**SOC 2080: Rural Sociology**

**Winter 2025**

**University of Guelph**

**Course instructor: Dr. Matthew McBurney**

**Course time: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00-11:20**

**Course location: ANNU 156**

**Contact information:** [**mmcburne@uoguelph.ca**](mailto:mmcburne@uoguelph.ca)

**Office Hours: After class or by appointment via Zoom**

**Course Description**

An introduction to the structure and processes of rural society. This course deals with diverse topics such as agrarian movements, the rise of the agro-industrial complex, the role of the state in agriculture, the question of community, and rural environmental issues. A comparative perspective is cultivated, although the primary emphasis is on Canadian society.

The course will utilize the Community Capitals Framework to further one’s understanding regarding the reciprocal impact of multiple capitals on rural communities. Key topics include, but are not limited to: climate change, community health and wellbeing, outmigration, and resiliency. While the geographic focus of the course will be on North America, we will also explore connections to rural people and landscapes around the world.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Identify and explain key concepts and theories from the field of Rural Sociology.
2. Think critically about contemporary social, cultural, political, economic and environmental issues facing rural communities.
3. Discuss interconnections between rural communities and landscapes in North America and around the world.
4. Understand the Community Capitals Framework and apply it to discussions of rural community resilience.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking, effective written communication, research capacity and time management skills.

**SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES**

* Online Discussion Forums (10 x 2%) 20%
* Online Quizzes (4 x 5%) 20%
* People’s Archive of Rural Ontario/India Submission 30%
* Final Exam (Take home exam) 30%

**READINGS**

Readings must be completed before attending lectures. All readings in the course are mandatory and form an integral part of the course content. The required textbook for this course is:

Flora, C.B., Flora, J.L. & Gasteyer, S.P. 2016. Rural Communities: Legacy & Change, 5th edition. Westview Press.

This book is available for purchase for approximately $65.00 or as a free digital copy using the University of Guelph Library access.