

ESCI 1101 Course Information – Spring 2016

ESCI 1101: Environmental Science Lab
(CRN # 1101, section:
Biology Room B326, Day and Time

Instructor:

Office Hours:

Email

Office Hours:

Required Text:

None. Labs will be posted on Blackboard by Thursday of the week before the lab, and it is the student's responsibility to print out a copy, **read it**, and bring it to lab.

Course objectives:

There are two main purposes to the labs:

- 1) To show students how different parts of the environment interact, how we measure properties of these features and detect environmental disturbances such as pollution
- 2) Teach practical skills for use in the lab and field.

Some labs illustrate observing the environment and collecting samples, while others teach specific skills.

Students are expected to:

- 1) Learn concepts and vocabulary. Students will explore several important concepts that are of concern to us as citizens, educators, and scientists.
- 2) Learn how scientists think. Scientists observe, question, and analyze, and you will be expected to do the same.
- 3) Investigate real world examples. Students will be investigating soil, water, biota and associated issues from the El Paso area.
- 4) Practice independent thinking. Students will critically evaluate the information they receive regarding environmental issues so they can make informed and independent decisions.
- 5) Enjoy. This should be a class where you learn a lot and also have a good time. Participation is a key to enjoyment.

Process:

Before each class:

- * Read the assigned materials
- * Identify concepts that are central to understanding the environmental issue to be discussed

- * Prepare a list of questions from the reading for which you need further clarification (you usually will get an opportunity to ask those questions in class).

In class:

- * Most classes will open with a quiz over concepts learned in the previous class. These will last about 10 minutes. There are no make ups for missed quizzes (see below).
- * Take careful notes
- * Ask questions if you are not sure how to do something
- * Be an active participant!!

Evaluation of work:

There are **a total of 500** points possible for this lab. There is a form at the end of the syllabus for you to keep track of your grades. Grades will be posted on Blackboard at least once a month.

Quizzes: There will be **quizzes most weeks**. These will usually be split between a **pre-lab quiz** that will be collected at the beginning of the lab. The pre-lab quiz will be posted on **Blackboard** and will cover material for the lab that we will conduct that day. The goal of the pre-lab quiz is for you to become familiar with the concepts and activities for that day's lab BEFORE coming to class. That will help you understand what we will be doing and why we will be doing it. The answers will usually be found in the Powerpoint lecture slides and the lab instructions.

There will also be an **in-lab quiz** that will cover material **from the previous week's lab**. This part of the quiz will be given promptly at the beginning of lab, and it will not be given to latecomers. Each quiz is worth **10 points** (usually split 5 points for the pre-lab and 5 points for the in-lab), and there will be **11 quizzes during the semester**. The **last quiz** will be **extra credit**.

Lab assignments: **All labs** will have questions associated with them. You are allowed to complete lab *activities* in groups, **and can discuss the answers** to the questions in groups, but you must **write your own answers** to the questions unless otherwise instructed. **Each lab assignment** is worth **20 points**, and there will be a total of **13 lab assignments during the semester**. The last lab assignment will be extra credit.

Energy white paper: We are going to do a mock El Paso Electric company hearing about potential energy sources for generating electricity to meet El Paso's future needs. Each group will be assigned a different energy source (solar, wind, natural gas, coal, or nuclear). During the lab the week of 15 February each group will make a short presentation about why their source is the best option, followed by a discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of each energy source. To prepare, each group will complete a short (2–3 page) white paper about their energy source. More details will be provided early in the semester. The white paper is worth **25 points**, and the presentations and discussion will be graded as the lab

assignment for that week (worth 20 points).

UTEP Green Fund proposal and peer review: The project for the lab is a simplified version of a proposal to the UTEP Green Fund. The Green Fund is a \$3 per student per semester fee that raises up to \$40,000 per year for campus sustainability projects (<http://sa.utep.edu/greenfund/>). This semester you and a partner will 1) perform an assessment of the campus ecological footprint, 2) present your ideas of how to use Green funds to improve the sustainability of some aspect of the campus footprint, and 3) write a 2–3 page proposal of your ideas (both a rough draft for peer review and a final draft). Details will be provided in lab. You are required to go to the writing center at the library before turning in the proposal. The first draft will be due the week of 29 February, the peer reviews will be due the week of 21 March, and the final draft will be due the week of 4 April. The peer review of the written proposals is worth **20 points**, and the final proposal is worth **50 points**.

Worm food: Each student will need to bring in food waste suitable for worm composting one time during the semester. Details will be provided the first week of the semester, but suitable foods are generally vegetables and fruits, except citrus. No meats, breads, or other animal products. Bringing in the worm food on time and with only correct food is worth **5 points**.

Final exam: The lab final exam is comprehensive and will come from the quizzes and lab assignments, typically about 3–5 questions per lab. **Save your work** as it is returned to you; you will need it to study with. The final exam is worth 60 points, and will be given the final week of class (the week before finals).

Extra credit: There will be several opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. There will be a variety of different activities that you may attend, such as meetings of environmental organizations, work days at local parks, and seminars on campus. We will post details as we learn about the events on Blackboard. You can only attend approved events for extra credit, but we encourage you to let your TA know about possible events.

For each event, you must submit a written description of three new things you learned about the environment/environmental science. You may submit **two** extra credit write ups, and you can earn up to **10 points** on each. To earn the full amount of points, you must **explain** what you learned, not just list three facts. The write ups must be turned in **within two weeks of the event**.

Missed Assignments and Late Work: There will be no makeups on any of the assignments, quizzes, or the Green Fund Proposal. Late work is not accepted and will count as a 0.

Grading:

There are no exceptions to the grading scale presented below.

A = 450 – 500 points (100 – 90%)
B = 400 – 449 points (90 – 80%)
C = 350 – 399 points (80 – 70%)
D = 300 – 349 points (70% - 60%)
F = ≤ 299 points (below 60%)

COURSE POLICIES

POLICY ON CLASS PARTICIPATION: You are expected to come to class prepared to answer questions about the assigned lab. Always bring a pen and paper. Pop quizzes may be given at any time during the lab period. The instructor will post grades electronically, but students are responsible for knowing their grades at all times.

POLICY ON CELL PHONES: Do NOT have them on or out in class...this includes texting! Cell phones can be confiscated for the class period if used in lab.

POLICY ON ALL OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES: **You cannot** surf the internet, watch movies, listen to music, etc. in lab. You will be asked to leave if this happens.

POLICY ON MAKE-UP QUIZZES AND EXAMINATIONS: **NO** make-up quizzes or exams will be given for reasons other than illness (doctor's note required) or when a student is on official University business (documentation required). Make-ups must be scheduled within a week of when the quiz or test was given.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

While you will be working in lab teams, the work you submit for assessment must be evaluated on its own merit. Therefore, team members' reports, quizzes, and work should reflect the individual's thoughts. Do NOT turn in 3 near-duplicate reports with different names or everyone involved will be sent to the Dean of Students for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Yes, we have had to deal with this problem in the past and we are not lenient. You can calculate the consequences. All university

guidelines will be strictly followed. Please read these guidelines carefully. The guidelines can be found on line at: <http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?PageContentID=2084&tabid=30292>

POLICY ON DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: Any student who disrupts the class will be asked to leave and will be referred to the Dean of Students.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you think you may have a disability or if you are experiencing learning difficulties, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at [\(915\) 747-5148](tel:9157475148) (voice or TTY), in Union East Room 106, or by e-mail at cass@utep.edu. They will provide any necessary accommodations. You should also meet with your instructor in order to facilitate your needs. You are expected to provide documentation of your disability in order to make special arrangements in this class.

MILITARY STATEMENT: If you are a military student with the potential of being called into military service and/or training during the course of the semester you are encouraged to contact the instructor regarding these matters. You must let us know during the first two weeks of the semester.

DROP POLICY (College of Science): All grades of Incomplete must be accompanied by an Incomplete Contract that has been signed by the instructor of record, student, departmental chair, and the dean. Although UTEP will allow a maximum of one year to complete this contract, the College of Science requests it be limited to month based upon completion data. A grade of Incomplete is only used in extraordinary circumstances confined to a limited event such as a missed exam, project, or lab. If the student has missed a significant amount of work (e.g. multiple assignments or tasks), a grade of Incomplete is not appropriate or warranted. The drop deadline is **1 April 2016**.

Tentative Lab Calendar

Week of:	Lab	Topic	Pre-lab quiz	Pre-lab quiz topic	In-lab quiz	In-lab quiz topic	Assign.	Assignment topic
18-Jan		No lab						
25-Jan	1	Intro/Safety/Ecological footprint/Worm composting						
1-Feb	2	Campus ecological footprint	1a	Campus ecological footprint	1b	Ecological Footprint	1	Ecological Footprint
8-Feb	3	Vehicles and climate change	2a	Vehicles and climate change	2b	Campus ecological footprint	2	Campus ecological footprint
15-Feb	4	Energy town hall	3a	Energy	3b	Vehicles and climate change	3 and 4	Vehicles and climate change, Energy presentation
22-Feb	5	Field trip to desalination plant	4	Desalination take home				
29-Feb	6	World in the Balance and Doubling up	5a	Doubling up	5b	Desalination plant	5	Desalination plant
7-Mar		Spring break						
14-Mar	7	Set up algae biofuel growth experiment	6a	Algae biofuel growth experiment	6b	Doubling up	6	World in the Balance and Doubling up
21-Mar	8	Algae biofuel population growth and measuring nutrients	7a	Population growth and nutrients	7b	Algae biofuel growth experiment	7	Algae biofuel growth experiment set up
28-Mar	9	Introduction to water chem, field trip prep	8a	Water chemistry	8b	Algae biofuel calculations	8	Algae biofuel growth experiment results and conclusions
1-Apr		Drop deadline						
4-Apr	10	Field trip to the river	9	River field trip take home			9	Water chemistry
11-Apr	11	Aquatic organisms	10a	Aquatic organisms	10b	River field trip	10	River field trip
18-Apr	12	Worm composting and plants	11a	Worm composting			11	Aquatic organisms
25-Apr	13	Soils	12a	Soils			12	Worm composting
2-May	14	Lab final					13	Soils
9-May		Finals week (no lab) - good luck!						

Grade tracking form

	Points possible	Points earned
Quiz 1a	5	
Quiz 1b	5	
Quiz 2a	5	
Quiz 2b	5	
Quiz 3a	5	
Quiz 3b	5	
Quiz 4	10	
Quiz 5a	5	
Quiz 5b	5	
Quiz 6a	5	
Quiz 6b	5	
Quiz 7a	5	
Quiz 7b	5	
Quiz 8a	5	
Quiz 8b	5	
Quiz 9	10	
Quiz 10a	5	
Quiz 10b	5	
Quiz 11a*	5	
Quiz 12a*	5	
subtotal	100	

	Points possible	Points earned
Lab assignment 1	20	
Lab assignment 2	20	
Lab assignment 3	20	
Lab assignment 4	20	
Lab assignment 5	20	
Lab assignment 6	20	
Lab assignment 7	20	
Lab assignment 8	20	
Lab assignment 9	20	
Lab assignment 10	20	
Lab assignment 11	20	
Lab assignment 12	20	
Lab assignment 13*	20	
subtotal	240	

	Points possible	Points earned
Worm food	5	

	Points possible	Points earned
Energy white paper	25	
Green Fund proposal: Peer review	20	
Green Fund proposal: Final Draft	50	

	Points possible	Points earned
Lab final	60	

<i>Extra credit 1*</i>	10	
<i>Extra credit 2*</i>	10	

Total points	500	
---------------------	------------	--

Assignments denoted with * are extra credit

Grade	Points required
A	450 - 500
B	400 - 449
C	350 - 399
D	300 - 349
F	≤ 299

Point tracking form

Fill in the boxes with your point totals as your work is returned to you. Once you reach 300 points, you have earned at least a D. Once you reach 350 points, a C; 400 points, a B; and at 450 points you have earned an A!

↑	250 – 259		→	500		A
	240 – 249			490 – 499		
	230 – 239			480 – 489		
	220 – 229			470 – 479		
	210 – 219			460 – 469		
	200 – 209			450 – 459		
	190 – 199			440 – 449	B	
	180 – 189			430 – 439		
	170 – 179			420 – 429		
	160 – 169			410 – 419		
	150 – 159			400 – 409		
	140 – 149			390 – 399	C	
	130 – 139			380 – 389		
	120 – 129			370 – 379		
	110 – 119			360 – 369		
	100 – 109			350 – 359		
	90 – 99			340 – 349	D	
	80 – 89			330 – 339		
	70 – 79			320 – 329		
	60 – 69			310 – 319		
50 – 59		300 – 309				
40 – 49		290 – 299				
30 – 39		280 – 289				
20 – 29		270 – 279				
10 – 19		260 – 269				
0 – 9						