ENR 3400
The Psychology of Environmental Problems
Autumn 2021 | Section 0020 | Full Term

COURSE OVERVIEW

Meeting Information

Days: Monday and Wednesday
Time: 3:55 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.
Location: Baker Systems Engineering, Room 120

Instructor Information

Instructor: Shelby Carlson, PhD Candidate (she/her/hers)
Email address: carlson.539@buckeyemail.osu.edu
Office hours: By appointment, via Zoom

Prerequisites

ENR 2300 or PSYCH 1100

Course description

Environmental science emerged during the 1960s and 70s as an interdisciplinary field integrating the biological and physical sciences toward the protection and preservation of the environment. In recent decades, the field has broadened in scope to include study of the social, psychological, and economic dimensions of environmental problems. Likewise, traditional resource management fields (i.e., forestry, fisheries, wildlife) have increasingly recognized the importance of integrating "human dimensions" into professional training and practice.
Coincident with these changes, psychologists began investigating the psychological aspects of environmental dilemmas, noting that the discipline can provide powerful insight into why humans make the choices that they do in relation to the environment. Armed with this information, practitioners are capable of devising interventions that influence environmentally relevant choices and behaviors. Thus was born the field of Conservation Psychology.

Decades of research across a variety of fields show that helping people understand the magnitude of environmental problems often fails to elicit behavioral change; knowledge gained from such interventions is insufficient. Rather, information about a problem must be provided in ways that captures public attention and appeals to fundamental values, aligns with social norms, as well as removes any barriers to the ideal behavior (e.g., building bike paths if you want to encourage more biking). ENR 3400 is designed to provide an overview of psychological perspectives on human behavior with a focus on behaviors that are impactful to the environment, and to provide students with the ability to apply this knowledge to improve communication, policy, and outreach for public audiences.

Course learning outcomes

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

- compare and contrast different perspectives concerning how human thought and behavior contribute to environmental problems.
- define basic psychological concepts (e.g., values, attitudes, beliefs, norms, risk perceptions, etc.) and summarize how these concepts are used to explain environmentally significant behavior.
- describe how context (i.e., the social and physical environment), human thought, and public policy combine to shape human behavior.
- discuss the ways in which environmental risks and benefits are disproportionately distributed (across gender, race, and social class) and identify the psychological mechanisms that contribute to the perpetuation of such inequities, as well as the psychological consequences of experiencing them.
- demonstrate how to design passive and active interventions to influence human judgments, decisions, and behaviors, and select appropriate intervention strategies to address specific environmental issues.

HOW THIS COURSE WORKS

Mode of delivery: This course is 100% in-person.

Pace of activities: This course is divided into four modules, each of which cover 4 weeks of content. All modules and the daily sessions contained in each will be visible on Carmen at the start of the course, so students will be able to see the topics we will cover throughout the semester. However, some content (e.g., Instructor Carlson’s lecture slides) will appear as the
course progresses. Lecture slides will be posted after the session in which they are presented. All assignments, quizzes, exams, and projects in this course have deadlines, which are outlined in the course schedule. If there are any changes in due dates, a class-wide announcement will be made in Carmen.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a 3-credit-hour course. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (in-class instructor content) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Textbooks

- All required readings will be provided. Please refer to the course Carmen page to access PDFs for each session.

Course technology

Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- Self-Service and Chat support: ocio.osu.edu/help
- Phone: 614-688-4357(HELP)
- Email: servicedesk@osu.edu
- TDD: 614-688-8743

Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom for virtual office hours (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)

Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication
Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help.

Carmen access

You will need to use BuckeyePass (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass - Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions (go.osu.edu/add-device).
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click Enter a Passcode and then click the Text me new codes button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application (go.osu.edu/install-duo) to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

GRADING AND INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE

How your grade is calculated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minute Papers</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Assignments</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra Credit (optional)  up to 2% of final grade
Descriptions of major course assignments

Minute Papers

Description: Once a week, students will be given a short prompt at the beginning or end of class to which they will have 5-10 minutes to write a response. These brief in-class writing activities are designed to serve as a warm-up exercise in preparation for that day’s lecture, or as an informal way to gauge comprehension of the material covered that day. These papers will be graded based on completion not content, however, it is important that they be taken seriously, as the instructor will use them as indicators for whether or not a specific concept should be readdressed during class. Minute papers submitted incompletely (e.g., simply writing “I don’t know”) will not receive credit. The day in which these papers are assigned will vary, as a way to informally monitor attendance. In the event that a student is absent from class on a day in which a minute paper is assigned, they will have the opportunity to make it up without penalty by submitting their response electronically via Carmen. The prompt for each minute paper will be made available on Carmen, under the Assignments tab, immediately after the class session in which they are assigned and will remain available for completion until the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

In-Class Assignments

Description: In order to facilitate discussion, cooperation, and the exchange of new ideas and perspectives, five (5) group-based, in-class assignments will take place. Groups will be determined by the instructor and will be comprised of a different set of students for each assignment. The days on which these assignments will occur can be found in the course schedule below. In the event that a student is absent from class on a day in which an in-class assignment occurs, they will have the opportunity to make it up without penalty by submitting an individual response electronically via Carmen. The worksheet for each in-class assignment will be made available on Carmen, under the Assignments tab, immediately after the class session in which they are assigned and will remain available for completion until the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

Reading Quizzes

Description: Readings are assigned for each class and should be completed prior to the session for which they are assigned (i.e., please come to class having already read the material assigned for that day). Readings will consist of a combination of relevant book chapters and peer-reviewed journal articles. To hold students accountable for the content assigned and provide the instructor with feedback on comprehension of said content, there will be five (5) brief, in-class quizzes based upon the assigned material on a given day. Although the dates for which all readings are assigned can be found in the course schedule below, the readings selected for examination will be random. In order to adequately prepare for reading quizzes, it is recommended that students be prepared to answer the following for each assigned reading:
Journal Articles

- What research questions were the author(s) addressing?
- What theories or frameworks were used to inform their approach?
- What method(s) did they employ?
- What did the data show?
- What did the author(s) conclude, in light of the data?

Book Chapters

- What central topic or theme did the author(s) discuss?
- Were any key terms defined? If so, what were they?
- Were any visuals (e.g., tables, graphs) provided? If so, what did they communicate?
- What were the key takeaways from the author’s main message?

Reading quizzes will be administered using Top Hat (https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/top-hat/using-top-hat-students). Therefore, each student is required to create an account and bring an Apple or Android smartphone, tablet, laptop, or phone capable of sending a text message to each class. If a student does not have access to such a device, or experiences unexpected technical problems that prevents them from successfully submitting their answers, they may hand in a hard copy to the instructor during class. In the event that a student is absent on a day in which a reading quiz is administered, they will have the opportunity to make it up without penalty by submitting their response electronically via Carmen. The questions for each reading quiz will be made available on Carmen, under the Assignments tab, immediately after the class session in which they are administered and will remain available for completion until the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

Midterm Exam

Description: A midterm examination will be administered in this course. This exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank and extended response questions and will cover readings, lectures, and any other materials included in the course. As indicated in the course schedule below, this exam will be administered on **Monday October 11, 2021** during our regularly scheduled course meeting from 3:55 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. We will have a formal review session during class on Wednesday October 6, 2021. The midterm exam cannot be made up unless a student provides written notification to the instructor of their planned absence (via email) at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled time of the exam. If notification is provided within the stated time frame, students will be offered an alternate exam to be completed during a time agreed upon by both the instructor and student. Those who do not make arrangements at least 24 hours in advance will receive zero points for this exam.
Final Project

**Description:** In lieu of a final exam, students will submit a final project. This project, which will be completed individually, provides students an opportunity to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of key concepts covered throughout the course via first-hand application. As indicated in the course schedule below, we will go over detailed instructions for the project during week eleven. This project consists of three parts and students will need to attend class to complete parts one and two – which will take place on Monday November 1, 2021 and Wednesday November 3, 2021, respectively. If a student plans to be absent on either (or both) of these days, they will need to provide written notification to the instructor (via email) at least 24 hours prior to the session(s) missed and make arrangements to make up what they missed. If arrangements are not made in advance, an absence on either of these days will result in a 30% deduction from the overall score of the final project. This project is due in its entirety via Carmen Dropbox by 11:59 PM on Thursday December 16, 2021. Due to university deadlines for final course grades, projects submitted after that time will result in zero points.

Extra Credit (optional)

**Description:** Students will have the opportunity to earn extra credit in this course by participating in the Environmental and Social Sustainability Research Experience Program (ESSREP). The goal of ESSREP is to enhance student’s understanding of social scientific research methods and help apply class lessons to their lives. As a way to gain extra credit for this class you can get hands-on experience participating in research studies conducted by Faculty and Graduate Students in the Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) Lab in SENR. Research studies may take the form of online or in-person surveys, interviews, or focus groups and will be related to a current research project in a variety of topics in resource management, environmental science, psychology, and rural sociology.

- In order to sign up for research opportunities you will first need to create a Sona account using your .osu email address at [https://osu-essrep.sona-systems.com](https://osu-essrep.sona-systems.com). You will then be able to view and sign up for studies and monitor your credit accumulation through Sona Systems. Please see our website [https://ess.osu.edu/subject-pool/research-option](https://ess.osu.edu/subject-pool/research-option) for more detailed sign-up instructions, credit amounts, policies, and Frequently Asked Questions.

- If you do not wish to participate in research OR are under the age of 18, a written assignment alternative is also available. Papers will be based on approved research articles and due at set dates throughout the semester. See our website [https://ess.osu.edu/subject-pool/papers-option](https://ess.osu.edu/subject-pool/papers-option) for grading criteria and other information about the ESSREP paper option. If you wish to select the paper option, enroll by emailing the lab manager at Slagle.44@osu.edu by September 9th.

A total of up to 2 research credits will be possible as extra credit for this course, constituting 2% of your final grade.

If you have any questions about the research or paper options, or encounter difficulties with Sona systems please contact the lab manager Kristina Slagle at: Slagle.44@osu.edu.
instructor does not have access to Sona systems and will not be managing the paper option; please direct all ESSREP-related questions to the lab manager.

**Grading scale**

Per OSU policy, letter grades will be assigned accordingly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93–100: A</td>
<td>87–89.9: B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90–92.9: A-</td>
<td>83–86.9: B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>77–79.9: C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73–76.9: C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67–69.9: D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60–66.9: D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70–72.9: C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Below 60: E</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Instructor feedback and response time**

The following list is provided to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. You can call 614-688-4357 (HELP) at any time if you have a technical problem.

- **Grading and feedback:** For all assignments listed in this course, you can expect to receive feedback within **7-10 business days**.
- **Email:** Generally, I will reply to emails within **24-48 hours of a business day**.

**OTHER COURSE POLICIES**

**Discussion and communication guidelines**

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

- **Writing style:** Whether writing responses for minute papers, in-class assignments, or the final project, please be sure to pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- **Tone and civility:** Throughout this course, we will be engaging in critical – and at times challenging – conversations. In order to create and maintain a safe(r) and supportive learning community, it is essential that we each consider not only the **intent** of our words, but even more importantly their potential **impact**.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title, and if quoting, the page numbers. For online sources, include a link.
- **Backing up your work:** Consider composing your academic writing in a word processor, where you can save your work, and subsequently transfer it into the appropriate Carmen dropbox.
Academic integrity policy

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the university’s Code of Student Conduct (studentconduct.osu.edu), and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the university’s Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute “Academic Misconduct.”

The Ohio State University’s Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: “Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process.” Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the university’s Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the university’s Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page (go.osu.edu/coam)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)
- Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules)

Copyright for instructional materials

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.
Statement on Title IX

All students and employees at Ohio State have the right to work and learn in an environment free from harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender, and the university can arrange interim measures, provide support resources, and explain investigation options, including referral to confidential resources.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against based on your sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you may find information about your rights and options at titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu. Title IX is part of the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at Ohio State, which responds to all bias-motivated incidents of harassment and discrimination, such as race, religion, national origin and disability. For more information on OIE, visit equity.osu.edu or email equity@osu.edu.

Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them.

We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University’s Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.
COVID-19 Safety Measures

Per the University’s Safe Campus Requirements, all students, faculty, and staff are required to wear masks in classrooms and other shared indoor spaces – regardless of vaccination status. In order to be effective, masks must cover your mouth and nose. Failure to adhere to this requirement will be addressed as follows: During an incident in which a student is not adhering, the student will first be asked to comply (i.e., to wear a mask). If this does not resolve the situation, the student will be reminded about safe and healthy requirements. If the student continues to refuse, the student will be told to leave the location and not to return until they are prepared to follow the requirements. For all situations, except those students who quickly comply when reminded, the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Life Student Conduct for potential disciplinary action and to assist with appropriate tracking. In order to comply with the mask requirement, eating during class is prohibited. If a student needs to drink, it is strongly encouraged that they briefly step outside to do so. For more information on Ohio State’s current safe and healthy protocols, please visit: https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu/accountability.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Requesting accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Accessibility of course technology

This course requires use of CarmenCanvas (Ohio State’s learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- Canvas accessibility (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Top Hat (go.osu.edu/tophat)
## COURSE SCHEDULE

Please refer to the course Carmen page to access all assigned readings and for up-to-date assignment due dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Module #1: The Fundamentals of Human Behavior</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1    | 8/25  | Introduction to the course, syllabus, and this great group of scholars  
|      |       | • No readings |
| 2    | 8/30  | Linking Human Behavior to Environmental Problems and Solutions  
|      | 9/1   | How the Human Mind Works: Rational actors or cognitive misers?  
| 3    | 9/6   | No Class – Labor Day |
|      | 9/8   | How the Human Mind Works: Rational actors or cognitive misers?  
|      |       | **In-Class Assignment #1**  
|      | 9/13  | Values, Attitudes, and Behavior: Seeking cognitive consistency  
| 4    | 9/15  | Values, Attitudes, and Behavior: Uncovering conflict and change  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/6</td>
<td>Midterm Review</td>
<td>Bring any questions regarding the content we’ve covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>Bring a writing utensil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/13</td>
<td>No Class – Enjoy a well-deserved break!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Module #3: The Psychology of Environmental (In)Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10/20 | Unequal Distribution of Environmental Hazards | **In-Class Assignment #3**  
| 11/1 | Out of Sight, Out of Mind: The privilege of psychological distance | **Introduction to Final Project: Part I**  
| 11/3 | Out of Sight, Out of Mind: The privilege of psychological distance | **Introduction to Final Project: Part II**  
No readings |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment/Module</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
<td>No Class: Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
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<td>------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12/1 | Structured Decision Making: Putting principles into practice | In-Class Assignment #5  
- No readings |
| 12/8 | In-Class Workday | - Bring any questions and materials regarding your final project |

**Final Project Due Thursday, December 16th by 11:59 p.m. via the Carmen Dropbox**