



SYLLABUS

ENR3400

The Psychology of Environmental Problems

Autumn 2023 (full term)

3 credit hours

Lecture, in-person

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor

Instructor: Dr. Jeremy Bruskotter, Professor

Email address: bruskotter.9@osu.edu (preferred)

Phone number: 614-595-7036 (cell; emergencies only)

Office hours: By appointment via Zoom (make appointment via email)

Teaching Assistant: Naseem Dillman-Hasso

Email address: dillman-hasso.1@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Office hours: By appointment via Zoom (make appointment via email)

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:

- ... *recognize* and *articulate* different perspectives/theories concerning human thought and behavior contribute to environmental problems.
- ...*recognize* basic psychological concepts (e.g., values, attitudes, beliefs, norms, risk perceptions, etc.), and *articulate* how these concepts are used to explain environmentally significant behavior.
- ...*recognize* how to design interventions that are likely to be more effective at influencing human judgments, decisions, and behaviors, and be able to select appropriate intervention strategies to address environmental issues.
- ...*demonstrate* critical thinking concerning how context (i.e., the social and physical environment), human thought, and public policy combine to shape human behavior.

General Education Expected Learning Outcomes

As part of the **Sustainability Theme** of the General Education curriculum, this course is designed to prepare students to:

1.1 Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of sustainability

1.2 Engage in an advanced, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of sustainability

2.1 Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experience as they apply to sustainability

2.2 Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, selfassessment and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.

3.1 Describe elements of the fundamental dependence of humans on Earth and environmental systems, and on the resilience of those systems

3.2 Describe, analyze, and critique the roles and impacts of human activity and technology on both human society and the natural world, in the past, present, and future

3.3 Devise informed and meaningful responses to problems and arguments in the area of sustainability based on the interpretation of appropriate evidence and an explicit statement of values

This course fulfills these learning outcomes by exploring the links between human behavior and both environmental degradation and the design of effective solutions that involve promoting more sustainable human behavior.

HOW THIS ONLINE COURSE WORKS

Mode of delivery: This course will be delivered 100% in person. Lecture slides will be posted after each class session, but recordings will only be made available for pre-planned absences and anyone who submits evidence of an unexpected illness or other family emergency (see Attending Lecture below)

Pace of activities: This course is divided into modules that cover one week of content. All modules will be visible on Carmen at the start of the course, so students will be able to see the topics we will cover. However, some content (e.g., new readings, news, events) will appear as the course progresses. All content for a given week will be posted by 8AM Monday of that week.

Deadlines: Quizzes, assignments and tests all have deadlines. Students are expected to pay attention to deadlines, but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame. Note. If there are any changes in due dates, we will make an announcement and send an email to students as a reminder.

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 (instructor content and Carmen activities, for example) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

Attendance and participation requirements: The following is a summary of students' expected participation:

- **Carmen: AT LEAST TWICE PER WEEK**
Students are expected to log in to the course in Carmen every week. (During most weeks you will probably log in multiple times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, contact me *as soon as possible*.
- **Lecture: MANDATORY**
You are expected to attend every class session. Given the size of the room, it is also required that all students sit in the front 2/3 of the auditorium, assuming this can be done comfortably with current distancing guidelines. This is to ensure that our class discussions and small group activities can be carried out effectively and efficiently. Attendance will be taken intermittently and will comprise part of your participation score.
- **Participating in PackBack discussions: ~2-3 TIMES PER WEEK (MOST WEEKS)**
Our goal for using Packback is to facilitate critical thought and exchange of ideas concerning the topics discussed in course. Additionally, use of Packback will help you to: (a) develop writing skills necessary in your career, (b) learn to communicate clearly and concisely about complex topics, and (c) reinforce critical life skills, such as the ability to justify thoughts and claims with credible evidence.

Students are **required to submit 1 question and 3 answers** to others' questions each week (weeks 2 -14). In order to receive points each week, **questions must be submitted by Wednesday 11:59PM each week** and **answers must be posted no later than Sunday 11:59PM**. Students will receive three 'free' weeks in which no responses need be submitted. Thus, **in total you'll need to submit 10 questions and 30 answers** throughout the course of the semester.

Question Moderation: It takes ~24 hours for the Packback team to moderate a post and send a coaching email. If by any reason your post is moderated because it does NOT meet the Community Guidelines, you will need to edit and re-publish your post to receive credit for the week. This is why it is important that you complete your Packback questions and responses far before the deadline in case your post is moderated.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Textbooks

Required:

- Heberlein T.A. (2012) Navigating Environmental Attitudes. Oxford University Press: New York, NY. [Any format, including e-readers, will work.]

Recommended/optional

- *Optional:* Clayton, S and G. Myers. (2009) Conservation Psychology: Understanding and promoting human care for nature. Wiley-Blackwell: West Sussex, UK
- *Optional:* Koger, S.M. and Winter, D.D. (2010) The psychology of environmental problems: Psychology for sustainability. Psychology Press: New York, NY.

Other fees or requirements

Packback

This discussion platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to <https://app.packback.co> and clicking "Sign up for an Account". Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage. See instructor for the Community Lookup Key
3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

TopHat

This course will use the TopHat response tool during lectures. This system requires that each student have access to either a computer with internet access, a smartphone with the free

mobile app, or a phone capable of sending text messages. In order to fully participate in class you will need to have one of these devices with you every day. As an OSU student your TopHat account will be free of charge. You can sign up at <https://tophat.com>. You must select “Ohio State University” and then you can login with your University login and password. You should sign up for your account on a computer rather than a mobile device to make sure your account syncs properly. For detailed instructions for getting started with TopHat, see: <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/top-hat/getting-started-top-hat/>

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
- PackBack online discussion forum (vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions)
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (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 FACULTY RESPONSE

How your grade is calculated

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY	%
Participation: Attendance & Packback	15
Quizzes	30
Exam 1	15
Exam 2 (Cumulative)	15
Exam 3 (Final, Cumulative)	25
Total	100

See course schedule below for due dates.

Descriptions of major course assignments

Quizzes

This course is divided into modules, each with roughly 1 weeks of content. Typically we will have a quiz every other week that covers the content of the most recent modules (i.e., modules since the prior quiz). Because of the learning objectives of the course focus on application (as opposed to simple memorization), quizzes will typically ask you to *apply* what you have learned in that module to some other context. Quizzes are generally short in length – at most, they will take you a half hour or so to complete. Note: Quizzes are designed to prompt application and critical thought. As such, we encourage students to work together on quizzes; to challenge each other and debate the appropriate response to the question at hand.

Attendance & Participation

Attendance will be taken via TopHat. Attending and participating in the interactive lecture is critical to your learning. Every student will be allotted up to two excused absences without notifying the instructor or submitting documentation. Additional excused absences will be given if you have a situation that you already know will cause you to miss a particular session (e.g., an upcoming wedding, a sports commitment). Please let us know within the first two weeks about that planned absence by emailing the instructor and TA. If you have an unplanned

absence due to illness or a family emergency, please notify us as soon as possible. Additional excused absences will only be considered for extended absences related to documented illness (e.g., COVID quarantine). We may also occasionally use TopHat to conduct in-class quizzes. All *in-class* quizzes will count toward your participation grade.

Packback Discussions

A Note on Integrity: Packback discussions allow us to determine the extent to which students comprehend the concepts presented in course. Your questions and answers should be your own, and where your logic relies on the work of others, this work should be properly cited.

Students are **required to submit 1 question and 3 answers to others' questions each week (weeks 2 -14)**. In order to receive points each week, **questions must be submitted by Wednesday 11:59PM each week** and **answers must be posted no later than Sunday 11:59PM**. Students will receive three 'free' weeks in which no responses need be submitted. Thus, **in total you'll need to submit 10 questions and 30 answers** throughout the course of the semester.

Question Moderation: It takes ~24 hours for the Packback team to moderate a post and send a coaching email. If by any reason your post is moderated because it does NOT meet the Community Guidelines, you will need to edit and re-publish your post to receive credit for the week. This is why it is important that you complete your Packback questions and responses far before the deadline in case your post is moderated.

Exams

There will be three exams throughout the semester, each one will be cumulative but will focus primarily on new concepts introduced since the previous exam. All exams will be administered via Carmen during the proposed class session (see Carmen schedule), while the third exam will take place during our assigned final exam slot.

Review. There will also be three optional exam review sessions with the TA via Zoom that will be recorded for those that cannot attend. Given the exams will be administered remotely, this will allow you to access your notes, but we ask that you work alone.

Bonus Points

You may receive bonus points 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 inperson surveys, interviews, or focus groups and will be related to current research 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>. 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/subjectpool/research-option> for more detailed sign-up instructions, credit amounts, policies, and Frequently Asked Questions.

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 Ellen Eilers at: Eilers.14@osu.edu. Your instructors and TAs do not have access to Sona systems and will not be managing the paper option; please direct all ESSREP-related questions to the lab manager.

Late assignments

Late assignments and excuses for unplanned absences above the initial 2 “freebies” will not be accepted (unless in the case of an extended documented illness). If you need to be absent on the day an assignment is due, please arrange to complete that assignment before the due date (you can make arrangements with the course TA). Please refer to Carmen for due dates.

Extenuating circumstances (only for exams)

Students who miss an exam because they are sick or taking care of someone who is sick must provide a written doctor’s note. Other extenuating circumstances (e.g., sports travel) should be cleared with the instructor before the exam.

Grading

Per OSU policy, letter grades will be assigned accordingly:

90–92.9: A-
87–89.9: B+
83–86.9: B

80–82.9: B-
77–79.9: C+
73–76.9: C

70–72.9: C-
67–69.9: D+

60–66.9: D
Below 60: E

Instructor feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-4357(HELP)** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

- **Grading and feedback:** For tests or quizzes, you can expect feedback within **7 days**, usually sooner.
- **Email:** Generally I will reply to emails within **24 hours of a business day**. If you have questions about the course or assignments, please start by emailing the course TA.
- **PackBack discussion board:** Generally, while Packback moderates questions posted to the discussion board, Dr. Bruskotter and the TA will monitor and occasionally participate in discussions as well. Because of the volume of posts on the discussion board, we cannot monitor all posts. Thus, if you have a specific question that requires our attention please email us.

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 posts for PackBack or your annotated bibliography, please be sure to pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- **Tone and civility:** Before you start posting to PackBack, be sure to read the Community Guidelines found in the tutorial on PackBack. If your post doesn't follow the PackBack [Community Guidelines](#), there is a chance it will be removed and you won't receive points for that post. Please maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online, and often is the cause of negative interactions.
- **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 posts in a word processor, where you can save your work, and then copying into the Carmen discussion.

Academic integrity policy

See **Descriptions of major course assignments**, above, for my specific guidelines about collaboration and academic integrity in the context of this online class.

Ohio State's 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. Any materials restricted by fair use will be provided securely via the university library.

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. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, 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.

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 online 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)
- Packback (<https://www.packback.co/resources/>)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please refer to the Carmen course page for up-to-date assignment due dates. Note, any change to the content or schedule will be announced on Carmen (in the announcements).