SOCI 437[1]

Issues in Environmental Sociology and Climate Change: Fossil Capital, Climate Crisis, and Energy Politics

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Instructor: **Dr. Robert Neubauer**

Course Description:

Since the industrial revolution, fossil fuels have emerged as both the lifeblood of capitalism and a prime driver of rising global temperatures since the 1950s, resulting in a global climate crisis. This seminar explores these phenomena by combining the sociology of corporate power, the political economy/ecology of fossil capitalism and the climate crisis, and sociological analysis of political conflict over energy development and environmental sustainability.

Topics May Include:

- The sociology and political economy/ecology of fossil capitalism and climate crisis
- Modalities of corporate power in this field, with a focus on historical and contemporary attempts by fossil fuel corporations to pursue hegemony within the political, civil society, and media fields as a means to promote expanded fossil fuel extraction, delay action on climate change, and combat environmental movements both in Canada and globally.
- Modalities through which fossil fuels inform the texture of everyday life, with subsequent impacts on societal attempts to address the climate crisis.
- The rise of contemporary social movements seeking to address the climate crisis and protect local ecosystems with a core focus on movements campaigning for environmental justice.

Course Outcomes/Objectives:

Students will engage with these topics through course readings, lectures, class discussions, group presentations, and weekly reflective writing exercises, culminating in a final research paper.

Course Pre/Co-requisites:

Minimum third-year standing; declared Honours or Major in Sociology; or permission of the department.

Required Resources May Include:

Norgaard, K. M. (2011). Living in denial: Climate change, emotions, and everyday life. MIT Press.

Instructor Bio:

Robert Neubauer is a SSHRC postdoctoral fellow and Limited Term Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology. He received his PhD from the School of Communication at Simon Fraser University. His research explores the political economy/ecology of energy development, the sociology of corporate influence, and the role of networked civil society organizations and populist discourse in environmental and energy politics.

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[1] This online outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.