivery. Some asynchronous material and activities will be available through CourseLink throughout the semester.

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<sup>1</sup> Given the seminar format of the course, seminars will not be recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Assessment elements and weight may change prior to the release of the official syllabus in January 2025.