Camosun College

Geography 100:
ECOSYSTEMS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Course Outline, Winter 2004

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will acquaint students with some of the ways that humans interact with and influence our physical environment, primarily through our use of natural resources. Topics and examples will range from local to global scale. Lectures will loosely follow, but not be limited to, the assigned textbook. At the conclusion of the course, the student will be expected to know the structure and function of earth systems and ecosystems; human world views on the environment; human population dynamics; and the nature, use and environmental implications of various natural resources. My goal is for you to be able to engage in informed and rational analyses and discussions of natural resource management and environmental problems.

GENERAL POLICIES:

My classes tend to be quite informal, and I encourage participation and discussion. I want you to think and understand, so feel free to speak up, especially if you are confused! Still, I take the material seriously and expect you to do the same.

For most assignments, group work is encouraged, and you should help each other learn. But this does not mean you can copy! Each student must do their own individual lab reports, and if I catch people copying, all parties involved will get a mark of **zero** on that assignment. This includes plagiarism of existing material, even your own previous work! If you don't know what plagiarism is, please ask me or check out the following web site: *ccins.camosun.bc.ca/~latham/PlagiarismKP.htm*. You can also drop in on the Writing Centre: Dawson 207, Lansdowne campus – this is a good resource for all your essay-writing needs.

COURSE CONTENT:

Lectures: There will be two hours of lecture per week. Overhead notes and PowerPoint will be the main styles of presentation, and I will make electronic copies of these available on my web site: *www.camosun.bc.ca/schools/artsci/envirotech/ayles.php*. When possible, I will diversify the lectures with videos or guest lectures. I will also keep a binder with relevant readings, old tests and such in the reserve section of the library.

Labs: There are seven labs in the course, containing exercises to introduce some tools of geography and some applied problems related to course content. Attendance during lab periods is mandatory unless otherwise stated by me. Always bring pencils, calculator, ruler and extra paper to lab, as some basic math and graphing will be required. In calculation-based labs, you must show units of measure and all steps in your work in order to get full credit.

Labs are worth 3.5% each, except Lab 2 (Rithet's Bog ecology; 4.5%) and Lab 6 (Columbia River management simulation; 6%). Most labs are due a week later; I reserve the right to impose a 10% per day penalty on labs handed in late.

Presentations: The material in this course is highly topical. To emphasize this, 12% of your mark is placed on a current-events related project. Working in pairs, you will be responsible for researching and designing a 15-minute presentation on a contemporary environmental issue of

your choice. Topics can include current environmental problems, people or groups making a positive contribution to the environment, or ways in which government decisions are affecting the environment. The topic may be local, regional, national or international, but it must have been in the news within the past year. I encourage you to discuss your topic and presentation style with me ahead of time. **Attendance of presentations is required**.

Midterm Exam: A midterm exam will be given during lab period on **Wednesday, February 18.** It will be a mix of short-answer, multiple-choice, and short essay-type questions.

Final Exam: There will be a 3-hour final exam during Exam Week. This exam will be comprehensive, requiring students to demonstrate knowledge of the important concepts presented **during the whole course**, though the emphasis will be placed on material from the second half of the course.

When it comes to evaluation of assignments and exams, I endeavour to be fair and consistent. If you have any questions about the marking, however, you are welcome to ask for clarification.

ILLNESS, ETC.:

Presentations and exams are very hard to reschedule, so you should not miss them unless you are too sick to perform at a normal level. If you do miss a lab, presentation or exam due to illness or some other serious reason, I must ask you to provide a doctor's note or other documentation to support your story. Otherwise, a mark of **zero** for the missed assignment will be given.

Students who miss an exam for a valid reason must contact me within 24 hours with an explanation. In such cases, one makeup exam time will be scheduled, and all students needing it will be expected to attend.

EVALUATION:

Lab Exercises	28%
Presentation	12%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	35%
	100%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Our Environment: A Canadian Perspective, 2nd Edition by Dianne Draper, 2002.

This textbook is available at the Camosun bookstore, Lansdowne campus. You should also be able to find it used. Textbooks are expensive, so you are welcome to use the 1st edition if you find one (I used to do this all the time). It is your responsibility, however, to cover material that is missing from the old edition. Copies of the 2nd edition will be placed on reserve in the library.

Additional required readings may be announced during the term.

GRADING:

The standard grading scale of the School of Arts and Science will be used for this course:

A+	>95%	B-	70-74%
A	90-94%	C+	65-69%
A-	85-89%	C	60-64%
B+	80-84%	D	50-59%
B	75-79%	F	<50%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week of:	Monday	Wednesday	Readings
Jan. 5	-	Course Introduction	-
Jan. 12	Earth Systems	Lab 1: Topographic Maps	Ch. 1
Jan. 19	Ecosystems	Lab 2: Rithet's Bog Ecology	Ch. 3
Jan. 26	World Views	Lab 3: Ecological Footprints	Ch. 2
Feb. 2	Human Population	Energy	Ch. 4, 11
Feb. 9	**Presentations**	***Reading Break***	-
Feb. 16	Atmosphere	**Midterm**	Ch. 5
Feb. 23	**Presentations**	Lab 4: Vehicle Emissions	Kyoto reading
Mar. 1	Biodiversity	**Presentations**	Ch. 12
Mar. 8	Agriculture	Lab 5: TBA	Ch. 6
Mar. 15	Water	**Presentations**	Ch. 7, Lee article for Lab 6
Mar. 22	Fisheries	Lab 6: Columbia River Management	Ch. 8
Mar. 29	Forestry	None (Lab 6 due Friday)	Ch. 9
Apr. 5	Mining	Review for final exam Lab 7 (Audio Tape Review) due Friday	Ch. 10
Exam Week	**Final Exam**		

NOTE: Chapters 13 and 14 of the text deal, respectively, with urban environmental challenges and solutions, and prospects for environmental sustainability in Canada. They span many of the specific topics covered in lecture, so if you are looking for extra information on a topic, try there. You will not be examined on these two chapters, however.