GEOGRAPHY 301 A-01 /
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES 461 A-01
SECOND TERM, JAN-APR 2021
MON & THU 10:00-11:20 (PST)
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University of Victoria

COURSE OUTLINE
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

In grateful acknowledgement of the Lək̫ʷəŋən & W̱SÁNEĆ peoples upon whose territories we are able to live and learn.

Course Description

What is this course about?

This course investigates our attempts to predict, evaluate, and mitigate the adverse impacts of major development projects in this time of great socio-ecological upheaval. The course draws upon many disciplines, including geography, ecology, law, political science, and Indigenous studies to interrogate environmental decision-making, unpack the complex political/cultural context within which it takes place, and explore how the practice works and could be improved. Instructor-led discussions of theory and engaging case studies - past and present - are supplemented by guest speaker presentations with a wide range of perspectives and self-guided studies engaging with scholarly work and government reports and documents. As part of the course, students will conduct research specifically useful for the BC government, drafting a technical research briefing note. Given the pressing socio-ecological challenges we face, such a course, focusing as it does on the practicalities of environmental decision-making and how to improve it, should be of great interest to engaged students.

Communication

How do I get a hold of the instructor?

- *Note: Before reaching out, please **review the course outline,** as much valuable information is included here.*
- I can be reached through **email** at camo@uvic.ca . Note: I receive a high volume of messages and am not able to respond immediately. I will aim to reply within 24 hours (not including weekends). Please do not leave important matters to the last minute.
- I will host **office hours** from **13:00-15:00 on Thursdays**. Log in through office hours link on Brightspace. NOTE: If I am not "there" I am likely in a breakout session with another student. I will check in as soon as I can. I appreciate your patience.

Note: I will send out **important announcements** through Brightspace (emailed to you and available on the homepage). If you are NOT receiving these, please check your junk mail folder and / or the email account that you have provided to UVic.

Course format

How will the course be delivered this term?

Given the current situation and need for physical distancing, this course will be delivered online through Brightspace and ZOOM and will involve a mixture of self-guided activities and online live video lecture and discussion sessions. You can find useful information on online learning at the UVic Learn Anywhere portal.

What is Brightspace?

You will access the Brightspace site for important announcements, to submit assignments, and to access information handouts, instructor slides, readings, your grades, and other stuff. Guidance for navigating

Brightspaces (which replaced CourseSpaces) is [available](#).

What are the technology requirements for this course?

You will need reliable access to the internet and a computer (preferably with webcam/microphone) or a smartphone to connect with the class for the online lessons (through Zoom). You should be comfortable using a word processor such as MS Word (Office 365) and will be required to submit some assignments in .doc or .pdf formats.

What is online learning like?

The online format can seem strange and awkward at first, but I commit to doing everything possible to make this a comfortable and effective learning environment. Keep in mind that most of us are new to this format and we all need to be forgiving, open-minded, and adaptable. We're in it together.

Ensure you have a distraction-free space at home (or elsewhere) for the online classes.

The "live" portion of the course will involve lectures, guest speaker presentations, break-out group sharing, class discussion, and time for questions and answers. Please listen carefully to directions given at the beginning of class around asking questions (through the Chat feature) and effective dialogue through this format. When you are not actively contributing, please ensure you "mute" yourself to reduce ambient noise. Also, please be on time, as joining late can be very distracting.

Students less keen on sharing live will be able to participate through the [Brightspace](#) forum. Both in live class discussions and in the online forum, please be respectful, constructive, and professional in all your online interactions. No falling into troll-mode.

You can find useful information on online learning at the [UVic Learn Anywhere](#) portal.

How do I access lectures?

Much of this course will be delivered "live" (or synchronously) on Mondays and Thursdays from 10:00-11:20 (Pacific Daylight Time) through the Zoom (video-conferencing) platform. The link for the ZOOM session will be posted on Brightspace. All UVic students are automatically provisioned with access to Zoom. Register with netlink id and password through zoom.us/uvic. To access a lecture, use the link available on Brightspace. Note if you are asked to "sign in to join," click <<Sign in with SSO>> and then use "uvic" as company domain, after which you can login with your netlink ID and password. The process ensures the lecture is not disrupted by non-authorized individuals.

Do I need to attend the live lectures?

Attending the live lectures at the designated times is expected. Real-time interaction with the instructor and class-mates and the structure provided by having set times will greatly enhance your learning experience. However, recognizing you may be facing unusual challenges in the context of the COVID-19 disruption and that you may be joining the class remotely from a different time zone, attendance is not strictly mandatory. Lectures will be recorded and posted on Brightspace, although live group discussions will not be recorded.

Do I need to have my video turned on when I am attending a lecture?

To help build community, you are encouraged to turn your video on during sessions. However, we fully understand there are circumstances for which you may be unwilling or unable to do so which is perfectly acceptable. Remember when joining with video, your classmates will be able to see your background... be wary. ☺

What are the self-guided studies?

To mix things up (i.e. to avoid ZOOM fatigue), this course will involve a mix of lectures and self-guided studies. The latter are interspersed throughout the term and will involve you undertaking some work on your own. Rather than attending a lecture you will complete some reading/research assignment (see schedule).

Are there required readings?

The following text is required and available through the UVic bookstore or online as an eText [here](#):
Noble, B. 2020. *Introduction to Environmental Assessment. A Guide to Principles & Practice Fourth Edition*. Toronto: Oxford

Additional required readings (journal articles, book chapters, actual assessment documents and other sources) will be available online (through Brightspace). Reading effectively is absolutely essential for success in this course. Along with lecture material, assigned readings will be tested through quizzes and on the final. Be mindful that simply reading without engaging with the material is useless as material has no chance of moving from short to long term memory. It is critical to mark up, take notes and critically reflect while reading. Invest time and effort and you will be rewarded.

What will I be doing this term and how will I be assessed?

You will be evaluated on the following required elements:

Ongoing	**Mini-Assignments** – weekly or bi-weekly short "homework" assignments/quizzes will be administered throughout term (see schedule)	~~35%~~ 49%
Due April 5	**Briefing Note** – group research and professional writing assignment making useful recommendations to BC EAO or Ministry of Forest, Lands & Natural Resources about current management practice (see separate handout for details)	~~20%~~ 16%
Scheduled by registrar in April	**Final Exam** – open-book exam testing your comprehension of all course materials	~~40%~~ 30%
Ongoing	**Course engagement** –At the end of term you will submit a short, honest summary reflecting on the quality of your engagement in the course based on your participation in and/or online forum discussion.	5%

What do my marks indicate?

Familiarize yourself with UVic's grading system. While more precise feedback will be given, marks align with the qualitative description in the table below. Thus, an 85% should be read as "outstanding performance", a 75% should be read as having a "good grasp of the subject matter," and a 65% as satisfactory.
As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	**Exceptional**, **outstanding** and **excellent** performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	**Very good**, **good** and **solid** performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	**Satisfactory**, or **minimally satisfactory**. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	**Marginal** Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	**Unsatisfactory** performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

Learning Outcomes

What will I get out of this course?

This course presents an opportunity to deepen your understanding of environmental management, but more importantly an opportunity to develop certain skills and cultivate good habits. Specifically, disciplined and focused students will leave this course…

1. …better understanding the challenges of measuring and evaluating complex eco-social phenomena.
2. … better understanding the historical, political, and cultural context within which formal environmental assessment has evolved and how it works in theory and practice specifically in BC and Canada
3. … with enhanced capacity to critically assess the process of assessment and suggest promising pathways for reform and specifically to recognize the limitations of project-based environmental assessment and the importance of more comprehensive socio-environmental governance
4. … with an understanding of the centrality of Indigenous peoples' role in environmental governance in the context of reconciliation and resurgence
5. … reading comprehension and research skills developed through mini-assignments.
6. … being able to work effectively in a group environment undertaking research and effectively communicating findings.
7. … being able to communicate professionally through briefing note assignment
8. … having further developed habits in terms of discipline, focus, intentionality, consistency, organization, confidence, courage, conscientiousness, empathy, and dedication.

Weekly calendar*

What will we be learning about each week?

Week	Date/Topic	Readings / Homework
	Overview & Philosophy	
Week 1	**Jan 11 –** Course Overview + welcome	
	Jan 14 – Environmental Assessment: who? what? where? when? why? how?	Ch 1 & 2 (p 1-25)
Week 2	**Jan 18 –**Environmental Assessment: who? what? where? when? why? how?	Ch 1 & 2 (p 1-25) + Beattie (1995) "Everything You Already Know About EIA (But Don't Often Admit)"
	Jan 21 –[no live class] Environmental Assessment in Canada: key case studies in the evolution of the process	Ch 2 (p 25-36) + case studies
Week 3	**Jan 25 –** Environmental Assessment in Canada: key case studies in the evolution of the process	**Mini-assignment #1** *complete before class*
	Jan 28- [no live class] The Philosophy of Assessment	Readings?
Week 4	**Feb 1 –** The Philosophy of Assessment (discussion)	**Mini-assignment #2** *complete before class*
	Feb 4 – [no live class] Indigenous Peoples & environmental assessment + video: Amazay: A Film About Water	Ch 10 + video
Week 5	**Feb 8 –** Indigenous Peoples & environmental assessment (discussion)	**Mini-assignment #3** *complete before class*
	Feb 11 – Guest speakers: TBD	"Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies" report
Week 6	**Feb 15 –** Reading Break	
	Feb 18 – Reading Break	
	Focus on BC's EA Process	
Week 7	**Feb 22 –** [no live class] Pre-Project Planning & Public Engagement + Determining the Need for Assessment	Ch 3 & Ch 4
	Feb 25 – Guest Speaker: Nathan Braun & Lindsay Luke (BC EAO)	**Mini-Assignment #4** *complete before class*
Week 8	**Mar 1 –** Guest speaker debrief and discussion on Public Engagement	
	Mar 4 – [no live class] Scoping, Baseline Assessment, Impact Prediction & Characterization	Ch 5 & 6
Week 9	**Mar 8 –** Scoping, Baseline Assessment, Impact Prediction & Characterization	**Mini-Assignment #5** *complete before class*
	Mar 11 – [no live class] Managing Project Impacts + Significance Determination	Ch 7 & 8 + Owens & Rutherford (2019)
Week 10	**Mar 15 –** Managing Project Impacts + Significance Determination	**Mini-Assignment #6** *complete before class*
	Mar 18 – Guest speaker: Chris Parks & Clayton Smith (BC EAO) on Compliance & Enforcement	Ch 9
	International Case Study	
Week 11	**Mar 22 -** [no live class] Video: Mirages of El Dorado (International EA Case study)	Video
	Mar 25 – Pachua Lama case	**Mini-Assignment #7** *complete before class*
	Better practice in environmental governance	
Week 12	**Mar 29 –** [no live class] time to read and work on briefing note	Ch 11, 12 & 14
	Apr 1 – Guest Speaker: Hannah Horn (BC FLNR) et. al. on cumulative effects assessment and comprehensive land-use planning	
Week 13	**Apr 5 –** no class (Easter)	
	Apr 8 - Guest Speaker: Kahea Pacheco (Women's Earth Alliance) on "Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies"	Readings: VLVB Report – focus on Violence Impact Assessment
Week 14	**Apr 12 -** Debrief guest speakers and wind down discussion on promising paths forward	**Briefing Note Assignment due**

* The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Course policies and other important info

Where do I find info about the Geography department?
- Geography Department website: uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/
- Undergraduate Advising: geogadvising@uvic.ca

How should I behave in the course?
I will do everything I can to create an effective, engaging learning environment. I invite you to be part of something special. Please be punctual, respectful, compassionate, and attentive.

What is the policy on late assignments?
The expectation is that you complete the mini-assignments on time. Part of their purpose is to ensure students come to class with the background knowledge and prepared to discuss the material. However, I understand there are pressures on students. I will, thus accept late assignments with a **10% penalty per day**. This policy also applies to the briefing note assignment due at the end of the course.

What is the policy on plagiarism and academic honesty?
It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission, and aiding others to cheat. If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For other resources on writing see the Centre for Academic Communication.

How is the course made accessible to all students?
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

How is the university committed to safety and sexualized violence prevention and response?
The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.
UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

> Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR; Sedgewick C119
> Phone: 250.721.8021
> Email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca
> Web: uvic.ca/svp

How do I give feedback on the course?
I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

What should I know about self-care this term?

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.* uvic.ca/services/counselling/

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.* uvic.ca/services/health/

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* uvic.ca/services/cal/. *The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.*
uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php