ENV199H1S: Understanding and Debating Environmental Issues
Fall 2024

Last Updated: September 4, 2024

Time: Wed 2-4
Location: TBA
Instructor: Karen Ing, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, School of the
                   Environment, ES2098, karen.ing@utoronto.ca, 416-978-4863
Course Website: Quercus
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview
The study of environment offers unique challenges since it is inherently interdisciplinary involving the intersection of science, society, politics, culture, and values. The complexity of this area of study combined with a multitude of competing interests means that one can easily become overwhelmed with the bombardment of new and often conflicting information.

The purpose of this seminar course is to introduce students to current environmental issues through readings and discussions to develop an understanding of the issue to serve as a foundation in debating what should be done about said issue.

In addition, the course aims to introduce and provide opportunities for students to practice skills necessary for a successful undergraduate experience, e.g. the development of critical thinking, writing skills, and oral presentations.

The course consists of detailed examination of two current environmental issues: climate change and energy. For each, we will first examine the physical facts of the case and then the social and political aspects. From this foundation, students will then be required to seek out and evaluate other information sources and communicate their new found knowledge back to the class. Drawing on the breadth of knowledge and perspectives presented, students will then debate what should be done about the issue.

Required Readings
Course readings have been drawn from a variety of sources but are all electronically accessible and will have links posted on the course website.

Course Evaluation and Assignments
Finding and Evaluating Information Sources (student sign up throughout the term)
   -   10% for paper, 10% for presentation   20%
Quiz 1 - Climate Change – Oct 16th   20%
Quiz 2 – Energy – Nov 27th   20%
Position Paper on Climate Change or Energy (due Dec 1st)   20%
Discussion Leader (student sign up throughout the term)   5%
Class Participation (attendance, peer evaluations & discussions)   15%

Note: because class discussions are integral to the course, attendance and participation is an important component of your personal success in the course. Therefore, an attendance record, peer feedback sheets and active class participation will be factored into the participation grade.

Lecture Schedule

Date	Lecture Topic
Sep 4	1. Intro 2. What is education for?
Sep 11	1. Climate Change – Background 2. Information Literacy
Sep 18	1. Climate Change – Background & Impacts 2. Student Presentations
Sep 25	1. Climate Change – Policy Challenges 2. Student Presentations
Oct 2	1. Climate Change – Future Challenges & Debates 2. Student Presentations
Oct 9	1. Climate change- Future Challenges & Debates (cont'd) 2. Student Presentations
Oct 16	1. Quiz #1 – Climate Change 2. Fundamentals of Writing an Academic Essay
Oct 23	1. Energy – Background, Fossil Fuels 2. Student Presentations
Oct 30	**Reading Week**
Nov 6	1. Energy – Conventional Alternatives 2. Student Presentations
Nov 13	1. Energy – Future Challenges & Debates 2. Student Presentations
Nov 20	1. Energy – Future Challenges & Debates (cont'd) 2. Student Presentations
Nov 27	1. Quiz #2 - Energy 2. Final discussions

Important Dates

Sept16th – last day to enrol in F and Y section code courses
Oct 28-Nov 1 – Fall Reading Week, no classes
Nov 4th – Last day to cancel F section code courses from academic record and GPA
Dec 2nd – classes end
Dec 3rd - Last day to add or remove a CR/NCR option in Fall F courses
Dec 6-23 – final exams

COURSE POLICIES

Technology Requirements

Seminars will be in-person, but we may be using Zoom on occasion for online teaching & learning in this course.

This course requires the use of computers, and of course sometimes things can go wrong when using them. You are responsible for ensuring that you maintain regular backup copies of your files, use antivirus software (if using your own computer), and schedule enough time when completing an assignment to allow for delays due to technical difficulties. Computer viruses, crashed hard drives, lost or corrupted files, incompatible file formats, and similar mishaps are common issues when using technology, and are not acceptable grounds for a deadline extension.

Lectures/Copyright

Course materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Use of AI

In this course, you may use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT as learning aids and to help complete assignments. Generative AI may produce content which is incorrect or misleading, or inconsistent with the expectations of this course. These tools may even provide citations to sources that don't exist—and submitting work with false citations is an academic offense.

Generative AI is not required to complete any aspect of this course, and we caution you to not rely entirely on these tools to complete your coursework. Instead, we recommend treating generative AI as a supplementary tool only for exploration or drafting content. Ultimately, you (and not any AI tool) are responsible for your own learning in this course, and for all the work you submit for credit. It is your responsibility to critically evaluate the content generated, and to regularly assess your own learning independent of generative AI tools. Overreliance on generative AI may give you a false sense of how much you've actually learned, which can lead to poor performance on the tests, in later courses, or in future work or studies after graduation.

Tests

The instructor must be notified within 48 hours of a missed test and a completed Absence Declaration on ACORN must be presented within a week before any special consideration (such

as a deferred test) will be considered. Note students may submit **one absence declaration per academic term**. If additional absences occur within the term, students may need to contact their College Registrar or submit a UofT Verification of Illness Form.   More detailed information on the absence declaration guidelines and eligibility can be found at:

https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academics/student-absences

Graded Material
Any disputes or questions on graded material must be brought to the attention of the TA/instructor within 2 weeks of return or posting, otherwise will be considered final.

Submission of assignments:
We will be using a plagiarism detection program within the online assignment function in Quercus for submission of the written assignments in this course. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool website for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the University's plagiarism detection tool reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the University's plagiarism detection tool service are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

If a student does not wish to submit to the online plagiarism tool, the student MUST advise the instructor immediately as alternate arrangements for screening the assignment must be arranged.

To avoid late penalties, assignments must be submitted to the Quercus Assignment function before **midnight on the posted due date.**

When submitting your assignment on Quercus, the file should be saved in a single file, with an extension of .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the file submitted is readable. Any corrupt or unreadable files will be assigned a zero.

In formatting your assignment it should:
- Include the following information on the front page: the assignment title (feel free to be creative, but representative), the course title and number, your name and student number
- Can be 1.5 or double spaced, using 12 point font, in black ink with 1" (2.5cm) margins;
- include page numbers

Late penalties

The late penalty on all assignments will be 2.5% of the assignment grade per day late, including weekends and will only be waived with the Absence Declaration Tool on ACORN.

Note students may submit **one absence declaration per academic term**. If additional absences

occur within the term, students may need to contact their College Registrar or submit a UofT Verification of Illness Form.   More detailed information on the absence declaration guidelines and eligibility can be found at:

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Please note the declaration must cover the period of time you missed, e.g. the week before the assignment/essay is due, etc.

Assignments will NOT be accepted one week past the due date even if accompanied by a medical certificate unless prior approval has been obtained from the course instructor.

Academic Integrity

The following is taken from the Faculty of Arts and Science Academic Integrity website (http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students):

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:
- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including
  - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work,
  - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:
- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers.

- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website. If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

See also the handout "How Not to Plagiarize," Margaret Proctor, 2009, available online at http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize

ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility: if you require accommodations for a disability, or have any other accessibility concerns about the course, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

disability.services@utoronto.ca or *http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility* .

ADDITIONAL SERVICES and SUPPORT

The following are some important links to help you with academic and/or technical service and support

- General student services and resources at Student Life
- Full library service through University of Toronto Libraries
- Resources on conducting online research through University Libraries Research
- Resources on academic support from the Academic Success Centre
- Learner support at the Writing Centre

Information for Technical Support/Quercus Support