

ENVS 1301/1401

Introduction to Environmental Science

Courses Syllabus: Fall, 2015

Instructor: Dr. Lin Guo

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Phone: 903-886-5371

Office Hours: SCI 202

12:00–1:00 MF

Text Book:

Required. Electronic Book:

Simply go to store.trinity.com and search for your name, your class name, or the school's name to find the course. Or use the direct link to find the book;

<http://store.trinity.com/products/texas-a-m-university-commerce-intro-to-environmental-science-envs-1301-1401-guo-fall-2015>

Course Description:

Survey course designed to cover major areas relating to contemporary ecological/environmental problems and to introduce the student to the multiple of roles of the environmental professional in addressing these problems.

Instructional Method:

Lecture, discussion, videos and project.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Describe current environmental conditions;
2. Understand terminology commonly used in environmental science, such as environment; sustainable development;
3. Read and critically evaluate presented information and media reports;
4. Successfully work with a small team of students to design and conduct an environmental project.

Competency Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Critical Thinking: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion; be able to discern between relevant and irrelevant information, recognize bias in source material, and critically examine a diversity of source material.
2. Communication: In written, oral, and/or visual communication, students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience

and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure.

3. Teamwork: Students will be able to work together toward a shared purpose relevant to the course or discipline with a sense of shared responsibility for meeting that purpose.
4. Empirical and Quantitative Skills: Students will be able understand and utilize mathematical functions and empirical principles and processes.

Monthly writings, projects and exams will be given to support and assess the learning objectives and competency student learning outcomes.

Monthly Writings:

In order to culture and assess your critical thinking and written communication ability, you need to read an article and submit a brief review every month. The review should be typed (12 pt font, 1.5 line spacing) and include two full paragraphs. First, conclude the opinions of the article (about one half to one page). In the second paragraph (about one half to one page), please critique of the article with substantive or evidence-driven arguments for or against the opinions of the article. The articles will be assigned to you and topics will be related to sustainable development, global water shortage and global climate change. The reviews must be sent to the dropbox in e-college **before 5 pm on Sep 28, Oct 26 and Nov 23. Late homework will receive a zero!** Source of information must be referenced. **Any paper that is not properly referenced will receive a zero!**

Project:

In order to culture and assess your team work ability, students will form teams of 3-6 members, conceptualize, design, and perform a project targeting environmental sustainability and community environmental service (remember: think globally; act locally). Actual conduct of the project must exceed 8 hours. The whole team will submit one well written and photo documented paper describing the project, the project goals, the duties of each member, the time spent (including a documented work schedule), the achievements, and the lessons learned. The team members will be required to evaluate each other's contribution to the team effort (blind evaluation) to determine 33% of each member's assignment grade. The photo documentation should include images showing that you participated in the project. The paper should be a minimum of 5 written pages excluding the title page and excluding the photo documentation page(s). Use 12 pt font, 1.5 line spacing. Number your pages. **The paper must be sent to dropbox in e-college on or before 5 pm on Dec 7. Plagiarized papers will receive a zero score! Late homework will receive a zero! You must find team members by yourself. If your team contains less than 3 or more than 6 members, you can only receive 50% of the total points.**

Exam:

There will be a total of 3 exams for the course. Exams will be designed to evaluate the student’s understanding of the subjects covered in class and empirical and quantitative skills. Specific topic on Human Population will be included in the final exam as an assessment of Empirical and Quantitative Skills. Study guide will be given to help you prepare for exams.

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|----------------|---|-------------------|--------|
| Grades: | 3 tests | 300 points | A≥90% |
| | Articles writing | 100 points | B≥80% |
| | Projects | 100 points | C≥70% |
| | Lab | 100 points | |
| | (lab is for 1401 class; no lab is required for 1301 class) | | |
| | | | D ≥60% |
| | Total | 500 or 600 points | F<60% |

Opportunities (e.g. answer/discuss critical thinking problems) will be offered to earn extra grades.

Topics and schedule: The following topics will be included in class. The schedule is approximate and subject to change.

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| Week 1-2 Environmental Overview; Read Chap 1-4 | Week 9-11 Air; Read Chap 13; 14; 19 |
| Week 3 Ecology; Read Chap 8-10 | Week 12 Water; Read Chap 18 |
| Week 4 Biomes; Read Chap 5-7 | Week 13 Solid & Hazardous Waste; Read Chap 23 |
| Week 5 Biodiversity; Read Chap 11-12; | Week 14 Food Agriculture; Read Chap 15; 16; 17 |
| Week 6 Biological communities; Read Chap 11-12 | Week 15 Pest Control; Read other chapters |
| Week 7-8 Population; Read other chapters | Week 16 Review; Read other chapters |

The date of exam will be announced in class one week before the exam.

Absence

Students are required to attend all sections and sign the rosters every class. Be late for class and/or leaving early will be treated as absences. The final grades will be affected by the absences (i.e. the numbers of absences will be subtracted from your final grades). **Official documents** (e.g. doctor’s letter) must be presented if you ask for a leave from class or it will be treated as an absence.

Cell phone:

Cell phone must be turned off or in silent mode.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Gee Library,
Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835, Fax (903) 468-8148,
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

Plagiarism:

All sources of information must be referenced. Unreferenced or stealing of other's sentences, paragraphs, or entire paper is a serious ethical offense and even a crime activity.

Behavior:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. Students who are disruptive to class activities will be dropped from the class and may face further disciplinary action.

Early Intervention for First Year Students:

Early intervention for freshmen is designed to communicate the University's interest in their success and a willingness to participate fully to help students accomplish their academic objectives. The university through faculty advisors and mentors will assist students who may be experiencing difficulty to focus on improvement and course completion. This process will allow students to be knowledgeable about their academic progress early in the semester and will provide faculty and staff with useful data for assisting students and enhancing retention. Grade reports will be mailed by the end of the sixth week of the semester.

If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course, please contact me via email or come to my office. I am glad to talk to you any time, but it is better to stop by during my office hours or send me an email in advance.