

Spring 2022 Syllabus
Econ 105
Environmental Economics for the Citizen

Instructor: Sarah Moore
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Office Hours: By appointment
Location: Krug Hall 7
Time: M 7:20 – 10:00 PM

Introduction

Welcome to Environmental Economics for the Citizen! As an introductory course, my goal for the semester is to help you utilize the tools of economics for specific case studies capturing issues of environmental policy.

For this course, you are not expected to be an economics major or even have introductory economics under your belt. For that reason, I intend to help add tools to your economic analysis toolbelt as we go along this semester through the texts, supplemental materials, in-class exercises, and assignments.

Hopefully, by the end of the course, you will feel that you have a better understanding of how economics can aid you in understanding environmental policy and the issues that the environment currently faces (ex: climate change, pollution, etc.)

This class, at the moment, is an in-person class that occurs every Monday from 7:20 – 10:00 PM EST. Any/all assignments are due online and on blackboard the Sunday prior to class at 11:59 PM EST. Exceptions will only be made for documented needs for accommodations or extreme circumstances. Please email me immediately if you find that you fall into that category. I want you to succeed this semester, but I don't know that I need to help you unless you tell me! 😊

Mason Core Course

Learning Outcomes:

The following three learning outcomes are required goals of disciplinary or interdisciplinary courses:

1. Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors;
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs;
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

Required Texts

We will be reading from *Environmental Markets* by Terry Anderson, 14th edition. You can find this at the GMU bookstore or at your preferred online retailer.

Aside from the text, please familiarize yourself with the GMU library database, as it will serve us well for additional supplementary materials for the case studies we review this upcoming semester.

Grades

Policy/Case-Study Write-Ups: 30%. There will be 10 total this semester, making each one 3%.

Midterm Exam: 20%.

Final Exam/Final Paper: 30%. I will explain in detail what the final exam option is.

Case Study Analyses: 20%. There will be 3, each totaling the first two being 10% and the last being 10% of your grade.

While I do not curve, I do provide ample bonus point opportunities throughout the semester for you to redeem any points you lose as the semester continues. Notice that attendance is not mandatory. PowerPoint slides will be provided online should you miss class, but most bonus point opportunities will be announced/provided during class (though not all).

Assignments

Policy/Case Study Write-Ups:

Every week, you will find one policy related to environmental economics and summarize to me what it intends to address. You will cite it to me in either APA, MLA, or Chicago style and link to me the article you are referring to. It is okay if you have the same policy as someone else. If you choose to work together on these assignments, please list both your name and the name of the person you worked with. You must turn in your own work and version of the assignment. You are, obviously, welcome to use outside sources for this (as a matter of fact, it's required). Whatever you use, you must cite. Failure to do so will be counted as plagiarism and land you a 0 for the assignment. If you are caught multiple times, you risk failing the course and will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

If it is not a policy, you may also explain a current environmental issue that you think economics can/cannot address, as well as why or why not. These write-ups should be a minimum of a full page in length but should not exceed four pages in length (excluding sources). Times New Roman, 12 pt. font and double-spaced are the style I am looking for along with consistency of citation.

Midterm Exam:

While this class is based around case-studies, I do plan to hold a midterm on March 7th, during class time. It will be held on blackboard during class time and you must use the Respondus Lockdown Browser with proctor capability enabled. The midterm will cover the basic tools of

economics you have been given up to this point, as well as ask you to apply them to the various case studies we analyze throughout the semester.

Case Study Analyses (More Detailed Than your Weekly Assignments):

From class, you will choose one of the policies or environmental issues we have been talking about and do an analysis of a minimum of 4 pages and up to 8 pages (double spaced, 12 point font, and in Times New Roman). This analysis should present the idea you are reviewing, the issues it covers, and how the economic tools you currently possess do/do not address the problem. There will be, as previously listed, 3 of these throughout the semester. They are the equivalent of problem sets, so to speak. You may work together on these as well, but you must each turn in your own work. Each time they are assigned, you will have 2 weeks to do them.

Final Exam

The final exam is currently scheduled for May 15 from 7:30 – 10:15 PM. You will take this exam with a Lockdown Browser with Proctoring enabled. There are no exceptions to this date, as I have to have grades turned into the university within a certain frame of time. If you require accommodations, please let me know.

If you do not wish to take a final exam, you may write a research paper on an environmental issue or policy of a minimum of 10 pages in length in 12 point font, Times New Roman, double spaced (excluding sources). You must announce your intent to do this by **February 28, 2022** during class and you must have your topic and thesis picked out. Should you choose this route, I will require that your paper be turned in by May 15 at 10:15 PM.

Tentative Class Schedule

Begin Jan 24| Tools, Tools, and More Tools. Why are they important and how to they help us?
Read Chapter 1 of Text for Next Class

Begin Jan 31| Case Study 1: Issues with Property Rights
Write Up 1 Due
Re-Read Chapter 1 and highlight points you want to review

Begin Feb 7| Case Study 2: Issues with Property Rights Pt. 2
Write Up 2 Due
Read Chapter 2 of text for next class

Begin Feb 14| Case Study 3: Government Regulation – Does it Work? Why and Why Not?
Write Up 3 Due
Case Study Analysis 1 Assigned

Re-Read Chapter 2 and highlight points you want to review

Begin Feb 21 | Case Study 4: Government Regulation (cont.)

Write Up 4 Due
Read Chapter 3 for next class

Begin Feb 28 | **Decision on Final Exams Required** Case Study 5: The Tragedy of the Commons/Common Pool Resources
Re-Read Chapter 3 and highlight points you want to review
Case Study 1 Due

Begin March 7 | Midterm Exam
Write Up 5

Begin March 14 | Spring break! Enjoy your recess!

Begin March 21 | Case Study 6: Local Property Rights to the Commons
Re-read chapter 4; Case Study 2 Due

Begin March 28 | Case Study 7: From Property Rights to Markets
Read Chapter 6; Write Up 6 Due

Begin April 4 | Case Study 8: From Property Rights to Markets Pt. 2
Re-Read Chapter 6; Case Study 3 assigned, Write Up 7 Due

Begin April 11 | Case Study 9: Tackling the Global Commons
Read Chapter 7; Write Up 8 Due

Begin April 18 | Case Study 10: Tackling the Global Commons Pt. 2
Read Chapter 7 Again; Case Study 3 Due

Begin April 25 | Case Study 11: Property Rights and Environmental Markets
Read Chapter 8; Write Up 9 Due

Begin May 2 | Review Day. Go over final exam topics. Discuss any lingering problems/tools you want to go over.
Write Up 10 Due

Academic Integrity

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at <http://oai.gmu.edu>

Some kinds of participation in online study sites violate the Mason Honor code: these include accessing exam or quiz questions for this class; accessing exam, quiz, or assignment answers for this class; uploading of any of the instructor's materials or exams; and uploading any of your own answers or finished work. Always consult your syllabus and your professor before using these sites.

Disability Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

COVID-19 Policies and Guidelines

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, Red, or Blue email response. Only students who receive a "green" notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

Students are required to follow Mason's current policy about facemask-wearing. As of August 11, 2021, all community members are required to wear a facemask in all indoor settings, including classrooms. An appropriate facemask must cover your nose and mouth at all times in our classroom. If this policy changes, you will be informed; however, students who prefer to wear masks will always be welcome in the classroom.