

In Practice

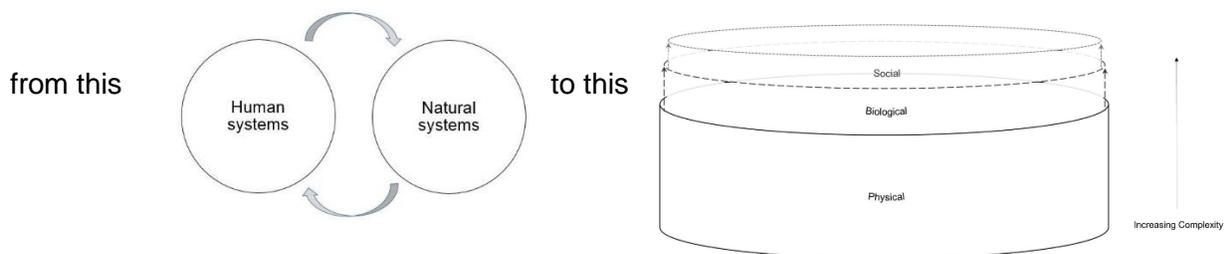
Mentality for Reality

Re-Thinking “Human-Environment Relations”



Purpose

The super simple suggestions below are meant to support the development of a new mentality,



and to continually reinforce it.

The following examples are from a college-level intro course. Adapt and apply as needed in your specific setting.

1. Designing the Course and Syllabus

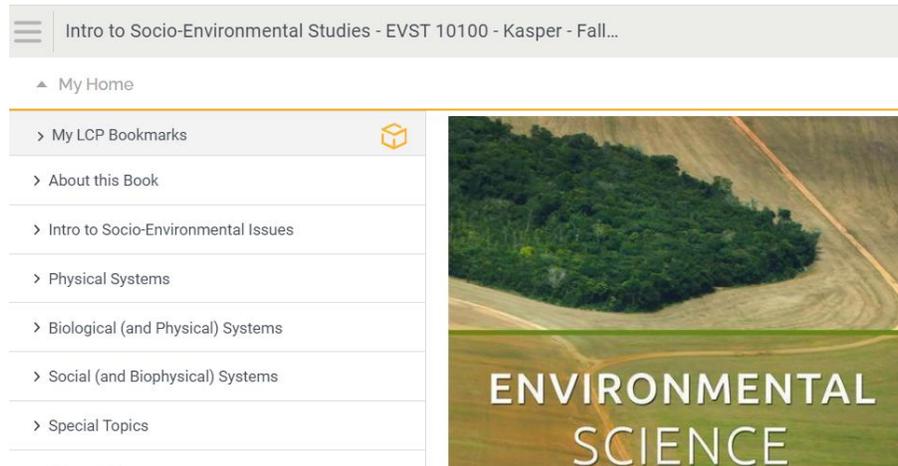
It's helpful to organize course subject matter and the class schedule according to these levels. The snapshots below are of the relevant headings in my Intro to Socio-Environmental Studies syllabus.

Course Schedule: subject to change as needed

Week	Date	Read / Study / Do / Due
Overview & Physical Systems		
1	8/30	Intro to the Course
	9/1	
	9/3	
Biophysical Systems		
	9/22	ES: Ch 5 Energy in Biology 5.2-5.3
	9/24	ES: Ch 3 part 4 (3.4 on Natural Selection) and Ch 5 Energy in Biology 5.2-5.3
Human Social Life, Socio-Environmental Systems, and Social Change		
	10/22	ES: Ch 9 Carrying Capacity 9.5-9.6 9.8 9.10-9.12

2. Organizing Readings and Other Resources

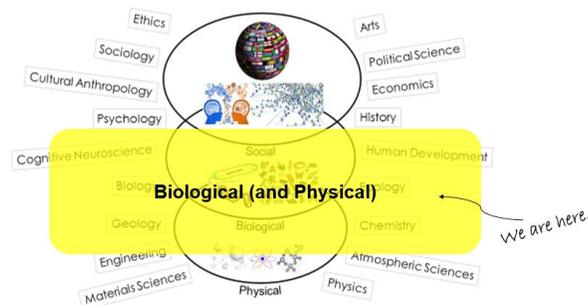
I'm currently using an electronic text which allows me to re-order content, add my own, and edit chapter and section titles. I take advantage of this to reinforce this mentality and the invaluable "[mental shelving](#)" it provides students. My self-designed textbook headings look like this:



Whether you use digital or physical textbooks or reading packets or something else, consider how you might organize course resources along these lines and make that organization apparent and even obvious to students.

3. Regular Reminders

As we move through the course material, and especially as we transition to the next major topic and prepare to build on what's come before, I use visual tools to help orient students. Below is one example of a slide with a simple image that places a selection of disciplines loosely along the hierarchy of levels and points out where we are in the course.



The [Conclusion of *Beyond the Knowledge Crisis*](#) (scroll down to “Back Matter”) deals with the question of situating disciplines in greater detail. It also offers suggestions for facilitating the development of this mentality in other classes, at institutional levels, in the portrayal of disciplinary relationships, and in some forms of research and data presentation.

You're encouraged to check that out and to imagine additional means for cultivating and reinforcing a way of thinking about our place in the world that better aligns with reality. And you're warmly invited to share them through the Contact form on www.debbievskasper.com.