# Course Outline Form: Fall 2015

## General Information

**Course Title: ENVS\*2230** Communications in Environmental Sciences

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with direct training in academic skills used in researching and communicating environmental science. Within the context of current problems in environmental science, students will develop skills in library research, statistical interpretation, oral and poster presentation and written communication to diverse audiences. Students will research and report on scientific issues within environmental issues being reported in the media.

Students will be engaged within the context of complex environmental issues such as: climate change, environmental impact on food security, pesticides in the environment (e.g., pesticide-pollinator interactions), groundwater quality, alien invasive species and global agro-ecosystems which have scientific, political and economic aspects. Specific topics covered during wintr2015 will be: Honey Bees and Neonicotinoids (pesticide-pollinator interactions), Canada’s Role in Space Exploration (economic impact vs technology transfer), and Athabasca Oil Sands and Transportation of Oil – Rail and Pipelines (environmental impact).

The course will be based on a mixture of lecture to introduce new topics, seminar-style discussion, inquiry based learning, library research, and independent and group work. As the one required course for this interdisciplinary major in Environmental Sciences, this course will explicitly model for the students the complex nature of environmental science, and its multi-faceted relationships with economics, policy and community.

**Credit Weight:** 0.50

**Prerequisite(s): 1 of ENVM\*1000, ENVM\*1200, ENVS\*1030**

**Restriction(s): Registration in BBRM, BSC(Env) or BSC(Agr) programs.**

**Academic Department (or campus):** School of Environmental Sciences

**Campus:** Guelph

**Semester Offering:** F’15

**Class Schedule and Location:**

Lecture: Mondays 4:30-5:20 pm, MACN118

Lab: Tuesdays 2:30 - 5:20 pm, ALEX028

## Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Mike Dixon

Instructor Email: mdixon@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours: Rm. 1213 Bovey, By Appointment

## Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Information

TBA

## Course Content

### Specific Learning Outcomes:

The overarching objective of this course is to assist students in developing the academic skills they will be require to interpret research and communicate their findings effectively to the numerous stakeholders engaged in environmental issues and problems.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

(1) summarize scientific research on environmental issues in a way that is palatable to a broad range of interested audiences;

(2) work collaboratively with group members to develop recommendations for solutions to complex environmental problems;

(3) communicate effectively using oral and written presentation skills;

(4) appreciate and assimilate diverse perspectives in an effort to construct balanced recommendations for solutions to complex environmental issues; and,

(5) analyze a topic so they are able to develop a balanced presentation/discussion based on concrete evidence in the context of environmental issues of global significance.

### Lecture Content:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Schedule** | **Lecture/Lab Topic** |
| **Sept. 14** | **4:30-5:20** | Course Outline and Overview |
| **Sept. 15** | **2:30-5:20** | Select topic for Briefing Paper;  Effective Library Research – Judy Wanner (Library) |
| **Sept. 21** | **4:30-5:20** | Space Exploration (Dixon) |
| **Sept. 22** | **2:30-5:20** | Writing and Editing a Briefing Paper, and  Creating Effective Discussion Questions – Kim Garwood (Creative Writing Services)  Discussion groups assigned |
| **Sept. 28** | **4:30-5:20** | Editing Techniques |
| **Sept. 29** | **2:30-5:20** | Group Project topics assigned;  Work on group contract for oral presentation assignment  Outline for discussion assignment (TA) |
| **Oct. 5** | **4:30-5:20** | Bees and Neonics Lecture (Scott-Dupree) |
| **Oct. 6** | **2:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper I – Space Exploration  (Discussion Group 1 and 2) |
| **Oct. 12** | **4:30-5:20** | Class cancelled |
| **Oct. 13** | **2:30-5:20** | Lab cancelled |
| **Oct. 19** | **4:30-5:20** | Oil Sands and Transportation of Oil (Dixon) |
| **Oct. 20** | **2:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper I – Space Exploration  (Discussion Group 3 and 4) |
| **Oct. 26** | **4:30-5:20** | Oral presentations - storyboards and structure (Dixon) |
| **Oct. 27** | **2:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper II – Bees & Neonics  (Discussion Group 1 and 2) |
| **Nov. 2** | **4:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper II – Bees & Neonics  (Discussion Group 3 and 4) |
| **Nov. 3** | **2:30-5:20** | Work Session, Presentation practice |
| **Nov. 9** | **4:30-5:20** | Work Session, Presentation practice |
| **Nov. 10** | **2:30-5:20** | Work Session, Presentation practice |
| **Nov. 16** | **4:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper III – Oil Sands and Rail/Pipelines  (Discussion Group 1) |
| **Nov. 17** | **2:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper III – Oil Sands and Rail/Pipelines  (Discussion Group 2 and 3) |
| **Nov. 23** | **4:30-5:20** | Discussion Paper III – Oil Sands and Rail/Pipelines  (Discussion Group 4) |
| **Nov. 24** | **2:30-5:20** | Group Presentations and peer evaluations |
| **Nov. 30** | **4:30-5:20** | Group Presentations and peer evaluations |
| **Dec. 1** | **2:30-5:20** | Group Presentations and peer evaluations |

### Seminars:

N/A

| **Assignment or Test** | **Due Date** | **Submission Method** | **Contribution to Final Mark (%)** | **Learning Outcomes Assessed** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Individual:** |  |  |  |  |
| Briefing paper – editing | Oct. 6 | CourseLink Dropbox | 5 | 1,3­­­­­­­­­­­ |
| Briefing paper- 1st draft | Oct. 20 | PEAR | 10 | 1,3 |
| Peer evaluation of briefing paper | Oct. 27 | PEAR | 5 | 1,3 |
| Briefing paper- final | Nov. 17 | PEAR | 20 | 1,3 |
| Discussion questions | 2 days prior to session by 4 pm | CourseLink Dropbox | 15\* | 4,5 |
| **Group:** |  |  |  |  |
| Group Contract | Oct. 6 |  | 5 |  |
| Oral presentation outline | Nov. 20 | CourseLink Dropbox | 5 | 2,4,5 |
| Final oral presentation | Nov. 24, 30 & Dec. 1 | CourseLink Dropbox | 30 | 2,4,5 |
| Peer evaluation of oral  presentations | Nov. 24, 30 & Dec. 1 | In Class | 5\*\* | 2,4,5 |

Additional Notes:

**\*** Discussion questions – 5%/question, one for each topic covered (2% for question; 3% for participation in discussions).

\*\* Oral presentations – you will be assigned 2 oral presentations to evaluate in class; each evaluation is worth 2.5%

### Final examination date and time: N/A

### Final exam weighting: N/A

[Examination Regulations](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-exam.shtml)

## Course Resources

### Required Texts: None

### Recommended Texts:

**“**Making Sense:A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing (Geography and Environmental Sciences)”. 5th Edition. M. Northey, D. Knight and D. Draper. Oxford University Press. 327 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-544582-4

Or

### “Communicating in Geography and the Environmeental Sciences”, Iain Hay and Philip Giles, Oxford University Press, 290 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-543641-9

### Lab Manual:

N/A

### Other Resources:

* Additional material can be found at the D2L CourseLink site associated with this course.
* All assigned readings are considered required readings, unless the Instructor explicitly indicates otherwise.

### Field Trips:

N/A

### Additional Costs:

N/A

## Course Policies

### Grading Policies

**Policy on Late Assignments:** Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day and will no longer be accepted a week after the due date. If you cannot meet a course requirement, let Mike Dixon (mdixon@uoguelph.ca) know as soon as possible, and preferably before the due date.

* Extensions will only be granted for medical reasons, documented by a Doctor’s note; or for documented compassionated reasons, at the discretion of the Instructor.

[Undergraduate Grading Procedures](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-grds-proc.shtml)

### Course Policy on Group Work:

Group work will be an important component of class interaction and associated assignments. Details of requirements for group work in the context of this course will be described in detail in specific assignment information for ENVS 2230

### Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

## University Policies

### Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml)

### Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/2014-2015/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml)

### Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/)

### Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the **Course and Instructor Evaluation Website**

### Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Nov 6, 2015. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar:

[Current Undergraduate Calendar](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/)

## Additional Course Information

**Copies of out-of-class assignments:**

Keep paper and/or other reliable electronic back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.