Instructor:
Melanie Jeffrey

Email:
Melanie.jeffrey@utoronto.ca

Class:
Tuesdays 12-2, HS 100, Inside 155 College Street

Office Hours:
Tuesdays 2-4
Or by appointment

Office Location:
NB 226
Inside Indigenous Studies, 2nd Fl
563 Spadina Cres

Prerequisite: 4th year status;
ENV341H1/HMB301H1/HMB302H1/HMB312H1/HMB314H1/ HMB322H1

Course Overview:
This course introduces students to complex issues at the interface between environment and health where health is broadly defined. Each year a current and controversial case study is explored from scientific, medical, political and policy perspectives. The course takes students from the molecular to individual to population and societal levels.

Course Description:
"Government of Canada Takes Action on Another Chemical of Concern: Bisphenol A"

OTTAWA – April 18, 2008. The Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, and the Honourable John Baird, Minister of the Environment, today announced that the Government is taking action to protect the health of Canadians and the environment from another chemical of concern. Canada is the first country in the world to complete a risk assessment of bisphenol A in consultation with industry and other stakeholders, and to initiate a 60 day public comment period on whether to ban the importation, sale and advertising of polycarbonate baby bottles which contain bisphenol A.”


This current and controversial bisphenol A case will be used as a starting point for understanding current issues in environment and health. How does the Canadian government reach decisions about chemical substances? What roles do industry, the media and nongovernmental organizations play? How does this translate into public policy in Toronto, Canada, internationally? What does it mean for individual Canadians?

The highlight of the course is the diverse expertise of the guest lecturers. Scientists from academia, industry, government and nongovernmental organizations provide different and sometimes conflicting perspectives on the scientific and medical facts and interpretations. Environmental experts from academia, the media, law associations and Toronto Public Health, together with the scientists, provide important insights into the political and policy implications.
ASSESSMENTS
Oral Seminar Presentation, 25%
(various dates, in pairs, marked individually)

Grant 1: Peer Scholar
- Create Phase, 10%, due Friday February 10
  - Assess Phase 5% due Friday February 17
  - Reflect/Revise 15% due Friday March 3

Grant 2: 30% due Friday March 31

Meaningful engagement, 15%
(throughout the course, see Respectful Engagement on page 4)

HOW DOES THIS COURSE WORK?
This is a seminar course arranged in two-week modules of five topics. During each module you will first have a presentation from guest lecturer and the following week, 15-minute student presentations on primary research papers in that field.

There are three assessments geared for fourth year students. The 15-minute oral presentation (working in pairs), and two grant proposals (working alone). You must do each of these three assessments (Grant 1, Grant 2, and the seminar) in different module topic areas.

The first step will be to choose a topic area/date for the seminar. These will open Friday January 13th. You may wish to pick the seminar based on interests and when your other assessments are due in the term. The seminar should be a critical presentation about a primary research paper in the field.

The details of the grant proposals will be covered in our first class together and be summarized on Quercus, but very basically, it is an inquiry-based assignment where you propose 3-5 critical questions in the field and propose ways to answer those questions using standard techniques (such as RT-PCR, for example). The topic areas are your choice but must differ from each other (Grant 1 and Grant 2) and the Seminar area you choose.

We meet in person every week and meaningful engagement is a significant proportion of your mark. You are expected to participate in all classes by critically reflecting on the readings, course materials, asking thoughtful questions, participating in discussion, and listening well (see Respectful Engagement).

RESPECTFUL ENGAGEMENT
What is engaged and respectful conduct in the university classroom? How can we make a learning environment that is welcoming to neurodiversity and different kinds of intelligence? What does it mean to co-create a safe learning environment for everyone? These and many more issues all link to concerns about equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the academy.

What constitutes respectful conduct is culturally centered. While this is a learning environment in a colonial institution, your cultural contexts are what enrich and inform the community of scholarship we build together in the class. Your own positionality and perspectives are what make you a unique and wonderful human! I’d like you to consider sharing ideas, but also kindness, listening deeply, and respect for each other and yourself. Listening and reflecting on what others say is as important as what you choose to share. You need to be present to be engaged, obviously, but the quality of your contributions and conduct in the class is what you are being assessed on, not the quantity.

READINGS
Various sources relevant to each class will be required reading. Readings will be released on Quercus every Wednesday for you to prepare for the following week’s class.
## JEH 455 2023 COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Seminar/Session</th>
<th>Speaker/Institution</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 10</td>
<td>Dr. Melanie Jeffrey</td>
<td>Syllabus, Assessments &amp; How this course works</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 17</td>
<td>Dr. Paul Bozek, Dalla Lana School of Public Health</td>
<td>Exposures in Occupational Settings</td>
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<td>January 24</td>
<td>Student Seminars</td>
<td>Occupational exposures papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 31</td>
<td>Dr. Melanie Jeffrey, Human Biology &amp; Centre for Indigenous Studies</td>
<td>From Minimata Bay to Grassy Narrows: Two stories of dietary methylmercury exposure</td>
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<td>February 7</td>
<td>Student seminars</td>
<td>Dietary exposures</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>PhD Candidate Bonnie Hamilton, Rochman Lab</td>
<td>Microplastics and Inuit Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Student seminars</td>
<td>Microplastics and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Evidence, policy, public perception and legislation in environment and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Student Seminars</td>
<td>Policy, evidence, and current issues in environment and health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday Feb 10</td>
<td>Create Phase of Grant 1 Due</td>
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<td>February 14</td>
<td>Dr. Miriam Diamond, School for the Environment and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>E-waste and other waste</td>
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<td>Friday February 17: Assess Phase of Grant 1 Due</td>
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<td>February 21-25</td>
<td>Reading Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>Student seminars</td>
<td>E-waste and other waste</td>
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<td>Friday March 3: Revise/Reflect Phase of Grant 1 Due</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>PhD Candidate Bonnie Hamilton, Rochman Lab</td>
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<td>Friday March 31: Grant 2 due</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>Student Seminars and wrap-up</td>
<td>Remaining seminars and final discussion</td>
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**SUBJECT TO CHANGE ACCORDING TO GUEST AVAILABILITY**

### ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Your instructor was greatly helped by Accessibility Services supports during her undergrad and grad degree at U of T. She has lived experience with learning challenges and neurodiversity and wants to build a safe space in this classroom for all learners. Some ways we can all do this include budgeting your time, being respectful of deadlines, setting clear goals and responsibilities in groupwork, and respecting others; don’t expect everyone to work just like you do.

Lecture slides will be posted, and lecture recordings will be available through the OCCS Student Link on Quercus and/or My Media.

Your college registrar is an important resource for non-medical and personal issues that affect your schoolwork.

### LATE PENALTIES

Since we have scaffolded deadlines for one assessment in this course (Grant 1), it is important that you get your own work done on time, so it does not affect others’ process through the exercise. The best way to do this is starting early. In the “real world” of competitive academic grants, late proposals are never accepted, or funded.

If you are ill or have other factors impacting your ability to hand in the required work, fill in 1) the HMB absence form (https://www.hmbutoronto.ca/missed_assessment), 2) the absence declaration form on Acorn under the Profile and Settings menu and 3) email Melanie 24 hours in advance of the due date to discuss options. Otherwise, late penalties are 5% per day late (including weekends) for a maximum of 1 week.
ABSENCE VERIFICATION
If you are sick or are a close contact of someone who tested positive SARS-COVID-19 or have another family or personal situation that prevents you from attending class, please fill out 1) an absence declaration form on Acorn under the Profile and Settings menu, and 2) email Melanie (instructors are not notified if you fill out a form). Do NOT come to class in person if you are ill. Use the Zoom link on Quercus to join us instead if you are well enough.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Academic integrity gives learning communities validity and relevance; it is fundamental to ethical scholarship. Honesty and responsibility are essential in the proliferation and communication of ideas, including giving credit to original sources. Academic integrity is about respectful participation in the academic community at the University of Toronto and ensures that the degree you earn here is a true indication of your academic achievement.

If you aren’t sure about academic integrity or plagiarism issues, please ask! It is your responsibility to act with academic integrity and not engage in any academic misconduct. There are significant consequences if you engage in academic misconduct, including plagiarism. It is expected that you know what constitutes an academic offence at U of T, including plagiarism and self-plagiarism. Here is a link: http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize

Taking notes as you conduct research is a critical step to ensuring that you cite the ideas you encounter properly. Here is a link to very helpful and practical advice for you research journeys: https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/researching/notes-from-research/. All academic work that you submit in this class must adhere to the university’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. You are expected to correctly cite all sources, written and otherwise. Here is a link to the citation style for this course, Vancouver Style: https://guides.hsict.library.utoronto.ca/vancouver-style.

WRITING AND RESEARCH TIPS (MORE ON QUERCUS)
Rubrics will be shared for all assessments. Documents that include strategies for success in research, presentations and grant proposal writing are also posted on Quercus for you to review. The most important ingredient to success is planning your time and giving the research and writing phases the balance of time they deserve.

Librarians can help you refine your searches for your seminars and grant proposals. They are fantastic resources for learning to navigate and use the library and help you grow your search strategies. You can use the chat function to engage with them from your own computer if you are shy or working from home.

Writing Centres at U of T are very good aids, especially for ESL learners. It is best to make appointments and go regularly to check your progress with the assignment (they also have a lot of cancellations, so don’t be discouraged if they seem full).

For Grant 1, you need to give yourself time to learn to use Peer Scholar, build figures, and format well in the program (double-space, headings etc). It is not difficult, but if you struggle to manage your time it may be stressful. It is best to write in Peer Scholar so you do not get last minute formatting issues that affect how your reader sees the work. Use your word processor to check copied drafts that you save for grammar and spelling periodically. No attached files will be marked.

For Grant 2, double space with one-inch margins and submit on using a single .doc, .docx or .odt file on Quercus. Detailed instructions are available on Quercus for you to review. Explore topics that interest you and deserve further investigation!