



willing to participate in class discussions. You should get in the habit of checking this site a couple times each week as I routinely post announcements, reminders, schedule changes, etc.

**Course objectives:** By the end of the semester, students should:

- Have an understanding both of some fundamental scientific concepts that underlie key environmental topics and of the environmental challenges facing us today;
- Have an appreciation for the complexity and value of ecosystems, biodiversity and the relationship between humans and their environment;
- Realize the wide range of values, risk assessment, and social, economic, historical, and political factors that influence the development of public policy – especially as it pertains to environmental regulations, conservation, and stewardship;
- Understand the global nature of many environmental issues and appreciate the wide range of world views on the value and priority of the environment;
- Be able to assess scientific and other forms of data, along with other information found in the literature for validity and relevance to environmental issues being considered; and
- Gain further experience in critical thinking, oral and written communication skills, and using technology to access important information.

**Course policies, procedures, and expectations:**

**Academic integrity:** In my opinion, academic integrity is of utmost importance and cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please read the **Academic Honesty Policy** that is included in the student handbook *and* the policy that I will distribute in class. I have attached a cover sheet to my policy that each of you will sign indicating that you have read and understand the policy and implications of violating it. If you have any questions about plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, please ask. Several assignments in this class will involve the use of internet resources, and it is my experience that students often do not realize that copyright violations and plagiarism policies still apply.

**Attendance policy:** As noted in the student handbook, students are expected to attend classes regularly. Due to emphasis on discussions in this course, regular attendance from each of you is essential. Frequent unexcused absences will have a negative impact on your grade for the course. I will recognize legitimate excused absences such as when students are representing the university in an official capacity (e.g. for intercollegiate athletic competition, but not practice, off-campus music performances, etc.). Such activities are scheduled ahead of time; thus, I expect you to make arrangements with me ahead of time as well. In the event of an extended absence due to illness or other legitimate reasons, please notify me and a representative in the Learning Services Center as soon as possible. In the case of severe illness, accidents, etc., we will work out arrangements (e.g. for making up work, obtaining an incomplete or withdrawing from the course) on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that during the class periods, I will intersperse lectures, whole class and small group discussions and assignments, hands-on activities, and problem solving. The topics discussed in class can not be learned simply by reading the text without coming to class and being an active participant. I am fond of spontaneous in-class assignments that are turned in before the end of the class period, and these can not be made up if you are absent. In other words, if you miss class, you miss out. Students who arrive late to class disrupt the flow of the session and distract their peers. Please be prompt!

**Assignments:** I utilize a variety of types of assignments including group projects (in and out of class), short writing assignments, journals, internet-based assignments, etc. Timely completion of the work is expected; late submissions will not be accepted (i.e. not graded).

**Journaling:** Throughout the course, it is a good idea to be aware of stories in the media that

relate to scientific and environmental topics. The internet can be a valuable resource as well, but you have to critically evaluate the content and source of the information that you find there. Often, timely stories break in the news that warrant out consideration in class, and your familiarity with media coverage of science and environmental issues can (and will) provide the basis for class discussions. Active participation in these discussions will be noted and will have a positive effect on your final grade for the course. For certain class assignments, I will also ask you to find an article or internet site on a specific topic. ***To this end, I would like each of you to keep a journal throughout the semester.***

I like students to determine the specific format and style of their journals. What I do require is that you date your entries and include the source of your information (e.g. which newspaper and what date, what magazine, edition and page number, the URL of a website, etc.). Keeping a regular record of stories that catch your attention or that relate to topics we are discussing in class, will allow you to reflect on what you are learning and how it applies to the “real world”, and allows you to follow trends throughout the semester. I expect that you should have at least 2 entries (news items) per week, plus some of your own comments, summaries or reactions to the news and topics from class. ***Each Friday, we will begin class with a discussion of timely news stories related to the environment and other topics being discussed in class. After our discussion, I will ask that each student submit their journal entries for the week.***

Prior to your submission of the completed journal at the end of the semester, I will ask you to summarize what you have learned from keeping such a journal and what trends or major issues you noticed.

**Exams:** Exams will cover material from lectures, class discussions, and the assigned readings and sample problems from the text or other assignments. A review sheet will be distributed approximately one week prior to each exam. You should expect at least a portion of these exams to be essay format. **No make-up exams** will be administered without an official medical or university excuse.

<b><u>Grading:</u></b>	<b><u>% of Total Grade</u></b>
Assignments including participation in class discussions and activities	<b>30</b>
Exam #1 <i>(Friday, September 29th)</i>	<b>20</b>
Exam #2 <i>(Friday, November 3rd)</i>	<b>20</b>
Final Exam <i>(to be scheduled during the exam Period, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> )</i>	<b>20</b>
Journal and summary <i>(Due Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at the beginning of class)</i>	<b>10</b>

I do look at trends in grades over the semester; improvement in test grades over the duration of the course will be favorably noticed! Participation in class discussions, review periods, etc. is expected and will be a factor in the determination of final grades. Please note that it is within the instructor’s purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for a course.

***Optional Extra Credit Project:*** I routinely get asked if there is any possibility of an extra credit project. For this semester, I have decided to provide such an option to students.

I would like you to read the book related to the environment. A few examples are provided below. If you chose a different book, please run your choice by me ahead of time. There are many contemporary and classic books to choose from.

An Inconvenient Truth – Al Gore

Silent Spring – Rachel Carson

A Sand County Almanac – Aldo Leopold

After reading the book, summarize what you learned from the book and what you thought of it (a book review, of sorts). In addition, consider how the book related to this course.

This will be due at the end of the semester (December 8<sup>th</sup>).

**Academic Integrity:** Absolute academic integrity and honesty is expected in all of my courses. Penalties for copying, plagiarism, data fabrication, or other types of cheating will not be tolerated and students caught violating the attached policy provisions will be dealt with severely. This can include failure for a test or assignment or a failing grade for the entire course. I have the right to report any and all violations of academic integrity to the appropriate campus administrators.

Each student enrolled in my classes is required to read and sign off on the attached academic integrity policy. This document was developed by a former colleague of mine (Dr. Jones-Wilson at East Stroudsburg University) who gave me permission to use the document.

Please read the policy and return the signed form (below) before the end of the week. I will keep these signed forms on file in my office.

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I have read the “Academic Honesty Policy” for Professor Husic’s Introduction to Environmental Studies course (fall semester, 2006). I understand the policy and the consequences of engaging in academic dishonesty.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***(Actual policy distributed in class on 8/28/06)***