

## SOC 150 – The Adaptable Human

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Robin Lovell		
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday/Thursday	12:00pm-1:00pm	Miguel 416
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<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.robinjlovell.com">www.robinjlovell.com</a>		
<b>Section 01:</b>	Mon/Wed/Thur	11:00am-11:50am	De La Salle 308
<b>Section 04:</b>	Mon/Wed/Thur	3:00pm-3:50pm	De La Salle 308

### INTRODUCTION

**Course Description:** Systematic study of human-environment relationships has only recently included complexities of climate change. Natural and social scientists have renamed this time on earth the Anthropocene, a new geologic epoch created by human pollution, land use change, and atomic experimentation. The critical variables in the study of climate change impacts on humans include vulnerability, resilience, and adaptation. These buzz words are used across disciplines with varying meanings, creating conflicting avenues for designing research and implementing interventions. What is clear, throughout a growing number of case studies on adaptations, is that shifting climatic regimes are projected to particularly negatively affect poor, marginalized populations, creating a heightened urgency to understand effective adaptation measures. This course explores the origins of research in human adaptation, including the origins of the "man-made" and "natural" worlds, the "settled" versus the "wild." The readings and lectures will investigate the tensions between ethnographic evaluations of vulnerability, empirical modeling of human resilience, and how those disciplinary schisms stemmed from, and can productively return to adaptation research.

**Class Format and Mechanics:** Each learning unit lasts approximately two weeks, during which you will have two readings, a short quiz, a key word assignment, and a writing assignment due. This schedule demands a high level of engagement inside and outside of class. In the context of the lecture and reading topics, you will write one persuasive paper and one research paper. You will have a chance to revise your research assignment, receiving feedback during each phase of the writing process.

**Course Learning Objectives:** This is an intensive reading and writing course. At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to articulate the following:

1. Critically evaluate popular and peer-reviewed literature.
2. Communicate research findings verbally and in a substantive written research paper.
3. Define and articulate how humans construct nature as a concept.
4. Articulate the social, economic, and ecological processes of global change.
5. Differentiate between vulnerability, resilience, and adaptation.

**Course Materials:** All course readings are available online through Moodle.

### EVALUATION

Your course grade will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82

C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	64-66
F	Below 64

Each assignment is graded on a 100-point scale, and then become part of the following major categories for your overall course grade.

- Attendance and Participation = 40%
- Quizzes = 20%
- Assignments = 40%

**Attendance and Participation (40% of total grade):** Your participation will be comprised of four things: attendance, reading engagements, discussion leadership, and contributing to the glossary of terms. Here is how you will be graded.

*Attendance (10%):* The more classes you attend, the more you will succeed in my class. Please do not email me or ask me for individual class session attendance waivers or makeups for the In-class Exercises. As there are foreseen and unforeseen reasons that you may not be able to attend class, you are given a total of three (3) excused absences for the semester. I do not need to know the details, so please do not email me. More than three absences will result in a reduction of 5% in your overall grade for each absence. In accordance with Department of Sociology policy, missing more than nine (9) class sessions will result in a grade of "F" for the course. Late arrival distracts your fellow students and the instructor, and is highly discouraged.

*Reading Engagements (10%):* Each class session with a reading, you must turn in one sentence noting a question or observation about the reading via Google Forms by 5pm the evening before the reading is due. This is usually a Sunday night. Please write a sentence noting your most positive or negative reaction to the reading, or a question you have about the reading. Please do not ask an unanswerable or vastly complex question, but instead try to ask questions we can reasonably discuss in class. Limit your responses to ONE sentence. See Moodle for the Google Form link.

*Discussion Leadership (10%):* You must sign up to lead or co-lead two class discussions about the readings or other various topics. You can either come up with a short exercise to do with your classmates, or you can create a short video that helps explain and spur discussion about the class session topic. Powerpoints are allowed, but can only be one slide. See Moodle for the full assignment.

*Glossary of Terms (10%):* You must contribute at least one term per unit, for a total of seven (7) terms throughout the semester. The terms are due at the end of the first week of the unit, on Thursday before class. We will review the term to ensure it is correct, and then the term will become part of the collective study guide for your peers in the course. Make sure to attribute your name and the date you created the term, or you will not get credit.

**Quizzes (20% of total grade):** You will have a quiz for each unit, for a total of seven (7). The quizzes will be multiple choice and will be based off of class discussions, readings, and the glossary of terms to which you all contribute. Quizzes will take place the last day of the unit.

**Assignments (40% of total grade):** You must complete two writing assignments. The first is a short autobiographical persuasive paper. The second is a research paper. Assignments and percentage values within your overall grade are as follows:

- **Constructing Nature Paper (5%)**
- **Research Paper Topic (2%)**
- **Annotated Bibliography (3%)**
- **Research Paper Proposal (5%)**
- **Research Paper Outline (5%)**
- **Draft Research Paper (5%)**
- **Final Research Paper (10%)**
- **Final Presentation (5%)**

### ADDITIONAL COURSE EXPECTATIONS

**Late Work and Grade Changes:** I do not accept late assignments. Please anticipate printer, Moodle, and other common problems and allow time for them. I also do not change grades unless I have made a mistake in assessing you, per a rubric or clear factual error. These policies exist for two reasons. First, I value organization, tenacity, and a strong work ethic. I believe the method of evaluation in this class is fair and that by reading this syllabus and remaining in my class, you agree. Second, only those with privilege (meaning gender, class, or race) tend to believe they deserve to turn in late work or receive a better grade despite the clear expectations outlined in this syllabus. I do not believe in rewarding privilege in itself.

**Laptops:** Laptops and tablets will be permitted only during certain in-class writing assignments noted on the syllabus, or when noted by Dr. Lovell. I expect you to take notes by hand the majority of the time. We will use technology deliberately, but not constantly. Students who need one of these devices as an accommodation or because it is essential to their work process may come to see me during office hours to “register” as an in-class device user. These students will commit to only using their device for class-related purposes. There are two reasons for this rule. First, studies have found that students who take notes by hand actually learn and retain more information than those who take notes on a laptop. Second, students who are using social media or checking email make for poor class participants and distract the people sitting behind them.

**Cell Phones:** No cell phones are allowed in class. Please turn your ringers on silent and leave your phone on the front table as you walk into class.

**Classroom Conduct:** I have three guiding principles in my classroom. 1) Speak up: share your ideas, confusion, and questions. 2) Be respectful: respect your classmates and Dr. Lovell. 3) Think critically: critique ideas, not people.

**Mandatory Reporting:** As a faculty member at Manhattan College, I am a mandatory reporter. Please know that, in sharing personal stories or details in class or during office hours, there may be information I am obligated to share with our Title IX officer.

**Ethical conduct:** Students are expected to adhere to the Manhattan College policy on academic integrity and associated links. All written assignments should be original works composed individually for this course. All academic integrity violations (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, multiple submissions, facilitating dishonesty) will be prosecuted. Be sure that you know what constitutes cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism (See B. Violations of Academic Integrity here: <https://inside.manhattan.edu/student-life/dean-of-students/code-conduct.php>).

**Academic Support:** The Center for Academic Success (CAS) has two locations — the Learning Commons (Thomas Hall 3.10) & the Leo Learning Center (Leo 117/118). These offices, conveniently spread across campus, provide students with a quiet space to study with a peer tutor or engage in small group study sessions. The services offered include individual writing center services and peer tutoring (online and in-person) in most 100-200 level and select 300-600 level courses, peer academic coaching, Supplemental Instruction in select courses, English language learning support, and professional learning specialist services in reading, writing, mathematics and science. All services are free of charge and available to all MC students.

Students can book appointments online by going to the 'MC Quick Links' and clicking the 'Schedule a Tutoring Appointment' tab. Appointments are preferred, but drop-ins are welcome. If you have any questions, please contact the CAS at 718.862.7414, email [success@manhattan.edu](mailto:success@manhattan.edu), or stop by Thomas Hall 3.10. For more information, visit the CAS website.

Manhattan College is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your authorization letter from the Specialized Resource Center (SRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the semester. At that time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course.

## WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

### Unit 1: Constructing Nature

Jan 15	Syllabus & expectations, intro to adaptations Academic writing	Reading 1 due @ 10pm Wed
Jan 16	The idea of “nature” and “wilderness”	Key Word 1 due before class
Jan 21 (Tues)	Standpoint awareness in nature	Reading 2 due @ 5pm Mon
Jan 22	Writing exercise	
Jan 23	Modern conceptions of nature	Quiz 1 in class Constructing Nature due @ 10am Fri

### Unit 2: (Man)ipulating Our Environment

Jan 27	The pristine myth, early adaptations	Reading 3 due @ 5pm Sun
Jan 29	Indigenous populations	
Jan 30	Human wellbeing	Key Word 2 due before class
Feb 3	Affluence	Reading 4 due @ 5pm Sun
Feb 5	Writing exercise	
Feb 6	The idea of progress	Quiz 2 in class Research Paper Topic due @ 10am Fri

### Unit 3: The Growth Problem

Feb 10	The great transformation	Reading 5 due @ 5pm Sun
Feb 12	The great acceleration	
Feb 13	The Anthropocene	Key Word 3 due before class
Feb 17	Film	Reading 6 due @ 5pm Sun
Feb 19	Writing exercise	
Feb 20	Anthropocene debate	Quiz 3 in class Annotated Bibliography due @ 10am Fri

### Unit 4: Global Change

Feb 24	Global change part 1	Reading 7 due @ 5pm Sun
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Feb 26	Global change part 2	
Feb 27	Scales and complexity	Key Word 4 due before class
Mar 2	Hurricane Sandy Discussion	Reading 8 due @ 5pm Sun
Mar 4	Writing exercise	
Mar 5	Questioning science	Quiz 4 in class

### Unit 5: Questioning Science

Mar 9	Subjectivity & objectivity	Reading 9 due @ 5pm Sun
Mar 11	Science and vulnerability	
Mar 12	Vulnerability exercise	Key Word 5 due before class

### **Mar 16-22 Spring Break**

Mar 23	Political responses to global change	Reading 10 due @ 5pm Sun
Mar 25	Writing exercise	
Mar 26	Social and economic responses to global change	Quiz 5 in class

### Unit 6: Adaptations

Mar 30	Linking vulnerability, resilience, and adaptations	Reading 11 due @ 5pm Sun
Apr 1	Socio-ecological systems	
Apr 2	Intersectionality and adaptations	Key Word 6 due before class
Apr 6	Green Dot Training	
Apr 8	Film & writing exercise	Quiz 6 Online

### **Apr 9- 14 Easter Break**

### Unit 7: Building Capacity

Apr 15 (Tues)	Adaptive capacity	Reading 13 due @ 5pm Sun
Apr 16	Adaptive food systems	Key Word 7 due before class
Apr 20	Adaptive water systems	Reading 14 due @ 5pm Sun
Apr 22	Adaptive energy systems	
Apr 23	Peer review exercise	Hard copy of paper due in class
		Final paper due @ 10am Fri
Apr 27	Presentations	Final Presentations due before class
Apr 29	Presentations	
Apr 30	Presentations	
May 7	Section 1 Final Exam	Quiz 7 Online
May 8	Section 4 Final Exam	Quiz 7 Online

### **READING LIST**

1. Cronon, W. (1996). The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature. *Environmental History*, 1(1), 7-16.

2. Cronon, W. (1996). The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature. *Environmental History*, 1(1), 17-28.
3. Denevan, W. M. (1992). The pristine myth: the landscape of the Americas in 1492. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 82(3), 369-385.
4. Sahlins, M. (1997). The original affluent society. In Rahnema, M. and V. Bawtree (Eds.) *The post-development reader*. Atlantic Highlands: Zed Books.
5. Polanyi, K., & Maclver, R. M. (1944). *The great transformation* (Vol. 2, p. 145). Boston: Beacon Press. Chapters 3-6.
6. Steffen, W., P. J. Crutzen, et al. (2007). "The Anthropocene: are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature." *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36(8): 614-621
7. IPCC, 2013: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [Stocker, T.F., D. Qin, G.-K. Plattner, M. Tignor, S.K. Allen, J. Boschung, A. Nauels, Y. Xia, V. Bex and P.M. Midgley (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA.
8. Fishbein, Rebecca (2017) "On The Five Year Anniversary Of Hurricane Sandy, Is NYC Ready For The Next One?" *Gothamist*. Printed October 6, 2017. Accessible at: <https://gothamist.com/news/on-the-five-year-anniversary-of-hurricane-sandy-is-nyc-ready-for-the-next-one#photo-1>.
9. Latour, B. (2005). Spinoza lecture II: the aesthetics of matters of concern. B Latour, *What is the style of matters of concern*, 26-50.
10. Crane, T. A. (2010). Of models and meanings: cultural resilience in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society*, 15(4), 19.
11. IPCC (2014). Working Group II Contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Summary for Policymakers, Cambridge University Press.
12. Thomas, K. A., & Warner, B. P. (2019). Weaponizing vulnerability to climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 57, 101928.
13. Nightingale, A. J., Eriksen, S., Taylor, M., Forsyth, T., Pelling, M., Newsham, A., ... & Bezner Kerr, R. (2019). Beyond Technical Fixes: climate solutions and the great derangement. *Climate and Development*, 1-10.
14. TBD