

Degree	Type	Year
Sociology	OB	3

Contact

Name: Jose Luis Espluga Trenc

Email: josepluis.espluga@uab.cat

Teachers

Guillermo Sala Lorda

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

None

Objectives and Contextualisation

The objective of the course is double. On the one hand, the aim is to understand the relationships between nature and society through different social sciences theoretical contributions, particularly from the already long tradition of environmental sociology. On the other hand, it is intended to reflect on environmental risks, their social and political implications and the main theoretical and practical debates related to its social perception, management and governance. In both objectives, emphasis will be placed on the issue of power and inequalities, on the role of scientific knowledge in the definition and management of environmental problems, and in the different types of social and political responses implemented to address these issues.

Competences

- Analysing the problems arising from the implementation of public policies and conflict situations by recognising the complexity of the social phenomena and political decisions affecting democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.
- Applying the concepts and approaches of the sociological theory, specially the explanations of social inequalities between classes, between genders and between ethnic groups, to the implementation of public policies and to the resolution of conflict situations.

- Assessing the contributions of sociological approaches to the study of culture, education, interaction between society and environment, social policy, and work.
- Demonstrating a comprehension of the analysis of social phenomena presented in English, as well as observing their strengths and weaknesses.
- Demonstrating a comprehension of the approaches of the sociological theory in its different aspects, interpretations and historical context.
- Describing social phenomena in a theoretically relevant way, bearing in mind the complexity of the involved factors, its causes and its effects.
- Developing self-learning strategies.
- Effectively communicating the basic analysis of social phenomena in an elementary level of English.
- Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
- Searching for documentary sources starting from concepts.
- Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.

Learning Outcomes

1. Applying the same social and environmental analysis to another country.
2. Comparing the theoretical approaches concerning interaction between society and the environment.
3. Defining the interaction society-environment from these approaches.
4. Defining the sociological concepts that interpret the interaction between society and the environment.
5. Demonstrating a comprehension of the analysis of social phenomena presented in English, as well as observing their strengths and weaknesses.
6. Developing self-learning strategies.
7. Differentiating the concepts adopted by actors involved in these policies and conflicts (productivist, environmentalist, sustainabilist, etc.).
8. Distinguishing sociological concepts, as well as the methods and techniques of social investigation commonly used by environmental sociology.
9. Effectively communicating the basic analysis of social phenomena in an elementary level of English.
10. Identifying the social phenomena by which the society and the environment interact.
11. Relating the approaches of the sociological theory in its different aspects with the global ecological dimension.
12. Respecting the diversity and plurality of ideas, people and situations.
13. Searching for documentary sources starting from concepts.
14. Take account of social, economic and environmental impacts when operating within one's own area of knowledge.

Content

Contents:

1. Relationships nature / society

The Society-Nature duality: an anthropological perspective

The economic system and natural 'resources'

The dialogue between the Social Sciences and the Natural Sciences

Human activity and environmental vectors: water, energy, waste, food, biodiversity, territory and urban planning, air quality and climate change (these vectors will also appear in the rest of the sections of the program)

2. Contemporary environmental concerns:

Origins and evolution. Different theoretical interpretations (causes based on technology, economics, politics, institutions, social constructionism, etc.).

Human ecological explanations: Chicago School (Park, Burgess, etc.); Model POET (Duncan); Model HEP-NEP (Catton & Dunlap), etc.

Explanations from the political economy: Wheel of production model (Schnaiberg); Second contradiction of capitalism (O'Connor); Popular Ecology (Martínez-Alier); Risk Society (Beck), Ecological Modernization (Mol and Spargaaren), etc.

Explanations from the debate on Ecological Modernization (Mol and Spargaaren) and alternatives: degrowth (Kallis, D'Alisa), transition initiatives (Del Río, Hobkins), ecosocialism (Sempere, Riechmann), etc.

Ecofeminisms and queer ecology.

3. Environmental and technological risks:

Concept of risk and its social and political implications. The social dimensions of risk.

Social perception of environmental and technological risks: Different perspectives (psychometric, cultural, institutional, etc.).

Socio-environmental conflicts: Models of analysis of the structure of conflicts.

4. Social movements and the environment:

The origins of socio-environmental mobilization: Conservationism and environmentalism.

The increase (of perception) of environmental risks and the new ecologism (or political ecologism).

Other social movements (naturism, etc.) and contemporary evolution (platforms, etc.)

5. Environmental policies:

Ecological modernization and sustainable development

Environmental governance and the precautionary principle

Degrowth and transitions towards sustainability

Ecosocial transitions and climate emergency

6. Transversal and thematic issues

Sociology of health

Urban sociology

Sociology of energy

Sociology of agrifood system

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			

Seminars	10	0.4	1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11
Theoretical classes	28	1.12	1, 2, 4, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	15	0.6	4, 5
Type: Autonomous			
Self-organized student's work	90	3.6	1, 2, 4, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11

The teaching methodology includes the following activities:

1- Master classes

2- Seminars: Reflections and analysis of Conferences and talks

3- Realization of group work

4- Preparation of the written test. Analysis and study of readings and materials.

5- Written test (exam).

At the beginning of the course, the specific instructions and the calendar to be followed will be detailed.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exam	50%	5	0.2	2, 4, 7, 8, 11
Seminars	20%	1	0.04	1, 13, 9, 5, 6, 10, 11
Team work	30%	1	0.04	14, 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12

The assessment of the course consists of:

- Attendance at two seminars, which will require a subsequent individual written reflection (20% of the final mark, 10% each one).
- A team work to analyze socioenvironmental conflicts (30% of the final mark).
- An exam (50% of the final mark).

Criteria:

- Both the exam and the team work must be approved separately.
- The mark results from the average of all partial notes (seminars, exam and team work), in accordance with the indicated proportionality.

- Those who, for any justified reason, can not carry out these activities, may agree to other methods of individual assessment (provided they do so before the date indicated by the teachers at the beginning of the course).
- In the event that someone is not present in the exam or does not do the group work, it will be considered 'Not Applicable'.
- The recovery will consist of an examination of the failed parts. To participate in the recovery exam one's must have been previously evaluated of the exam and team work, at least. No minimum mark is required to be able to do the recovery exam.
- The review of the final qualification will take place on a date established for the purpose, in which all evidence delivered during the course can be reviewed

IA terms of use:

"In this subject, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted as an integral part of the development of the work, provided that the final result reflects a significant contribution by the student in analysis and personal reflection. The student must clearly identify which parts have been generated with this technology, specify the tools used, and include a critical reflection on how they have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. Lack of transparency in the use of AI will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may lead to a penalty in the activity grade, or greater sanctions in serious cases."

Unique/single assessment:

In this subject there is the possibility of requesting a single assessment. Students who decide to take this option must provide the following evidence on the official day of the subject exam:

- - Seminars: deliver 2 reflections on 2 of the conferences scheduled during the course, with the same length and characteristics as those required of the rest of the students. In the event that the student cannot attend the conferences or talks, he/she can ask the teaching staff for substitute virtual material to make the respective comments or reflections. The weight of this evidence is 20% of the final grade.
- - Collective work: Submit a work equivalent to that proposed by the subject's collective work. Ideally, it should be group work. If this is not possible, the student should contact the teachers to receive precise instructions on how to do it individually. The weight of this evidence is 30% of the final grade.
- - Exam: students taking a single assessment must take the subject exam on the date set in the official calendar.

Recovery: The same recovery system as for the continuous assessment will be applied.

The review of the final qualification follows the same procedure as for the continuous assessment.

Bibliography

Basics:

Alabart, Anna (2003) "Sociologia urbana". A: S. Giner (coord.), *Teoría Sociológica Moderna* (págs. 458-488). Barcelona: Ariel.

Beck, Ulrich (2002) *La sociedad del riesgo global*. Madrid: Siglo XXI.

Commoner, Barry (1992) *En paz con el planeta*. Barcelona: Crítica.

Espluga Trenc, J. (2025) **Reptes socials de la transició ecològica**. (Col·lecció Transformem; 2). Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya.

Espluga, Josep & Caballero, Javier. (2005) *Introducción a la prevención de riesgos laborales*. Barcelona: Ariel.

Espluga, Josep; Ruscheinsky, Aloisio; Prades, Ana (2018) "El concepto de riesgo y su aplicación al análisis de conflictos socioambientales" (p. 69-90). In: A. Vallejos-Romero; J. Valencia Hernández & A. Boso (eds.) *Riesgos, Gobernanza y Conflictos Socioambientales*. Temuco: Ediciones Universidad de La Frontera.

Garcia, Ernest (2004), *Medio Ambiente y Sociedad*. Madrid: Alianza.

Garcia, Ernest (2021) *Ecología e igualdad*. València: Tirant.

Herrero, Yayo (2023) *Toma de tierra*. Madrid: Caniche.

Lemkow, Louis. & Espluga, Josep (2017) *Sociología Ambiental*. Barcelona: Icària.

Mies, María & Vandana Shiva (2016) *Ecofemismo. Teoría, crítica y perspectivas*. Barcelona: Icària.

Prades, Ana; Espluga, Josep; Horlick-Jones, Tom (2015) "Riesgos tecnológicos, conflictos sociales y políticas ambientales. Del estudio de las percepciones a la implicación pública". *Papers, Revista de Sociologia*, núm. 100 (4): 395-423. <http://papers.uab.cat/article/view/v100-n4-prades-espluga-horlick-jones>

Riechmann, Jorge & Fernández Buey, Francisco (1994) *Redes que dan libertad. Introducción a los nuevos movimientos sociales*. Barcelona: Paidós.

Schnaiberg, Allan (1998) "Politizando la rueda de producción: Los programas de reciclaje de residuos sólidos en Estados Unidos". *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 19-20: 181-222. [Versió en anglès: "Politicizing the treadmill of production: reshaping social outcomes of 'efficient' recycling". Working paper, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL USA].

Complementary:

Aledo, A.; Domínguez, J.A. (2001) *Sociología ambiental*. Granada: Grupo Editorial Universitario.

Baigorri, A. (ed.) (2012) *Transiciones ambientales. Ensayos de sociología ambiental*. Badajoz: ARSociologica & SOCMAyS.

Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society; Towards a New Modernity*, London, Sage. [La Sociedad del riesgo. Barcelona: Paidós, 1998]

Beck, U. (1999) *World Risk Society*. Cambridge. Polity Press. [La Sociedad del riesgo global. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2002]

Beck, U. (2009) *The World at Risk*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

Benach, J. (2020) *La salud es política*. Barcelona: Icària.

Brundtland, G.H. (1989) *Nuestro Futuro Común*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial (Comisión Mundial Del Medio Ambiente Y Del Desarrollo).

Carson, R. (2002) *Silent Spring*, New York, Mariner Books (Houghton).

Commoner, B. (1992) *En paz con el planeta*. Barcelona: Crítica.

D'Alisa, G.; Demaria, F.; Kallis, G. (eds.) (2015) *Decreixement. Vocabulari per a una nova era*. Barcelona: Icària.

Del Río, J. (2015) *Guía del movimiento de Transición*. Madrid: La Catarata.

Díaz-Maurin, F. (2013) *Decreixement sostenible i Eficiència Energètica*. Documents de Treball Medi Ambient, Vol. 7 "Eficiència Energètica", Diputació de Barcelona, Servei de Medi Ambient.

Dobson, A. (1997) *Pensamiento político verde*. Barcelona: Paidós.

- Douglas, M. (1996). *La aceptabilidad del riesgo según las ciencias sociales*. Barcelona: Paidós. [1985].
- Douglas, M.; Wildavsky, A. (1982). *Risk and Culture*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Dunlap, R.E.; Buttel, F.H.; Dickens, P.; Gijswitj, A. (2002) *Sociological Theory and the Environment. Classical Foundations, Contemporary Insights*. Lanhan: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Espluga, J. (2004) "Conflictes socioambientals i estudi de la percepció social del risc". *Papers. Revista de Sociologia*, núm. 72, p. 145-162.
- Espluga, J. (2012) "Riscos ambientals, plans d'emergència i desigualtats de gènere". A: M. Freixanet (coord.) *Sostenibilitats. Polítiques públiques des del feminisme i l'ecologisme*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials. Pàgs. 189-226.
- Espluga, J. (2013) "Riscos ambientals i moviments socials a Catalunya". A: *Societat Catalana 2012*. Barcelona: Associació Catalana de Sociologia - Institut d'Estudis Catalans. Pàgs. 135-156.
<http://publicacions.iec.cat/repository/pdf/00000190%255C00000045.pdf>
- Espluga Trenc, J. (coord.) (2019) *El cambio climático y sus metáforas*. Barcelona: Icària.
- Espluga, J.; Di Masso, M.; López, D. (2019) "Agroecologia i polítiques per la sobirania alimentària: fórmules per afrontar la crisi energètica, ambiental i econòmica". A: R. Gomà & J. Subirats (coords.) *Canvi d'època i de polítiques públiques a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Galàxia Guttenberg. P. 144-159.
- Espluga, J.; Farré, J.; Gonzalo, J. Prades, A. (2014) "Factores que inhiben la movilización social: el caso del área petroquímica de Tarragona". *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, núm. 146: 191-216.
<http://www.reis.cis.es/REIS/jsp/REIS.jsp?opcion=articulo&ktitulo=2435&autor=JOSEP+ESPLUGA+TRENC%2C+>
- Espluga, J.; Farré, J.; Gonzalo, J.; Horlick-Jones, T.; Prades, A.; Oltra, J.; Navajas, J. (2009) "Do the people exposed to a technological risk always want more information about it? Some observations on cases of rejection". In: S. Martorell, C. Guedes & J. Barnett (eds.) *Safety, Reliability and Risk Analysis*, London: CRC Press - Taylor & Francis, p. 1301-1308.
- Espluga, J.; Prades, A.; Gamero, N.; Solà, R. (2009) "El papel de la confianza en los conflictos socioambientales". *Política y Sociedad*, Vol. 46, núm. 1 y 2: 255-273.
<http://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/POSO/article/view/POSO0909130255A>
- European Environment Agency (2013) *Late Lessons from Early Warnings: Science, Precaution and Innovation*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Fischhoff, B.; Slovic, P.; Lichtenstein, S.; Read, S.; Coombs, B. (1978). "How Safe is Safe Enough: A Psychometric Study of Attitudes towards Technological Risk and Benefits". *Policy Sciences*, núm. 8: 127-152.
- Foster, J.B. (2012) "The Planetary Rift and the New Human Exemptionalism: A Political-Economic Critique of Ecological Modernization Theory". *Organization Environment*, 25: 211-237.
- Garcia, E. (2004), *Medio Ambiente y Sociedad*. Madrid: Alianza.
- Garcia, E. (2021) *Ecología e igualdad*. València: Tirant.
- Giddens, Anthony (1993): *Las consecuencias de la modernidad*, Madrid: Alianza.
- Giddens, Anthony (2000): *Un mundo desbocado*, Madrid: Taurus.
- Harari, Y.N. (2014) *Sàpiens. Una breu història de la humanitat*. Barcelona: Edicions 62.
- Horlick-Jones, T.; Prades, A. (2009). "On interpretative risk perception research: Some reflections on its origins; its nature; and its possible applications in risk communication practice". *Health, Risk & Society*, 11 (5): 409-430.

- Irwin, A. (2001) *Sociology and the Environment*. Oxford. Polity Press.
- Jackson, T. (2011) *Prosperidad sin crecimiento. Economía para un planeta finito*. Barcelona: Icària.
- Jackson, T. (2022). *Postcreixement. La vida després del capitalisme*. Barcelona: Arcàdia.
- Kallis, G. (2021) *Límits. Ecologia i llibertat*. Barcelona: Arcàdia.
- Krimsky, S.; Golding, D. (eds.) (1992) *Social Theories of Risk*, London: Praeger.
- Laraña, E. (1999) *La construcción de los movimientos sociales*. Madrid: Alianza.
- Lash, S.; Szerszynski, B.; Wynne, B. (1996), *Risk, Environment and Modernity*. London: Sage.
- Latouche, S. (2008), *La Apuesta por el Decrecimiento. ¿Cómo Salir del Imaginario Dominante?*, Barcelona, Icaria.
- Lemkow, L. (1984). *La protesta antinuclear*. Madrid: Mezquita.
- Lemkow, L.; Espluga Trenc, J. (2017), *Sociología Ambiental*. Barcelona: Icària.
- López Cerezo, J.A.; Luján, J.L. (2000) *Ciencia y Política del Riesgo*. Madrid: Alianza.
- López García, D. (2015) *Producir alimentos, reproducir comunidad. Redes alimentarias alternativas como formas económicas para la transformación social y ecológica*. Madrid: Libros en Acción.
- López García, D.; Fernández Casadevante Kois, J.L.; Morán, N.; Oteros Rozas, E. (eds.) (2017) *Arraigar las instituciones. Propuestas de políticas agroecológicas desde los movimientos sociales*. Madrid: Libros en Acción.
- Malm, A. (2020) *Capital fósil. El auge del vapor y las raíces del calentamiento global*. Madrid: Capitán Swing.
- Martínez Alier, J.; Oliveres, A. (2005), *¿Quién Debe A Quién? Deuda Ecológica y Deuda Externa*, Barcelona, Icaria.
- Meadows, D. (coord.) (1972) *Los límites del crecimiento*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Mora i Ticó, P. (2004) "El moviment ecologista: història i procés d'institucionalització". A: E. Prat (coord.) *Els moviments socials a la Catalunya contemporània*. Barcelona: Publicacions i Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona.
- Naredo, J.M. (2006) *Raíces económicas del deterioro ecológico y social*. Madrid: Siglo XXI.
- Pardo, M. (1998) "Sociología Y Medio Ambiente: Estado de la cuestión". *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, 19-20: 329-367.
- Patel, R. (2008), *Obesos Y Famélicos. El Impacto de la Globalización en el Sistema Alimentario Mundial*. Barcelona: Los Libros Del Lince.
- Redclift, M and Benton, T. (1994) *Social Theory And The Global Environment*. London. Routledge.
- Renn, Ortwin (1992): "Concepts of risk: A Classification", pp. 53-81, en S. Krimsky y D. Golding (eds.) *Social Theories of Risk*, Westport: Praeger.
- Renn, Ortwin (2008): *Risk Governance. Coping with Uncertainty in a Complex World*, London: Earthscan.
- Riechmann, J. & Fernández Buey, F. (1994) *Redes que dan libertad. Introducción a los nuevos movimientos sociales*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Riechmann, J. (2019) *Otro fin del mundo es posible. Sobre transiciones ecosociales, colapsos y la imposibilidad de lo necesario*. Barcelona: MRA.

- Riechmann, J.; González-Reyes, L.; Herrero, Y.; Madorrán, C. (2012) *Qué Hacemos Hoy Cuando Nos Encontramos Frente A La Amenaza De Una Crisis Mayor Que La Econòmica: La Ecològica*. Madrid: Akal.
- Sacristán, M. (2009) *Pacifismo, ecologismo y política alternativa*. Barcelona: Icària & Público.
- Saito, K. (2022). *Una nova manera de viure. El capital a l'era de l'antropocè*. Manresa: Tigre de Paper.
- Sapolsky, R.M. (2007) *El mono enamorado. Y otros ensayos sobre nuestra vida animal*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Schloeser, E. (2001) *Fast food nation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (*Fast Food. El lado oscuro de la comida ràpida*. Madrid: Grijalbo, 2002)
- Schnaiberg, A.; Gould, K. A. (1994) *Environment and Society. The Enduring Conflict*. Caldwell: The Blackburn Press.
- Sempere, J. (2009) *Mejor con menos. Necesidades, explosión consumista y crisis ecològica*. Barcelona: Crítica.
- Sempere, J. (2018) *Las cenizas de Prometeo. Transición energética y socialismo*. Barcelona: Ediciones de Pasado & Presente.
- Sempere, J.; Riechmann, J. (2000), *Sociología y Medio Ambiente*. Madrid: Síntesis.
- Sempere, J.; Tello, E. (coords.) (2008) *El final de la era del Petróleo barato*. Barcelona: Icària.
- Sevilla Guzmán, E. (2006) *De la sociología rural a la agroecología*. Barcelona: Icària.
- Slovic, Paul (2000): *The perception of risk*, London: Earthscan.
- Spaargaren, G.; Mol, A.P.J.; Buttel, F. (2000), *Environment and Global Modernity*. London: Sage.
- Steel, C. (2022). *Sitopia. Cómo pueden salvar el mundo los alimentos*. Madrid: Capitán Swing.
- Tábara, J.D. (2003) "Teoría socioambiental y Sociología Ecológica". En: S. Giner (coord.), *Teoría Sociológica Moderna* (págs. 431-457). Barcelona: Editorial Ariel.
- Tejero, H.; Santiago Muiño, E. (2019) *¿Qué hacer en caso de incendio? Manifiesto por el Green New Deal*. Madrid: Capitán Swing.
- Tello, E. (2005) *La historia cuenta. Del crecimiento económico al desarrollo humano sostenible*. Barcelona: El Viejo Topo.
- Tello, E.; Jover, G. (2019) *Polítiques i conflictes ambientals a Catalunya, 1972-2017*. A: R. Gomà & J. Subirats (coords.) *Canvi d'època i de polítiques públiques a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Galàxia Guttenberg. P. 83-98.
- Turiel, A. (2020) *Petrocalipsis. Crisis energètica global y cómo (no) la vamos a solucionar*. Madrid: Alfabeto.
- Wilson, E.O. (2012). *La conquista social de la Tierra*, Barcelona: Debate.
- Wynne, Brian (1996): "May the Sheep Safely Graze? A Reflexive View of the Expert-Lay Knowledge Divide", pp. 44-83, en S. Lash; B. Szwed; y B. Wynne (eds.) *Risk, Environment and Modernity*. London: Sage.

Software

Not necessary.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(SEM) Seminars	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	51	Catalan	second semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	51	Catalan	second semester	afternoon