AREC 341: Environmental Economics
Colorado State University
Fall 2015
7:30-8:45 MW, A205 Clark
Dr. Andy Seidl, professor

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Office hours:
9-11 am MW and by appointment.

Description:
Economic theories and analytical frameworks are developed and applied to contemporary problems of the use and protection of the natural environment.

Required Text:
http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/2894093/007781245X?__hdv=6.8

Objectives:
The successful student will be able to...
• Apply benefit cost analysis techniques to environmental problems and projects and evaluate their implications for developed as well as developing countries and communities.
• Assess the strengths and weaknesses of economic valuation approaches to inform decision-making.
• Evaluate the implications of a wide range of policy tools to achieve environmental outcomes.
• Evaluate and discuss the major US and International environmental policies and agreements, identifying common issues and challenges among them.

Grading:
The class will be graded in the following manner:
A = >90% B = >80% C = >70% D = >60% F = <60%

Evaluation:
Midterm Exam 30% of total points
Final Exam 30% of total points
Homework 40% of total points

Exams (60% of total grade):
Exams questions will be fill in the blank, multiple-choice, short answer, and graphical or mathematical illustrations. Information will be taken from the text and from classroom discussion

Many current issues are complex and require individual evaluation from a number of perspectives. In writing your exams, please restrict yourselves to the economic arguments supporting your position.

Homework (40% of total grade):
There will be three types of homework:
1) Four (4 @ 5% each) graphical and/or mathematical applications of the concepts and tools taught in class. They will be due by 5 pm on the due date. Late submissions will be accepted until the exercise is returned to the class. Such submissions will be subject to a 10% per day decrease in total possible points obtainable.

2) Two (2 @ 5% each) analyses of a contemporary environmental economic issue found in a newspaper or magazine article. Submissions will provide a critical analysis of the problem using economic concepts, graphical and/or mathematical representations and be 1 page, single spaced, 11 pt font, in length. Please attach the article analyzed to the submission. Submissions will be turned in prior to Dec 4. Late submissions will receive zero credit. Spelling and grammar count.

3) Four (4 @2.5% each) one-page reflections of an environmental economics-oriented seminar you have attended during the semester. The class will be expected to attend all Econ (typically Friday afternoon) and DARE (Thursday afternoon) seminars with an environmental theme, but you are not restricted to attending and writing up only those seminars. The write-up should discuss what was presented and what you learned from the presentation through an economics lens. Submissions will be turned in prior to 5 pm Friday Dec 4. Grading is on a Pass-Fail basis. Late submissions will receive zero credit. Spelling and grammar count.

Here is one I would recommend about the air pollution problem in China: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6X2uwlQGQM
Parsed out into 8 parts: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhIZ50HKlp0&list=PLWAJWwjxamNeiTvOQulxx5J8-rb33Uq

NOTE: Type 2 and 3 homework turned in prior to Fall Break (5 pm Friday November 20, 2015) will receive a 5% bonus.

Policies:

1) Issues covered in this course can touch upon deeply held and personal values. I strongly encourage you to discuss these issues both inside and outside of class. General rules of civil discourse, mutual respect and decorum should be adhered to at all times.

2) Please be on time. I will begin and end class on time to be respectful of your time. Please reciprocate.

3) Do your part. The first question I will ask you when you come to office hours is “Have you read the text?” and the second question I will ask you is “What do your classmates say?”

4) All university policies about academic honesty most definitely apply.

Need Help?
CSU is a community that cares for you. If you are struggling with drugs or alcohol and/or experiencing depression, anxiety, overwhelming stress or thoughts of hurting yourself or others please know there is help available. Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Contact 970-491-6053 or go to http://health.colostate.edu. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, Tell Someone by calling 970-491-1350 to discuss your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources (http://safety.colostate.edu/tell-someone.aspx).
Schedule (subject to adjustment according to class needs):

Mon, Aug 24: Class introductions.
    Module 1: Introduction to Environmental Economics
        Ch 1. Overview

Wed, Aug 26: Ch 2: Economy and the Environment
Mon, Aug 31: Ch 3: Basic Theory
Wed, Sept 2: Ch 4: Basic Theory II
Wed, Sept 9: Ch 5: Economics of Environmental Quality
Mon, Sept 14: Ch 6: Frameworks of Analysis

Module 2: SBCA and Policy Analysis

Wed, Sept 16: Ch 7: Benefit-Cost Analysis: Benefits;
Mon Sept 21: Valuation examples
Wed, Sept 23: Valuation examples

Homework #1: Due

Mon, Sept 28: Ch 8: BCA: Costs
Wed, Sept 30: Ch 9: Policy analysis
Mon, Oct 5: Ch 10: Law and property rights
Wed, Oct 7: Ch 11: Regulatory approaches

Homework #2: Due

Mon, Oct 12: Review session
Wed, Oct 14: Midterm Exam (30% of grade)

Module 3: Using policy to affect environmental behavior

Mon, Oct 19: Ch 12: Incentive based strategies
Wed, Oct 21: Ch 13: Incentive based strategies continued
Mon, Oct 26: Incentive based strategies: Examples
Wed, Oct 28: Ch 14: Policy
Mon, Nov 2: Ch 15: US Federal Policies
Wed, Nov 4: Ch 16: US Federal Policies

Homework #3: Due

Mon, Nov 9: Ch 17: US Federal Policies

Module 4: International Environmental Economics and Policy

Wed, Nov 11: Ch 18: Comparative environmental politics
Mon, Nov 16: Ch 19: Economic Development and the Environment
Wed, Nov 18: Examples

Homework #4: Due

Mon, Nov 23: Fall Break
Wed, Nov 25: Fall Break
Mon, Nov 30: Ch 20: The Global Environment
Wed, Dec 2: Ch 21: International environmental agreements

Wed Dec 4 @ 5 pm All remaining homeworks due.

Mon, Dec 7: International environmental agreement: Examples


Mon, Dec 14: Final Exam, 11:50-1:50 pm (30% of grade)