

EC 370 – Environmental Economics

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Class meetings: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 1:30 pm – 2:35 pm at 058 Rike Hall
Office Hours: Monday 12:30 pm to 1:20 pm, Wednesday 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm, and by appointment

- I. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The natural environment is fundamental to the functioning of humans because it not only provides raw materials for production and consumption but also provides a ‘sink’ for all the wastes produced thereof. It therefore supports the social and economic functioning of human life at local, national and global levels. However, the current scale of human activities threatens the sustenance that we receive from the natural environment. This threat does not arise merely because of improper individual choice or due to technological constraints, or as a result of ecological processes beyond human control; it has its roots in the social relations of production and exchange that lead some to benefit from environmental degradation and some to be worse off.
This course is intended as an overview of issues of efficiency, scale and distribution as they pertain to the environment. The objective of the course is to gain an understanding of how economics can be used to understand the causes, consequences and potential solutions to environmental problems. In the current global social and economic climate, a good understanding of these issues would lead us to look outside of narrow political boundaries. Therefore, the course will cover environmental problems and case studies from the U.S. and around the world.
- II. **READINGS:** The text used in this course is by Goodstein, E.S. *Economics and the Environment, Fifth edition*. Wiley. The textbook is available at the university bookstore may also be purchased online. Other reading materials will be available on webct. ***I expect each of you to do the required readings before the class meets in order to facilitate class discussion.***
- III. **CLASS FORMAT AND ATTENDANCE:** Classes will consist of a mixture of lecture, questions and discussions. My lectures may go beyond the material in the text and readings. I expect you to be responsible for taking notes and utilizing this information when needed. I may call on any one of you to answer

a question or express an opinion. This requires each you to be prepared for each class. If you dislike being called on in class, discuss the matter with me and we will work out another way for you to participate in class. I do not appreciate 'put-downs' in class. ***You are welcome to disagree with me or other students but each of you is responsible for maintaining a respectful atmosphere in class.***

IV. ATTENDANCE AND CLASS BEHAVIOR: Class attendance is expected and critical to success in this course. If you choose to attend class, I insist that you be on time and refrain from visiting with your neighbors. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated or ignored. Students who do not attend class cannot expect individual tutoring. If you miss class it is your responsibility to keep with readings, notes, announcements. ***Keep in mind that the test may refer to issues, topics and questions discussed in class.***

V. EMAIL POLICY: I may occasionally email students about updates or changes in the syllabus and class activities. I expect each of you to check the email address listed under Wings (Banner).

If you email me, please mention the course and section numbers in the subject to ensure that I respond in a timely manner. Be specific in your questions.

VI. ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments and papers should be submitted to turnitin.com

Using Turnitin.com

If you are using this service for the first time, go to the following url, <http://www.turnitin.com> Click on "New Users", located in the upper right hand corner. Follow the instructions. When asked if you are a student or instructor, make the appropriate choice. Key in the following class ID and password to access the class website. Note that the password is case sensitive.

Once you are registered for this class, turn in assignments and papers as per the due date.

VII. GRADING: Throughout the quarter there will be assigned homework and in-class assignments. In total, assignments are worth 50% of your score. They will test your understanding of theoretical concepts, your ability to synthesize readings and application of concepts to the real world.

You will present an environmental problem in class consistent with the topic under discussion that week. This research presentation requires significant

research and reading. You may work in pairs or individually. These presentations will be made every Monday starting October 11th. The presentation should be 20 minutes (10 minutes, if working individually) in length. Each group (individual) will turn in a brief two paragraph proposal for the presentation on September 27th. On the Saturday before your presentation you will also turn in a detailed 4-5 (2-3 pages, if working individually) page outline of your presentation that includes the issues covered and your analysis of the problem. In addition, a copy of handouts and slides and a complete reference list (this should only include materials that you are actually utilizing in your presentation and analysis of the environmental problem) should also be submitted. For those working in pairs, include a brief explanation of how each individual contributed to the projected. The research presentation counts for 15% of your total score. You will be scored based on quality of the content, quality of the presentation (including handouts and/or presentation), and creativity in presentation and content.

A final test is worth 20% and class participation, which includes keeping up with readings and engaging in class discussions count for 15% of the total grade. ***The test will be held between 1pm and 3pm on Monday, November 15th***

Although I may adjust the grading scale, you will be graded on approximately the following scale:

A: 90% and above; B: 80% -- 89%; C: 70% -- 79%;
D: 60% -- 69%; F: 59% and below

Component	Weight
Assignments	50.00%
Research Presentation	15.00%
Final Test	20.00 %
Class Participation	15.00%
Total	100.00%

VIII. COURSE PREPARATIONS: The best advice I can offer you on this course is to keep up with the readings and discussions. If you do not understand a concept, question or application of a concept, do not hesitate to bring it up in class or see me during office hours or email me to set up an appointment. The following is a partial list of some websites that offer writing tips for economics courses.

- a. David Colander's website for Writing in Economics Colander's website
http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072549025/student_view0/writing_about_economics.html#

- b. Companion website to Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. Sixth edition.
<http://www.dianahacker.com/writersref/>

For direction with regard to common words used in essay questions, you may use this page as a guide

http://wright.edu/ctl/faculty/resources/direction_words.pdf. In addition, you may seek assistance from the Writing Center located in 031 Dunbar Library. You can access them online at <http://wright.edu/academics/writingctr/>

IX. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: The university policy on academic dishonesty can be found in the student handbook, also available at

<http://www.wright.edu/students/judicial/integrity.html>

Make sure you read it, particularly the sections regarding examination behavior, plagiarism, and suggestions for student prevention of academic dishonesty. If found in violation, action will be taken according to university guidelines.

X. READING LIST:

September 8th – 13th

Introduction: Nature of Resources and Resources of Nature

- 1) Robert Costanza, Richard Norgaard, Robert Goodland, Herman Daly and John Cumberland. 2007. *An Introduction to Ecological Economics: Chapter 1*. In: Encyclopedia of Earth. Eds. Cutler J. Cleveland (Washington, D.C.: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment).
http://www.eoearth.org/article/An_Introduction_to_Ecological_Economics:_Chapter_1
- 2) Robert Costanza, Richard Norgaard, Robert Goodland, Herman Daly and John Cumberland. 2007. *An Introduction to Ecological Economics: Chapter 3, sections 1 and 2*. In: Encyclopedia of Earth. Eds. Cutler J. Cleveland (Washington, D.C.: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment).
http://www.eoearth.org/article/An_Introduction_to_Ecological_Economics:_Chapter_3

Understanding the Problems

September 14th – 20th

Efficient Allocation: Externalities and other Market Failures

- 1) Goodstein, Chapter 3.
- 2) Daly, H., & Farley, J. (2004). *Ecological Economics: Chapter 10*. Washington: Island Press.

- 3) Templet, P. (2003). Defending the public domain: Pollution, subsidies, and poverty. In J.k. boyce, & B. Shelley (Eds). *Natural Assets: Democratizing Environmental Ownership*. Island Press.

September 21st – 27th

Sustainable Scale: Economic Growth and Human Development

- 1) Robert Costanza, Richard Norgaard, Robert Goodland, Herman Daly and John Cumberland. 2007. *An Introduction to Ecological Economics: Chapter 3, sections 3, 4 and 6*. In: Encyclopedia of Earth. Eds. Cutler J. Cleveland (Washington, D.C.: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment).
http://www.eoearth.org/article/An_Introduction_to_Ecological_Economics:_Chapter_3
- 2) Eriksson, R., & Andersson, J.O. (2010). *Elements of Ecological Economics: chapter 5, pgs 62-74*. New York: Routledge.

September 28th – October 4th

Inequality and Distribution

- 1) Boyce, J.K. (1994). Inequality as a cause for environmental degradation. *Ecological Economics*, 11(3): 169-178. Available at
http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/published_study/PS1.pdf

Analyses and Solutions

October 5th – 11th

Efficient Scale: Standards and Property rights

- 1) Goodstein, Chapters 4 and 5
- 2) Robert Costanza, Richard Norgaard, Robert Goodland, Herman Daly and John Cumberland. 2007. *An Introduction to Ecological Economics: Chapter 4, sections 5.1 and 5.2*. In: Encyclopedia of Earth. Eds. Cutler J. Cleveland (Washington, D.C.: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment).
http://www.eoearth.org/article/An_Introduction_to_Ecological_Economics:_Chapter_4

October 12th – 18th

Efficient Scale: Valuation and Cost-Benefit Analysis

- 1) Goodstein, Chapters 8 and 9.
- 2) Ackerman, F., Heinzerling, L. (2002). Pricing the priceless: Cost-benefit analysis of environmental protection. Working paper, The Georgetown Environmental Law and Policy Institute. Available at
<http://ase.tufts.edu/gdae/publications/C-B%20pamphlet%20final.pdf>

October 19th – October 25th

Scale: Wealth, Consumption and Sustainability

- 1) Soumyananda, D. (2004). Environmental Kuznets curve hypothesis: a survey. *Ecological Economics* 49(4): 431-455.
- 2) Guha, R. & Martinez-Alier, J. (1997). Poverty and environment. In R. Guha & J. Martinez-Alier. *Varieties of Environmentalism*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.

October 26th – November 1st

Sustainable Scale: Policy Instruments

- 1) Robert Costanza, Richard Norgaard, Robert Goodland, Herman Daly and John Cumberland. 2007. *An Introduction to Ecological Economics: Chapter 4, sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5*. In: Encyclopedia of Earth. Eds. Cutler J. Cleveland (Washington, D.C.: Environmental Information Coalition, National Council for Science and the Environment).
http://www.eoearth.org/article/An_Introduction_to_Ecological_Economics:_Chapter_4
- 2) Daly, H., & Farley, J. (2004). *Ecological Economics: Chapter 21*. Washington: Island Press.

November 2nd – 8th

Distribution: Defending the Commons

- 1) Ostrom, Elinor (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ch. 1.
- 2) Agrawal, Arun and Clark C. Gibson (1999). Enchantment and disenchantment: the role of community in natural resource conservation. *World Development* 27(4): 629-649.

November 9th – 12th

Distribution: Environmental Justice

- 3) Harper, K., & Raja, R. S. (2007). International environmental justice: building the natural assets of the world's poor. In J.K. Boyce, S. Narain, & E.A. Stanton (eds.) *Reclaiming Nature: Environmental Justice and Ecological Restoration*. London; New York: Anthem Press.
- 4) Pastor, M. (2007). Environmental justice: reflections from United States. In J.K. Boyce, S. Narain, & E.A. Stanton (eds.) *Reclaiming Nature: Environmental Justice and Ecological Restoration*. London; New York: Anthem Press.