

**Department of Sociology
King's University College
Sociology 2220 Sociology of the Environment
Fall 2017**

Essay Requirement (30%)

Due: Last day of classes, December 7th

This short essay will require that you critically summarize an assigned issue relating to the course content (below). This assignment should be 8 pages long (not including tables and references).

Pick one of the following two assigned topics (not both)!

- 1. Canada is a relatively prosperous country, but not all Canadians share equally in this wealth. As a result, some Canadians are more likely to be exposed to “environmental bads” than are other Canadians (e.g. living in close proximity to a road with major traffic congestion; living next to a major waste disposal site; living in a noisy or highly polluted neighborhood, working in a meat processing plant or as a farm worker on an industrial farm). Drawing from the concept of “environmental justice”, provide an example of this form of injustice. In light of the problem(s) you highlight, do you have any policy recommendations that might help in terms of remedying or correcting for the situation as outlined? Feel free to be specific, i.e. considering the situation in a specific city, community or region.**
- 2. Select a specific example of a common resource (in the Canadian context) and consider the impact of human activities on this “resource”. Outline some of the benefits to society/individuals of using the resource, and the shared cost which results from its damage or overexploitation. Does Hardin’s “tragedy of the commons” fit in considering the use of this resource, and if so, how so? If not, why not? In light of current practice in using this resource, do you have recommendations/suggestions on how we might avoid environmental problems in using this resource? Please try to relate this to ideas/concepts that we reviewed in class.**

Note: For the purpose of this course, we can think of various “resources” as “common property” (loosely defined). In the Canadian context, I would think that a clean atmosphere is a common resource (it belongs to all of us), as is “clean water”, “healthy river systems, lakes and oceans”. Yet most of our waterways are subject to some form of environmental protection and our “forests” are often collectively owned (crown land), as is the “fish in the sea” (within the 200 mile limit) and the “wild fauna and flora” that resides on public lands. Feel free to use any of the latter examples as an example of a “common resource”, even if it doesn’t strictly fit with Hardin’s definition.

Other Considerations:

Write your answers as if you are addressing to other students, that is, people who are relatively intelligent and somewhat informed, who know the same or less about the topic than you do.

Your written essay should be thoughtful: it should indicate that you have not only read about this topic, but that you have also thought about it in depth. Try to maintain a critical perspective (by this, I mean informed criticism, not criticism for its own sake).

In submitting assignments, no electronic copies will be accepted; they must be typed (maximum 300 words per page, 12 font Times Roman), double-spaced, on 8 ½ X 11 paper, stapled (no paper clips or plastic covering or binders), and handed in personally in class. If late, and I am not in my office, slip the paper under my office door (late penalties apply).

In addition, an electronic copy of the assignment must be submitted to TURNITIN.COM (details forthcoming). The file name of your work must be your last name followed by the first initial of your first name. A failure to submit to TURNITIN.COM leads to a grade of 0.

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by quotation marks and through the proper citation. **Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).**

References: Citations should be referred to in the text as (White, 2000) and citations should be listed in your bibliography at the end of your essays (do not use footnotes for references). For the appropriate style to be used in referencing research in this sociology course, I highly recommend that you use the ASA style of citation, as specified on the following web page. This page set up by the library staff also informs you on where to look for relevant sociological research. In compiling this paper, I expect a “list of references” with at least 5 separate sources (beyond our textbook).

Citation style <http://kings.uwo.libguides.com/sociology>

No assignments are to be handed in at the Faculty Secretaries office (they do not accept them). Late assignments can be delivered to the ‘late assignment box’ in the SA building, or can be handed to me personally during office, lecture or consulting hours and/or slipped under my office door. In the interest of fairness for all students, this assignment is due at the beginning of class of the final lecture of this term. Assignments received after the due date will have their grade reduced by a rate of 5% daily. No papers will be accepted more than one week (7 days) after the due date. Only major illness and exceptional circumstances (with appropriate documentation) are acceptable reasons for handing in an assignment after the due date without late penalty. The professor must be contacted before the due date and appropriate documentation should be provided to the academic dean as soon as possible. This policy will be strictly enforced and no exceptions will be made.