

# ENV200H1F: ASSESSING GLOBAL CHANGE: SCIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

## I CONTACTS

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### INSTRUCTOR

Name: Dr. Romila Verma

Email: [romila.verma@utoronto.ca](mailto:romila.verma@utoronto.ca)

Lecture: SS2117

Office: TBA

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 2 to 3 pm EST or by appointment

### TAs

Sara Vaezafshar: [sara.vaezafshar@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:sara.vaezafshar@mail.utoronto.ca)

Serra Willow Buchanan: [serrawillow.buchanan@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:serrawillow.buchanan@mail.utoronto.ca)

## II COURSE OVERVIEW

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Earth's natural system is undergoing considerable changes. Although these changes are following a natural cyclical path, the past 200 years have seen an accelerated rate, scale and scope of change not witnessed before. These changes have brought global impacts with implications on our atmospheric systems, climate, the biosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere. To understand and assess the global impacts of these changes, ENV200 has been designed to examine the environment through a scientific lens. This course becomes even more pertinent in the light of the current Coronavirus crisis. We will examine the impacts of zoonotic diseases in humans and look beyond redefining our systems post-Covid19.

Even though this course is intended to fulfill the environmental literacy requirement for students in the BA programs of the School of the Environment or environment

breadth course requirement for Commerce, Humanities and Social Science students, I am hoping that it will make you an ecosystem thinker so that you are able to integrate the concepts learnt in this course in any field of study.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At the end of the term, students are expected to have a thorough understanding and application of the following concepts:

- Identify and describe the mechanisms of the natural system: the atmosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and lithosphere.
- Linking the interdependence of ecosystem and evaluating the impacts of humans on the environmental system.
- Analyze the interactions between nature and humans, with emphasis on the understanding and resolution of environmental concerns having global implications: atmospheric systems and climate change, the biosphere and conservation of biodiversity.
- Evaluate scientific and critical thinking in devising creative solutions to global environmental challenges.

**PREREQUISITE COURSE(S):**

**Exclusion:** BIO120H1, EEB208H1

**Distribution Requirement:** Science

**Breadth Requirement:** Living Things and Their Environment (4)

**READINGS:**

Required Textbook: You are expected to read the chapters corresponding to the lectures as described in the lecture schedule. The required textbook is:

Environmental Change and Challenge: A Canadian Perspective by P. Dearden and B. Mitchell, Erin O'Connell, Sixth Edition

9780190161668 – Environmental Change and Challenge 6e eBook

[https://www.campusebookstore.com/integration/AccessCodes/default.aspx?bookeller\\_id=96&Course=STG+ENV+200H+eBOOK+ENVIRONMENTAL+CHANGE+AND+CHALLENGE+6E&frame=YES&t=permalink](https://www.campusebookstore.com/integration/AccessCodes/default.aspx?bookeller_id=96&Course=STG+ENV+200H+eBOOK+ENVIRONMENTAL+CHANGE+AND+CHALLENGE+6E&frame=YES&t=permalink)

**III HOW THE COURSE IS ORGANIZED**

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This course is organized by 2 units/week, except one week due to long weekend. This is a fully in-person course. Over the course of each week, you are expected to attend live lecture and/or watch recorded lectures posted on Quercus.

**COURSE SCHEDULE & RELEVANT SESSIONAL DATES:**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>UNIT/WEEK</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>CLASS TIME</b>
May 8 to 14	2	Administration and Introduction  Understanding Environmental Issues and Science	May 9, noon to 2 pm  May 11, noon to 2 pm
May 15 to 21	2	Environmental Systems- Energy and Material Cycles  Biomes, Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation (outdoor class)  <b>Tutorial 1. Due by May 17, 11.59 pm EST</b>	May 16, noon to 2 pm  May 18, noon to 2 pm
May 22 to 28	1	Evolution, Species Interactions and Biological Communities	May 25, noon to 2 pm  <b>This lecture will be posted online</b>
May 29 to June 4	2	Food and Agriculture  Water Resources  <b>Tutorial 2. Due by June 3, 11.59 pm EST</b>	May 30, noon to 2 pm  June 4, noon to 1 pm

June 5 to 11	2	Human Population and Urbanization  Climate and Energy  <b>Online Quiz starts 2 pm on June 8. Due by June 9, 2 pm EST</b>	June 6, noon to 2 pm  June 8, noon to 2 pm
June 12 to 18	2	Writing Lab Oceans and Fisheries  Environmental Geology and Earth's Resources  <b>Tutorial 3. Due by June 14, 11.59 pm EST</b>	June 13, noon to 2 pm  June 15, noon to 2 pm
June 19 to 25		Environmental Science: The Big Picture	June 20, noon to 2 pm

### **TUTORIAL OBJECTIVES:**

There are three tutorials incorporated into the course with the objective that the students will work to further their understanding and application of the role of science in global environmental issues using these different exercises.

There are 2 components of the tutorial:

1. Take-home Assignment: I will post the assignment questions one week before the due date. Students are expected to complete their assignments and upload it on Quercus on due date/time.
2. Participation mark: Please register for tutorial, and on assigned dates, you must come prepared to discuss preassigned discussion question.

- Assignments are each worth 15% and tutorial participation is worth 5% of your final mark.

## Tutorial Time, Dates and TAs

Tutorial Section	Time	Room	Participation Dates	TA
TUT0101	Wednesday 2-3	SS581	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Sara Vaezafshar
TUT0102	Wednesday 2-3	SS1078	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Serra Willow Buchanan
TUT0201	Wednesday 3-4	SS581	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Sara Vaezafshar
TUT0202	Wednesday 3-4	SS1078	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Serra Willow Buchanan
TUT0301	Wednesday 4-5	SS581	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Sara Vaezafshar
TUT0302	Wednesday 4-5	SS1078	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Serra Willow Buchanan
TUT5101	Wednesday 7-8	SS1078	May 18, June 4 and June 15	Sara Vaezafshar

## IV EVALUATION/GRADING SCHEME

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QUIZ\* (one in total) worth 20%  
TUTORIALS (3 in total) worth 15% each  
TUTORIAL PARTICIPATION (3 total) worth 5%  
FINAL ASSESSMENT\* (end of course) worth 30%

\*Quiz and final assessment are open book.

### MARK BREAKDOWN

Quiz = 20% total grade  
Tutorial = 45% total grade  
Tutorial participation = 5% total grade  
Final Assessment = 30% total grade

**Note:** if an unexpected technical issue occurs with a university system (e.g., Quercus services, network outage) that affects availability or functionality, it may be necessary to revise the timing or weighting of the assessments.

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WORK

If known, include criteria by which work will be evaluated (if not provided in the syllabus this must be provided on Quercus). Two examples of grading criteria are shown below.

**The primary criteria used in evaluating written work are the following:**

- 1) **Mechanics:** Your work must be completely free of grammatical errors, spelling errors or major factual errors. References can be in any style but the same format must be used consistently and they must be accurate.
- 2) **Writing style:** Your papers should be written in a clear and unambiguous style which assists, rather than impedes, communication with the reader.
- 3) **Structure:** Your written work should have a clear focus, provided by the research question, and a structure which logically flows from that focus.
- 4) **Precision and accuracy:** Precision means saying exactly and specifically what you mean, avoiding ambiguity and vague generalities. Accuracy refers to absence of major factual errors.
- 5) **Analysis:** Your analysis should display understanding of the topic and, based on that understanding, originality of thought.

**The primary criteria used in evaluating oral presentations are the following:**

- 1) **Success in communicating** key concepts succinctly and accurately, thereby demonstrating sound understanding of the work being presented.
- 2) **Mechanics of communication**, such as manner of speaking (including good diction and tone), structure of the presentation and level of organization.
- 3) **Ability to respond** appropriately and fairly to questions and contribute to and stimulate unstructured discussion among peers.

## **FINAL ASSESSMENT**

Final Assessment will be held online. TBA

## **V COURSE POLICIES**

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- Communication with instructor: You can email the TAs or me directly with your questions and concerns. Emails might not be returned promptly especially during the weekend.
- Online and In-person learning expectations regarding etiquette/participation: Please be respectful of your online space when asking questions or participating in discussions or posting online on discussion groups.  
University statement regarding a positive learning environment: *“The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights, and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another’s differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.”*

- Privacy language and appropriate use of course materials:  
<https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/audio-video/sample-statements/>
- Deadlines for assignment submissions and late policy: Late penalty is 5% per day.
- Submission methods: All assignments, quizzes and assessments are to be posted/uploaded on Quercus.
- Process for requesting re-grading of course work: Students will be evaluated on the course requirements according to the information in the assignment document. Students will be provided with evaluation criteria for each assignment. Overall grades will be assessed in accordance with the University's description as provided in the Academic Handbook.

However, if you would like to request re-grading, please wait for two days after getting the marked assignment back. You can email me the request with clear petition on why you are requesting re-grading.

- Process for signaling course absences and requesting make-up tests or exams, if applicable: For students who miss the regularly scheduled assignments, quiz test or final assessment, Dr. Verma [romila.verma@utoronto.ca](mailto:romila.verma@utoronto.ca) must be notified as soon as possible.
- Extensions or penalties for late work: In case of emergency, please notify Dr. Verma ASAP. To get an extension on assignments, quiz and/or final assessment, students must use the Absence Declaration tool on ACORN if they are unable to complete work because of illness or other extenuating circumstances and also notify the instructor.

## **VI TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

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Specific guidance from the U of T Vice-Provost, Students regarding student technology requirements is available here:

<https://www.vicprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/tech-requirements-online-learning/>

Advice for students more broadly regarding online learning is available here:

<https://onlinelearning.utoronto.ca/getting-ready-for-online/>

This course requires the use of computers, and of course sometimes things can go wrong when using them. You are responsible for ensuring that you maintain

regular backup copies of your files, use antivirus software (if using your own computer), and schedule enough time when completing an assignment to allow for delays due to technical difficulties. Computer viruses, crashed hard drives, broken printers, lost or corrupted files, incompatible file formats, and similar mishaps are common issues when using technology, and are not acceptable grounds for a deadline extension.

## **VII INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND SUPPORT**

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### **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 outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

(<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>)

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/>).



## **PLAGIARISM DETECTION TOOL**

We are using Ouriginal for plagiarism detection for this course. Ouriginal is a similarity detection solution that combines text-matching with writing-style analysis to promote academic integrity and help prevent plagiarism.

**Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to Ouriginal 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 Ouriginal reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Ouriginal service are described on the Ouriginal web site.**

**If a student does not wish to participate in Ouriginal, the student MUST advise their TA at least three weeks before the assignment due date as alternate arrangements for screening the assignment must be arranged. (Normally, this will entail the submission of rough notes and drafts along with their final assignment.)**

## **COPYRIGHT**

This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session.

Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

If a student wishes to copy or reproduce lecture presentations, course notes or other similar materials provided by instructors, he or she must obtain the instructor's written consent beforehand. Otherwise, all such reproduction is an infringement of copyright and is absolutely prohibited. More information regarding this is available here: <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/ed-tech/audio-video/copyright-considerations/>

## **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.

## **ADDITIONAL SERVICES and SUPPORT**

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](#)