

Environmental Law: ENV 422/1701

Fall Term 2025

Asynchronous Modules/Live Lectures, Tuesday 6:00 – 9:00 pm (lecture time will be reduced for advance review of the asynchronous materials)

Course Instructor: Graham Rempe

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Your primary contact for assignment work should be our course TA

alaa.attiah@mail.utoronto.ca

Office hours may be scheduled by prior appointment in person or via online meeting.

Course description

Law, policy, and ethics are key in understanding how we respect, and manage our environment. This course will introduce students to basic principles of environmental law. What is it? How did it evolve? Does it deal fairly with resource preservation, use and allocation? Can it deal with complex emerging problems such as climate change, species at risk, and accumulation of toxics?

We will review the state of environmental law, with emphasis on topical issues in Toronto, Ontario, and Canada. Throughout the course, students will be asked to consider the ethical foundations for environmental laws, and their capability of addressing today's challenges.

We will also consider how to present information in a formal setting. Students will be required over the semester to research and prepare a presentation on a current issue in environmental law.

- All students will be expected to have a secure internet connection and a familiarity with Quercus and Zoom (or equivalent)

- Course materials are not to be reproduced or distributed without my express written consent

Learning Objectives

1. Examine the ethical principles and mechanics of modern environmental law
2. Develop a basic understanding of how environmental laws (may) apply to current environmental problems
3. Improve your ability to prepare, present and defend evidence

Assessment

See the “Syllabus and Rubrics” Module on Quercus for detailed rubrics. These are summarized below.

1) Environmental Assignment (30%)

The assignment builds over the semester. 5% of the mark is based on timely completion of prescribed steps. 25% of the mark is based on the content of the presentation.

Students will select a topic from the list offered (see Appendix 2). or propose their own topic (with my approval). **If you have not chosen a topic by Sep 9, you will be assigned to one of Topics 1-5.**

We will create “Topic Groups” on Quercus, which will always be available for exchange of information and ideas.

Marks for **timely** filing (on Quercus) of Assignment preparatory steps:
Week 2 – Select Topic area from list or with my approval(1mark)
Week 4 – Define Issue in one sentence (1mark)
Week 6 – Bibliography (5 good references) (1.5 marks)

Week 8 – PP presentation or bullet point summary (1.5 marks)

Week 10 – Narrated presentation (Grads Max 10 mins., 5 minutes for undergrad volunteers, 12 slides, exclusive of bibliography. Marked out of 25. See further details in Rubric) . All presentations must be scheduled by Week 7 - October 14.

Weeks 9 through 12 will be available for live presentation of the assignment. This is required for grad students (up to 10 mins) and voluntary for undergrads (up tp 5 mins)

2) Quizzes(60%)

There will be four short quizzes based on the Module materials.

- Quiz 1 – Week 3 (Sep 16) (10%)
- Quiz 2 – Week 6 (Oct 7) (20%)
- Quiz 3 -- Week 9 – (Nov 4) (20%)
- Quiz 4 – Week 12 (Nov 25) (10%)

Quizzes will be available on Quercus, after the lecture and will remain available until the end of the following day. You will have one hour to complete the quizzes once you have started them. Questions will be true/false, multiple choice, short essay answer, etc. Old quiz examples are available as practice quizzes under the Quercus Quizzes tab.

Students will be required to acknowledge their academic integrity obligations in writing for each quiz (e.g. no chat rooms during testing).

3) Participation (10%)

This mark is based on your weekly participation in discussion items (10%)

Undergrads may make a presentation (5 mins max) which will count towards 5 participation marks (those who do not wish to do this may complete an additional 5 discussion items (see below)).

4) Final Exam

There will be no final exam.

Graduate Student Assessment

Grad student assignments will be expected to meet a more rigorous standard in evaluation.

Graduate students will be expected to take a greater role in classroom discussion. Grads will be expected to give some thought to the weekly **Discussion** items (or related items of interest) and may be called upon in class to participate in these. Grads are also strongly encouraged to keep an eye on recent developments in environmental law and to raise these during the “topical” portion of the lecture.

Graduate students will be required to make their PowerPoint presentation live to the whole class in either week 9 or 10 (Nov 5 or 12). This may be done individually or as a group. We are flexible, but you must get my approval. The object is a fun and informative presentation. The role of the rest of the class will be to pay attention and ask questions.

Learning Activities

Asynchronous Lecture Modules

(Online – at your own pace, **but before the weekly lecture**)

Twelve basic lecture Modules will be pre-recorded and loaded on Quercus through the term. Students will have access to these materials at least four days in advance of the lecture. These lecture Modules will remain available all term.

Each Module will be accompanied by **Discussion** items on Quercus. These should also be completed **before** the lecture. They will be closed after the lecture. They provide feedback and will be considered in the participation mark, although we will **not** be giving in-depth comments or analysis. The first Discussion will remain open until week 2.

The Modules will also include demonstrations on research, organization and presentation, which will help guide your preparation for the Assignment. These will also be reviewed in the live session.

We are fortunate to have input from Prof. Paul Muldoon who has kindly provided his recorded thoughts on key concepts as outlined in the text. These are included in the Module materials. Prof Muldoon will also join us in class to discuss current issues if time permits.

Live Seminars

Seminars will be held live starting at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays. **The three-hour slot will be reduced to reflect the time necessary to review the online components.** I will make best efforts to record these seminars on the U of T's OCCS system and post same on Quercus in the OCCS tab; however, it is your responsibility to attend, or to make some arrangement if necessary.

The details of the weekly schedule are set out in Appendix 1, below. They may need to be modified a bit based on class size, or other contingencies.

Course Materials

You are responsible for:

- all of the online module contents posted on Quercus as well as materials presented during the webinars by guest lecturers, other students in the course as part of their assignment etc.
- DeMarco, Jerry V. Building a Strong Foundation for Action: A Review of Twelve Fundamental Principles of Environmental and Resource Management Legislation. *Journal of Environmental Law and Practice* 19.1 (Oct 2008): 59-69. See “Reference Materials” Module on Quercus
- The course text: Muldoon et al *An Introduction to Environmental Law and Policy in Canada (Fourth Edition)*. Toronto: Emond Montgomery, 2025. It is available at the bookstore and is available through the Library Reading List tab on Quercus.

Appendix 1 – Weekly Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Deadlines
1	S 2	Ethics – How green is my law?	Mod 1 Ch 1 Prof. M L1	Overview of Assignment
2	S 9	Sources of law – What is this thing called jurisdiction?	Mod 2 Ch 2 Prof. M L2	Finalize Assignment Topics (1 %) Research tips
3	S 16	Constitution and Rights – Are there environmental rights?	Mod 3 Ch 2, 13 Prof. M L3	Quiz 1 (10 %) Assignment biblio research

				demo
4	S23	Legislation – Intro - There oughtta be a law!	Mod 4 Ch 2, 5	Review Q1 Assignment Description (1 %)
5	S30	Private (Civil) Law, Lawsuits: Here comes the judge!	Mod 5 Ch 2, 11	Assignment Demo
6	O 7	International Law – What can we all agree on?	Mod 6 Ch 4 Prof. M L4	Quiz 2 (20%) Assignment Biblio (1.5%)
7	O 14	Legislation: Standards and Enforcement – Trust the government?	Mod 7 Ch 5-6 Prof. M L5	Review Q2 Schedule Live presentations
8	O 21	Legislation: Planning and Assessment – Look before you leap!	Mod 8 Ch 7-8	Assignment PP or summary due (1.5%)
Rdg Wk	O 28			
9	N 4	Citizen Participation. Indigenous Input – How clear (or fair) is transparent?	Mod 9 Ch 4, 14	Quiz 3 (20%) Presentations?
10	N 11	Harnessing the market – Trust issues in the era of ESG?	Mod 10 Ch 9	Review Q3 Assignment 2 due (25%) Presentations?
11	N 18	Taking Legal Action	Mod 11 Ch 10-14	Presentations?
12	N 25	Ethics redux	Mod 12	Quiz 4 (10%)

		Recent Developments	Ch 10,15	Presentations? Course wrap-up
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Appendix 2 – Assignment Topics

- 1. Rulemaking on Toxics (PFAS)**
- 2. Environmental Social Governance (Greenwashing)**
- 3. Climate change legislation (any level)**
- 4. Climate change litigation (any court or tribunal)**
- 5. Environmental (or “impact”) assessment update**
- 6. International Court of Justice Opinion on CC liability**
- 7. Extended Producer Responsibility**
- 8. Ontario Place or Highway 413 or Small Modular Reactor (mock hearing - if interest)**

Appendix 3 - The fine print (important stuff)

Late penalties:

Work that is late without prior extensions being granted (email TA for extension requests) will be subject to a penalty of 3% of the value of the assignment per day late.

Absences:

All illness leading to an absence or delay must be reported on the ACORN system using the absence declaration form provided. Within three days of an absence, you must provide me with a screen shot of the absence declaration form in question.

Accessibility Needs:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility: if you require accommodations for a disability, or have any other accessibility concerns about the course, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

1. Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
2. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
3. Making up sources or facts.
4. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

1. Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
2. Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
3. Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

1. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
2. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional

information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/>).

Students may not use artificial intelligence tools for taking tests or completing discussion items or assignments. However, these tools may be useful when gathering information from across sources and assimilating it for understanding.

Use of Turnitin

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>)

Additional Resources for Students

The following are some important links to help you with academic and/or technical service and support

- General student services and resources at [Student Life](#)
- Full library service through [University of Toronto Libraries](#)
- Resources on conducting online research through [University Libraries Research](#)
- Resources on academic support from the [Academic Success Centre](#)
- Learner support at the [Writing Centre](#)
- Information for [Technical Support/Quercus Support](#)

Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.