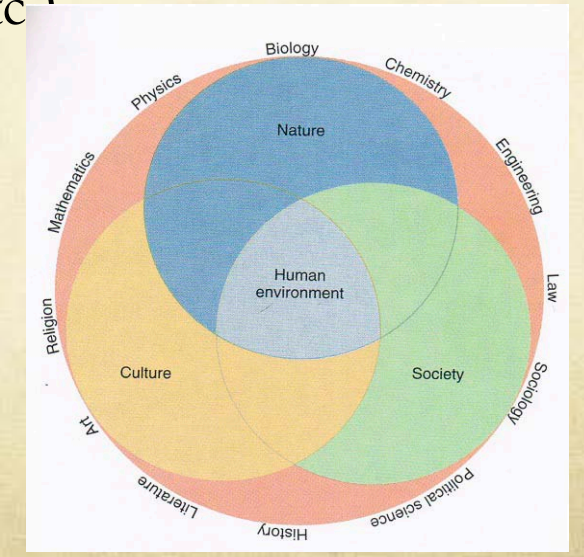
Understanding our Environment

Notes 1.1

What is "Environmental Science?"

- The systematic study of our environment, and our proper place in it.
- Highly interdisciplinary
  - Natural Sciences (Biology, chemistry, geology etc.)
  - Social Sciences (Economics, psychology, Political Science (politics) etc.)



Example: Deformed Frogs

Group Discussion

- Working in your table groups: Use your notes from this class, and information that you may have learned in other classes do the following:
  - Explain what may be happening to the frogs.
  - Discuss why we should care about this issue?
  - Using the diagram, explain what disciplines and areas would come together to address this problem.
- Be prepared to share your group opinions with the class.

Example: Deformed Frogs

- Frogs with poorly formed, additional, or missing legs
  - Chemicals?
  - UV Radiation?
  - Better Observations?

- Questions:
  - What are we doing to other species?
  - What threats might our activities pose to us?
  - Are the observed issues a result of human activity, or do we just happen to be noticing them?
  - What should we be doing about it?

Conclusion

- Answers are not always obvious or easy. Many do not even have a right or a wrong.
- Solutions to any environmental problem, no matter the scale are multidisciplinary.
- To be an “Environmental Scientist” takes knowledge in a particular discipline, and the ability to work closely with people from areas and backgrounds different than your own.