

**McMASTER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AND EARTH SCIENCES
COURSE INFORMATION SHEET
FALL 2011**

1. BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Course: **Environmental Assessment Geog/Earth Sc/Envir Sc 4EA3**

Lecture Time: Monday and Thursday 4:30-5:20 in ABB 102

Labs:

Section 1: Wednesday, 1:30 - 2:20 in BSB B138

Section 2: Thursday, 3:30 - 4:20 in BSB B138

Section 3: Tuesday, 10:30 - 11:20 in BSB B138

Section 4: Monday, 3:30 - 4:20 in BSB B142

Prerequisites: Geog 2E13, Earth Sc 2E13 or registration in Honours Biology, a Civil Engineering program, an Engineering and Society program or an Honours program in the School of Geography and Earth Sciences

Note: The last day to withdraw without academic penalty is September 16, 2011

2. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Maureen Padden

Office: GSB 205

Phone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 20118

Email: paddenm@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: Monday, 12-2 or by appointment

3. VERY IMPORTANT DATES

Lecture Midterm: October 20 (in class)

Final Exam: TBA (Scheduled by the Registrar)

4. COURSE CONTENT, OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION

Course Content and Objectives

Environmental assessments are widely applied tools in the environmental industry in Canada to identify and mitigate potential negative consequences of proposed projects. We'll explore the stages and techniques used in environmental assessments in Canada and apply them to both completed environmental assessments and current, on-going assessments.

The learning outcomes for this course are summarized below:

1. You will understand the process of environmental assessments in Canada.
2. You will learn to critically assess the information provided to the public about environmental assessments.

- You will be able to state a persuasive opinion on a current environmental project and back it up with an evidence-based argument.

Course Organization

This course involves two 50-minute lectures per week and one 50-minute lab period. Assessment will be in the form of two tests (one during the semester and one in the final exam period), lab debates and a major project. The project will be peer-reviewed before final submission. The lecture schedule for this course outlines what topics will be covered and when they will be covered during the term. Please note that the lecture schedule will likely be modified throughout the term as some topics may not be finished in the predicted lecture time.

Geog/Earth Sc/Envir Sc 4EA3 Lecture Schedule*

Lecture	Date	Chapter	Topic	Labs	Hand-in?
1	Sept. 8		Introduction to course		
2	Sept. 12	1	EIA aims and objectives		
3	Sept. 15	2	EIA in Canada		
4	Sept. 19	2	EIA in Canada II	Using Env. Registries	no
5	Sept. 22	3	Classification		
6	Sept. 26	4	Methods I	Debate I	marked in lab
7	Sept. 29	4	Methods II		
8	Oct. 3	5	Screening	Debate II	marked in lab
8	Oct. 6	5	Screening II		
	Oct. 10		Thanksgiving		
9	Oct. 13	6	Screening/Scoping		
10	Oct. 17		Review		
	Oct. 20		Midterm		
11	Oct. 24		Berger Inquiry	Debate III	marked in lab
12	Oct. 27		Letter Project		
13	Oct 31	7	Prediction I		
14	Nov. 3	7	Prediction II		

15	Nov. 7	7	Prediction III	Choose environmental assessment	yes
16	Nov. 10		Niagara River		
17	Nov. 14	8	Impact Significance	Drop-in for letter questions	no
18	Nov. 17		Archaeological Assessment		
19	Nov. 21	9	Managing Impacts I	Peer review of draft letter	yes - to peers
20	Nov. 24	10	Post-decision Monitoring I		
21	Nov. 28	11	Cumulative Effects	Final letter	yes
22	Dec. 1	12	Strategic Environmental Assessment		
23	Dec. 5		Final Review		

*Lecture schedule may be subject to change throughout the term.

5. TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

Recommended Text Books:

Introduction to Environmental Impact Assessment: A Guide to Principles and Practice by Bram F. Noble (available in University Bookstore)

Resource Materials:

Lecture notes (available on the course website)

Online web resource links will be posted on the course website

6. CLASSROOM CONDUCT

This is a large class but you are not a small part of it! To make our time together as valuable as possible, we both have to work hard at it. It is important that the classroom and lab learning environment is one of mutual respect and I will do everything I can to create that environment for you. Please note the following basic statements below for my expectations of student conduct.

- 1. Every student has the right to learn as well as the responsibility not to deprive others of their right to learn.**
- 2. Every student is accountable for his or her own actions.**
- 3. Please arrive on time and do not schedule other activities during class or lab time. Late arrivals and early departures are very disruptive.**
- 4. In order to get the most out of this class please attend all scheduled classes and labs. I will try to make class as interesting and informative as possible, but I can't learn the material for you.**
- 5. Please let me know immediately if you have a problem that is preventing you from performing satisfactorily in this class.**

Below is what you can expect of me this semester.

- 1. I will treat you with respect and I will try to make my expectations clear.**
- 2. I will be respectful of your schedule and start and end class on time.**
- 3. I will be available to you for help outside of classroom times should you want to review concepts that you do not understand or learn material beyond the course content.**
- 4. I will manage classroom disruptions to the best of my ability so that you have a safe and distraction-free learning environment.**

7. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The distribution of marks in this course is as listed below:

In-lab Debate	10% (9% for debate performance, 1% for feedback)
Midterm Test	20%
Assignment	30%
Final Exam	40% (all course material – cumulative)

Final grades will be changed should an error in grade addition or grade entry occur. If there is an error in your final grade contact the instructor immediately.

The Registrar schedules all deferred final exams. If you miss or leave an examination for medical reasons you must submit a Petition for Special Consideration form with supporting documentation of illness, personal or family reasons, to the Office of the Associate Dean normally **within five working days of the missed examination.**

8. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix I of the Undergraduate Course Management Policies document found at this link

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. Improper collaboration in group work. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

9. ETHICS STATEMENT

If you agree, your course work may be used for research purposes. Your responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Grouped data (no individual responses) may be used in academic presentations and publications. Participation in such research is

voluntary and will not influence grades in this course. Students' signed consent forms will be withheld from instructors until after final grades are submitted. More information will be provided at the time student participation is requested.

10. COURSE MODIFICATIONS

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

If you have any questions regarding the course outline please contact me at any time. I am looking forward to working with you this semester!

Sincerely,

Maureen Padden