Syllabus

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Syllabus

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Environmental Scier

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Department of Geolog

Course Description

Why study environmental geology? The Earth is fundamental to life as we know it today. How we got here, the mountain, oceans, organisms, and our interaction with one another is the focus of this course. In addition, for many there is a natural curiosity about how Earth processes work and how humans may or may not be responsible for changing those processes in ways that will alter our lives forever.

Environmental science lab is to give you hands-on activities of the material covered in the lecture. This lab will reinforce the concepts in environmental science and how it affects your everyday life. Some labs will illustrate scientific observations of our own environment while others, will be experiments and using scientific techniques.

Catalog Description. Introduction to Environmental Science Laboratory (1-0) An introduction to environmental science, emphasizing the multi-disciplinary approach required to document, understand and solve environmental problems. Topics include such large scale challenges as global warming, deforestation, and energy consumption, as well as more local problems such as water and air quality, organic and inorganic toxins, and human health. Material of regional and current interest is incorporated.

Course Objectives

- Learn concepts and vocabulary. Students will explore several important concepts that of of concern to us as citizens, educators, and scientists.
- Learn how scientists think. Scientists observe, question, and analyze, and you will be expected to do the same.

- Investigate real world examples. Students will be investigating soil, ate, biota, and associated issues from the El Paso area.
- Practice independent thinking. Students will critically evaluate the information they receive regarding environmental issues so they can make informed and independent decisions.
- Enhance academic skills, including the use of electronic resources.

Course Expectations

This course is an on-line course. Assignments and all of the communication will take place via Blackboard. On-line learning is different than sitting in a classroom. On-line learning may require a more intensive effort on the part of the learner because the learner will have to gather information on their own as directed by the instructor instead of listening to a lecture. On-line learning does give you the freedom to study when and how you want.

The principal means of communication will be the tools in Blackboard. Assignments are to be submitted via each Learning Module. You correspond with the instructor and with other students via the Email tool. Your e-mail message will only go to those people you designate. In contrast, postings using the Discussion Tool are posted so that everyone in the class can read the posting and respond. The Discussion Tool will be used for some assignments. Feel free to initiate discussions under the CyberCafe link if you have questions or see something of interest to the class as a whole. I may edit and organize discussion postings as needed.

Assessment

Grades will be based on the following criteria and will be assigned using the scale:

- A = 90- 100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = < 60%

Procedures

- Labs will be posted and can be accessed under the link **Learning Modules**. Each lab will include an introduction to the topic and an assignment. **It is important to keep up**.
- You should access labs as they become available and note what needs to be done and plan your work accordingly. I recommend that you visit the site 2 - 3 times weekly to check for e-mail, messages, and discussion postings.
- You may submit work at any time before the due date and the earlier the better. It is not wise to wait until the last minute because 'technical difficulties' are not a valid excuse for missing a deadline.
- I will typically visit the electronic classroom daily and will try to acknowledge all e-mails within 2-4 hours during the workweek until 5pm. Questions and messages posted after 5 pm or over the weekend may not be acknowledged until the following day.
- I am available to answer any questions you may have concerning the work that is due. Please don't hesitate to ask questions either via email to me or via the CyberCafe discussion board to the entire class.
- You are encouraged to work ahead and turn in your work early. I may have time to check over work that is turned in early and if errors are found, I will contact you so you have a chance to make the correction before the due date.
- Once your work is graded, there are no "do-overs." If you have a question or need

help with your lab, please don't hesitate to ask.
- I make every attempt to present this class free of errors, but they do happen. If you see an error (due date, question, etc.) please email me and let me know so I can fix it ASAP.
- Please make note of the cut-off dates for each lab. After the date, the lab will become unavailable.

Course Outline

Please Note: The following schedule may be subject to change.

Learning Module	Lab Topics	Due
Learning Module 1 Introduction to Bb and the Scientific Method	Lab 1: Introduction to Blackboard Lab 2: Scientific Method	Lab 1: Jan. 29 Lab 2: Feb. 5
Learning Module 2 Air Quality	Lab 3: Air Quality Lab 4: Hands-on Ozone	Lab 3: Feb. 12 Lab 4: Feb. 19
Learning Module 3 Climate	Lab 5: Greenhouse Gases Lab 6: Carbon Lab	Lab 5: Feb. 26 Lab 6: Mar. 5
Learning Module 4 Ecosystems	Lab 7: Ecosystems Lab 8: Population Ecology Lab 9: Biomes	Lab 7: Mar. 19 Lab 8: Mar. 26 Lab 9: Apr. 2
Learning Module 5 Pollution	Lab 10: Soils Lab 11: Water Pollution	Lab 10: Apr. 9 Lab 11: Apr. 16
Learning Module 6 Resources	Lab 12: Resources	Lab 12: Apr. 23
Class Project		Apr. 30

Assessment and Grading Criteria

Labs 90%
Each Lab will have an accompanying activity. These activities are intended to provide examples of the concepts covered in the lecture and how scientists work.

- The labs will be linked to from within each Learning Module.
- You will be provided with an Lab Answer Sheet in Rich Text Format (RTF). Download it to your computer, fill in the answers, do a "Save As...." .rtf and upload it for grading.
- The labs are to be submitted via the lab link within each Learning Module.
- A comment box is available in the Lab dropbox where you may post any comments you want me to read concerning your work. I, too, will use the comment box to post any comments I may have on your work as I was grading it. Please return to read the comments, especially if you do not receive a grade for an assignment within a few days of the due date.
- I prefer your work to be answered using your own words, not copied verbatim from a text, the internet, or a fellow student. Copying answers, especially if not referenced, is plagiarism.
- Wikipedia is not peer-reviewed and therefore can contain errors, please do not use that website.
- Labs will be graded on a 10 point scale. The grade will be based both on content

and on completeness of the response.
- Labs can be turned in late up until the Learning Module becomes unavailable. See the Learning Module description for those dates. There will be a penalty for late labs of 10%.

Your labs will be graded as follows:

9–10: The lab is complete and correct. It shows insight and careful reflection on the topic. It is well written with complete sentences that respond to the questions. It was completed on time.

8–9: The lab is essentially complete. The learner shows understanding of the topic although there are minor errors they are not conceptual in nature.

7–8: The lab is missing one or two answers or there are complete or there are errors in the work that reflect a misconception or lack of understanding.

6–7: The lab is lacking more than one answer. Work is poorly done or displayed and does not demonstrate understanding of topics.

<6: Does not effectively address the assignment, major portions are missing.

Class Project 10%

You are to to either participate in an environmental activity outside of class and write up a summary (photos, too) to post online. Participation may include one of the following:

- Volunteer in a local environmental group
- Participate in a local environmental activity
- Attend a talk about an environmental issue
- Take a field trip
- Come up with an idea of your own (needs instructor approval).

Or you can submit 4 written summaries of a current event that is related to this class (i.e., environmental in nature). The summary should include:

- the title of the event
- the *who, what, when, where, and why*
- the location of the article/video/news report

Course Policies for Students

- **Informed Consent**: Some individuals may choose to disclose personal information during class. Therefore, it is important that all classmates agree not to discuss or write about what others have discussed in class.
- **Disability Statement**: Services for students with disabilities are provided through the Disability Services Office. Some examples of the assistance provided are: audio materials for the blind or dyslexic, note takers, readers, campus guides, audio recorders, a quiet testing area, and undergraduate academic tutors.
- **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.
- **Professionalism**: Students are learning professional skills and are expected to engage in classroom discussions, complete reading assignments and turn in assignments in a timely fashion as befitting professional behavior.
- **Scholarly Writing**: Use clear college level writing with correct spelling and grammar for all assignments. If you need help in writing, check with the Writing Center.
- **Integrated Use of Technology**: Because this is an online course, I am making the assumption that you are comfortable utilizing a computer, and navigating various software programs like Microsoft Word, Powerpoint. If you have any questions about computer requirements see the *Student Resources* course in Blackboard.

- **Need Help?**

  1. Post a question to the CyberCafe discussion board. There is no such thing as a dumb question.
  2. Post a question as a Blackboard email to your instructor.
  3. If the Blackboard system goes down or you have other technical questions, contact the UTEP Help Desk

- **Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures:** Each student shall observe standards of honesty and integrity in academic work completed at UTEP. Students may be penalized for violations of the Academic Integrity policy. Please refer to the Academic Integrity section in the current UTEP Catalog.
- **Caveats:** The schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.
- **Code of Civility**: In order to promote a positive, professional atmosphere among students, faculty and staff, the following Code of Civility has been developed:
  - **Respect:** Treat all students, faculty, staff and property with respect and in a courteous and professional manner. This includes all communications, whether verbal or written. Let your actions reflect pride in yourself, your university, and your profession.
  - **Kindness:** A kind word and gentle voice go a long way. Refrain from using profanity, insulting slang remarks, or making disparaging comments. Consider another person's feelings. Be nice.
  - **Truth:** Exhibit honesty and integrity in your dealings with fellow students, faculty and staff members. Don't lie, don't cheat, and don't steal.
- **Responsibility:** Take responsibility for your actions. This includes gracefully accepting the consequences of your behavior.
- **Cooperation:** Exhibit a cooperative manner when dealing with students, faculty and staff so we may all work towards our common goals and mission.
- **Acceptance:** Accept differences in others, as they accept differences in you. This includes diversity in opinions, beliefs and ideas and everything else that makes us unique individuals.
- **Professionalism:** Always conduct yourself in a manner that will bring pride to your profession, to UTEP, and, most importantly, to yourself.