

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT

University of Toronto

2014-15

JGE 1413F: Workshop in Environmental Assessment

Course Instructors: Virginia Maclaren, SSH 5050, 978-4977, maclaren@geog.utoronto.ca and Beth Savan, ESC 2148A, 978-6535, b.savan@utoronto.ca

Time and Location: Tuesdays, 5-7pm, PGB 101

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3-5pm (Savan, ESC 2148A); Mondays 5-7pm (Maclaren, SSH 5050)

OUTLINE

This course will provide an introductory overview of the theory and practice of environmental assessment and then move on to more advanced topics. Environmental assessment is a procedure that examines the positive and negative environmental implications of proposed *projects, policies, programs or plans*. Assessment of projects is typically referred to as environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact assessment (EIA) while assessment of policies, programs or plans is referred to as strategic environmental assessment (SEA). EA seeks to identify ways to avoid or mitigate negative effects and involves continued monitoring and assessment of effects after a project has been constructed or after a policy/plan/program has been implemented.

The classes will consist of a combination of lectures by the instructors, guest lectures by practitioners, graduate seminars and graduate and undergraduate presentations. This is a joint graduate-undergraduate course that includes substantially different assignments for the two groups but joint classroom instruction.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading Critiques. You are expected to do all the required readings before each class meeting. Each class will have 4-5 readings. You should also prepare a single page (250-500 word) commentary on the assigned readings for four of the seven weeks that have stars beside the topic for that week (see schedule below). These are meant to be short analytical responses (rather than summaries) that evaluate the arguments made in all of the assigned readings for that week and point to connections between readings (assigned that week or read earlier). For the remaining three weeks, please submit two questions based on the readings. Email these to us by Sunday (no later than 9pm) and we will distribute them to the rest of the class. The commentaries and questions will form the basis for class discussion that week during the lecture and during the graduate seminar.

Research Proposal and Paper. Each student will choose a research topic on which they will prepare a paper and make a presentation during one of the classes. The proposal should identify the objectives of the paper, an outline of the sections to be included in the paper with a short description of the contents of each section, and at least five references that will be used in the paper. Please integrate these references into the content of your proposal. The length of the proposal will be 2-3 pages and the paper will be 18-20 pages, not including references or appendices.

A range of possible topics for the paper is provided below. You have the choice of writing a paper based entirely on secondary sources or including some original research (i.e. key informant interviews) in your paper. Papers may explore a particular topic in EA or focus on a case study of a specific EA.

Potential Research Paper Topics: A more detailed examination of any of the topics covered in the course lectures. EA in the Global South. Methodologies for different types of EA – for example, economic, biodiversity or air quality. A comparison of the Ontario EA review panel recommendations with one kind of Class EA or a sectoral regulation including examination of specific outcomes for a particular class EA or a waste, energy, or transportation project under the new reg. A sustainability assessment of a completed EA. A follow-up of a completed EA.

Seminar Presentation. Each student will be responsible for leading a 30 minute seminar on his or her research topic. Students will present for 15-20 minutes and then guide class discussion for the remainder of the time. At least two weeks before the seminar presentation, please provide the instructors with one reading that you expect all seminar participants to have read plus three additional recommended readings. These should be available through the University of Toronto library system or through a link on the internet.

Participation. This mark will be based on the quality of your participation in class discussions and evidence of preparation for those classes (i.e. familiarity with the readings).

GRADING SCHEME

Readings critiques and questions	20%	As scheduled
Research paper proposal	10%	Due Oct 7
Seminar presentation	20%	As scheduled
Research paper	40%	Due Dec 2
Participation	10%	

Accessibility Needs. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

Academic Integrity. Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of citation. Quotation marks are required when using an author's words. Students also should not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. Please consult the "Rules and Regulations" section of the Arts and Science Calendar (http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html) for further information and check the 'How not to plagiarize' website at: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

Assignments and Late Submissions. All assignments must be submitted electronically on the date specified. Work submitted late will be accepted with a 5% daily penalty (including weekend days), up to seven days after the due date. In case of an unavoidable delay in submission you must contact the

instructor in advance. A completed University of Toronto Medical Certificate (<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/>) must be submitted for health reasons; other proof may be required by the instructor for non-medical reasons -- both within a week of the missed deadline. No extensions will be granted unless you have communicated with the instructor and your reasons have been deemed valid.

Blackboard. Course announcements and all readings will be posted on the course Blackboard site for which you have access through the University of Toronto Portal. Please check the site regularly.

Communicating with the Instructors. Please send all communications to both instructors. We will endeavour to respond to any emails within 24 hours. If you do not receive a response from us by that time, please resend your email.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	HOUR 1	HOUR 2	HOUR 3
Sept. 9	Introduction		
Sept. 16	Overview of EA History and Review	EA Consulting (Guest Speaker)	
Sept. 23	EA participation*	Aboriginal participation (Guest Speaker)	Graduate Seminar
Sept. 30	Federal EA changes (Guest Speaker)	EA follow up*	Graduate Seminar
Oct. 7	Evaluating alternatives	Request for Review (Guest Speaker)	Lab
Oct. 14	Social Impact Assessment*	Climate Change and EA (Guest Speaker)	Graduate Seminar
Oct. 21	Significance/uncertainty*	Current issues in Ont. EA (Guest Speaker)	Graduate Seminar
Oct.28	Strategic EA/Cumulative Assessment*	Grad Presentations	Graduate Seminar
Nov. 4	Integrated/Sustainability Assessment*	Grad Presentations	Graduate Seminar
Nov. 11	Planning without EA*	Grad Presentations	Graduate Seminar
Nov. 18	No class (mid-term break)		
Nov. 25	UG Group Presentations	UG Group Presentations	UG Group Presentations
Dec. 2	UG Group Presentations	UG Group Presentations	UG Group Presentations