FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS & REGULATIONS
ESCI-5302-001
Department of Physical & Life Sciences
Environmental Laws & Regulations
Fall 2016

COURSE SYLLABUS

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: ESCI-5302-001 – FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Class meeting time: Mondays Weekly – 5:30 – 8:00 pm

Course Hours: Weekly participation in this course is mandatory for all students. This is a classroom section and it may be merged in Blackboard with other sections. The instructor will use Blackboard extensively for assignments and course announcements to all sections of the course. Students who are unable to attend any of the weekly lectures will be expected to review lecture materials and make up the course assignments online. The online and Blackboard course week will be from 00:00 Hours CST on Tuesday through 23:59 on Monday each week. All weekly assignments must be turned in within the week. Weekly discussion board assignments and current events postings should be completed by Thursdays if possible so that classmates will have the opportunity to read them and comment on them.

Class location: NRC 1101 or other location TBD

Course Website:
90677.201609: [FALL-16] ESCI-5302-001 - FEDERAL ENV LAWS AND REGULATNS
https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/launcher?type=Course&id=_52791_1&url=

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: H.A. Tony Wood
Instructor Mailing Address: 6300 Ocean Drive, Unit 5850, Corpus Christi, TX 78412
Instructor Office: 6300 Ocean Drive, NRC Suite 1105, Corpus Christi, TX 78412
Office Hours: 8-5 M-F. By appointment ONLY. Mr. Wood is full time staff at TAMU-CC’s National Spill Control School and as such he also serves as an advisor to the National Response Team. He often teaches 40-Hour per week courses. If you wish to meet him in his
office you must make an appointment because he may be have NSCS responsibilities on
campus or somewhere else in the world.

Telephone: (w) 361-825-3335
E-mail: tony.wood@tamucc.edu

**Appointments:** Submit a meeting request using Outlook Calendar. E-mail or telephone
calls are also acceptable but the meeting should not be considered confirmed until it is
accepted by the instructor and logged in his calendar. (For exceptionally important issues,
walk-ins may be accepted.)

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

**Catalog Course Description**
A survey of state and federal environmental laws and regulations, and their impact on the
environment. Case studies of environmental issues and legislated regulations.

**Extended Course Description**
Environmental laws and regulations establish the parameters of environmental resource
management for our society and establish the framework under which environmental
professionals work. This is an extremely important course for environmental science majors
and is recommended for anyone expecting to work in areas related to environmental policy,
regulation, or management. This course requires extensive readings from the text, study of
regulatory agency websites, and a review of briefings and presentations each week. The
successful student will gain an understanding of the major legal, regulatory, historical, and
policy frameworks that define environmental programs and regulations in the United
States. A practical review of environmental regulatory compliance and enforcement, as well
as the successes of such programs will also be discussed. International environmental
treaties, regulations, and agreements, and their implications for the United States may also be
discussed as a part of this course.

*Special Notes:* There are two Environmental Regulations course sections offered this
semester. There is a graduate level and an undergraduate level sections. These course
sections are merged in Blackboard so that discussions can be shared in the various sections
of the course. All written and discussion assignments will be delivered, and completed
assignments must be submitted by the students in Blackboard.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

**Prerequisites** - POLS 2305 - U.S. Government and Politics and POLS 2306 - State and
Local Government (or equivalent courses.) The instructor or academic advisor may grant
permission to take ESCI 4301/5302 without these two TAMUCC prerequisite courses if the
student has successfully completed an equivalent high school or collegiate level course in
U.S. Government, and has an understanding of tri-partite multi-level Governments as
practiced in the U.S.
Co-requisites - None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES
- Federal Environmental Law, The User’s Guide by O. Moya and A. Fono, 3rd Ed. 2010. Students are expected to read each section of the textbook prior to the corresponding classroom session and class discussions.
  OR

- http://www2.epa.gov/laws-regulations

- Other readings will be suggested over the course of the semester.

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a process used by instructors to help improve learning. Assessment is essential for effective learning because it provides feedback to both students and instructors. A critical step in this process is making clear the course’s student learning outcomes that describe what students are expected to learn to be successful in the course. The student learning outcomes for this course are listed below. By collecting data and sharing it with students, students and instructors can evaluate how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes. Students can focus more efficiently and effectively on their learning efforts. This information can also help instructors identify challenging areas for students and adjust their teaching approach to facilitate learning.

Course Objectives: Successful participation and study in this course will enable students to:
1. Understand how environmental laws and regulations are developed.
2. Know which agencies regulate environmental laws.
3. Demonstrate how to locate specific environmental laws and regulations.
4. Understand the primary components of major Federal environmental laws including the CAA, CWA, RCRA, CERCLA and NEPA.
5. Understand how environmental compliance inspections are conducted.
6. Understand how these and other environmental laws directly affect one (student selected) industry.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Participation - Weekly course participation is mandatory. There are weekly briefings, lectures, recorded lectures, current event discussions, research assignments, and other
guidance. All of these will be posted on Blackboard. Participation may be in the classroom or online. All students will turn in class assignments on Blackboard. There will be two opportunities to participate online each week; current events and industry assignments. Students will generate their own current events postings from recent news. The instructor will also give a discussion board assignment regarding the student’s chosen industry and the specific law(s) being studied that week. Each student is required to make one initial weekly posting to the current events discussion board and one to the industry discussion board, to review the postings of other students in each category, and to make some substantial comment to at least two of the other student’s initial postings. A substantial posting must be more than just “I agree.” or “That’s what I thought too.” in order for it to count for credit. Classroom section students will be using Blackboard, but should submit short summaries of their classroom comments during the class. Online students are expected to contribute more substantial discussions.

2. Readings - A weekly reading assignment must be completed. Federal environmental laws will be studied individually, with a focus each week on one area of the law. There will generally be readings each week that come directly from the textbook. There will also be a web based research effort each week. There may also be special assignments from the professor.

3. Briefings & Lectures - One or more PowerPoint briefing(s) will be provided each week by the instructor. Students are required to review the briefing(s) and will be responsible for knowing and understanding the content. Audio lectures may be posted on Blackboard to accompany the weekly PowerPoint briefings.

4. Internet Research - Specific websites pertinent to the weekly topic will be identified and posted each week. On other occasions the students will be given a topic and must research and be able to discuss relevant websites that they have found. Students should share these websites with other classmates and may be asked to discuss them.

5. Course Assignments - There will be 4 major assignment deliverables this semester: an Agency Essay, a Current Events Summary, and an Industry Report, and a Graduate Research Presentation:

5.1 Agency Essay - A 2-3 page, single spaced, essay describing the role of an International, Federal, State, regional, or tribal agency with environmental responsibilities will be required of each student. These essays should describe the roles and responsibilities of the selected agency, its organizational structure, an indication of how many employees the agency has and the annual budget of the agency. For extremely large agencies, a smaller subset of the agency should be chosen. (Do not choose an agency as complex as the USEPA, although individual units within the USEPA can be chosen.) The essay should be completed in technical writing style. (APA format is acceptable but not required.)

5.2 Current Events Folder - Each student will prepare an environmental regulations current-events folder. At least one article related to current events in environmental law should be placed into the student folder each week. The weekly posting in the folder should include the web citation and a brief discussion (1-3 paragraphs) explaining why this article is relevant to
the course topic. Students should post their weekly current events for other students to see. (A minimum of 10 articles over 13 weeks are required.) The student must deliver a one-page listing of articles (like a Table of Contents) at the end of the semester. The one page deliverable will show the date posted, the current event title, the publication or website, the date of publication, and how many follow-up discussions the original posting generated from other students.

5.3 Industry Report – Each student will select a specific industry to focus on throughout the entire semester. It should be an industry which is environmentally regulated and which you would anticipate working for or regulating after graduation. The student will profile this industry and identify its NAICS code(s), its products, and its potential for affecting the environment. The student will research how each federal law we discuss could affect that specific industry, which regulations apply, and what permits are required. The student will also identify what that industry does to assure compliance. The student should discuss engineering controls and the level of economic commitment evidenced by the industry's efforts. Page limits: 10-20 pages, single spaced, completed in APA format.

5.4 Graduate Credit Requirements - Graduate students are expected to be able to demonstrate an understanding of the underlying framework of Federal environmental laws and regulations, their historical context, and be able to analyze these laws and the political forces that worked to establish them. Graduate students should be able to engage in the political processes that formulate such laws.

Graduate students will be required to attend at least one environmentally oriented public meeting. The meeting should relate to natural resource regulation and/or management. Regulated and managed resources may include water, air, soil, or minerals. Regulatory issues may include resource management, waste, pollution control, or energy. The student will identify the resource and its relevance to this course, describe the hosting organization, and indicate the date and frequency of organizational meetings. The student will identify at least some of the key board members and stakeholders, describe one or more topics on the agenda in detail, and explain the expected outcome of the agenda item. Finally, the student must identify the relevance of the organization and its discussions to pertinent federal and state regulations. Possible examples of acceptable public meetings include meetings on a specific environmental issues; or recurrent meetings with some environmental topics on the agenda such as city council, water board, municipal planning, parks, LEPC, or other similar meetings.

If a student is unable to attend any meetings related to the environment then alternative assignments may be discussed and mutually agreed upon with the professor. An example of a possible alternative assignment would be a thorough review of an environmental issue posted for public comment and developing a written comment on the subject.

A short written report must be submitted after attending the meeting and a 20-25 slide PowerPoint briefing will be submitted in Blackboard. This briefing will be presented to the class between the 10th and 13th weeks of the semester.
6. **Exams** - Classroom sections of this course will have 3 major examinations this semester. These exams will be based upon the readings, briefings, current events, and discussion postings. Each of the first 2 exams are valued at 10% of the course grade. The comprehensive final exam is valued at 15% of the total course grade.

**H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Agency Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Participation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Events Summary Sheet</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
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**I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE**

This schedule is intended to serve as general guidance. It will be expanded over the course of the semester, especially if current environmental regulatory events offer opportunities for real-time lesson development. Student abilities, extended discussions on specific and current topics, or other factors may result in some adjustments to this schedule. Students should budget time each week for:

- Reading the course textbook
- Researching & reporting on current events
- Researching EPA & other regulatory agency websites on the weekly topic
- Discussion and documentation
- Lecture/briefing review
- Preparing industry report regarding pertinent laws and regulations

**Week 1**
Introduction
Discussion 1: Introductions, Virtual Introductions & Expectations
Briefing: Course Introduction & Expectations
Overview of Course
Overview of Textbook
Assignments: Select Agency for Essay, Become familiar with Blackboard

Week 2
Reading: Administrative Law (Chap. 1)
Briefing: Environmental Compliance Inspections & Preparing for a Regulatory Inspection
Industry Selection Due
Discussion 2: Why and how do we regulate? For the industry you have selected, discuss which historical era of environmental regulation and management they are currently living in and why.

Week 3
Agency Summary Essays Due
Reading: National Environmental Policy Act & Environmental Impact Statements (Chap. 2)
Discussion re: NEPA

Week 4 & 5
Reading: Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Chap 3)
Briefing & Lecture on RCRA
Discussion re: Hazardous waste TSDF sites

Week 6
Reading: Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation & Liability Act (Chap 4)
Briefing: Superfund Amendments & Reauthorization Act
Discussion: Superfund sites near you

Week 7
Exam # 1 for Classroom sections
Mid-term review for all sections

Week 8
Reading: Clean Air Act (Chap 5)
Briefings &discussions on the CAA
Discussion: The difference between stratospheric and tropospheric ozone

Week 9
Reading: Clean Water Act (Chap 6)
Water issues in Texas
Briefings & discussions on the CWA
Discussion: The difference between stratospheric and tropospheric ozone

Week 10
Reading: Endangered Species Act
Briefings & discussions

Week 11
Video: Frontline-Climate of Doubt
Grad student Presentations

Week 12
Grad Student Presentations/Review
Current Environmental Events Notebooks Due

Week 13
Course Wrap-up
Exam #2 for Classroom sections

Final
Comprehensive Final Exam for all classroom sections

Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class by the Instructor. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

J. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance/Tardiness
Weekly attendance is mandatory. All students should review the presented briefings, lecture information, and assignments on Blackboard. Students must log onto Blackboard and review the lecture materials if they miss a classroom lecture. Students are expected to be courteous to others in the classroom and online. Interrupting a lecture, showing up late, and submitting weekly discussion postings late are all considered inappropriate behaviors.

Late Work and Make-up Exams
Assignments may be completed and submitted at any time over the course week. Extensions for assignments and exams will only be granted for extenuating circumstances.

Extra Credit
The baseline information in this course is of such importance that students are encouraged to gain additional knowledge about the core topics rather than seeking extra credit to mitigate substandard grades.

**Cell Phone Use** – Cell phone conversations are acceptable only for emergencies. Conducting smartphone research that specifically pertains to lecture topics during the class period is acceptable and encouraged. Relevant information should be shared with the class and may be called for by the instructor at any time.

**Laptop Use** – Same as cell phone use.

**Participation** - Weekly course participation is mandatory.

**K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

- **Academic Integrity (University)**
  University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

- **Classroom/Professional Behavior**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

- **Statement of Civility**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.
• **Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)**
  The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must submitted. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Please consult the Academic Calendar ([http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/](http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/)) for the last day to drop a course.

• **Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)**
  As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html), and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at [http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html](http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the Office of the Provost.

• **Disability Services**
  The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call (361) 825-5816 or visit Disability Services in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

  If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

  [http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/](http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/)

• **Statement of Academic Continuity**
  In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi;
this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

L. OTHER INFORMATION

- **Academic Advising**
  The College of Science & Engineering requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. Meetings are by appointment only; advisors do not take walk-ins. Please call or stop by the Advising Center to check availability and schedule an appointment. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction 350 or can be reached at (361) 825-3928.

- **Blackboard**
  Blackboard is a web-based learning management system designed to support fully online courses and to provide a space for face-to-face course supplementation. It is at the core of the lessons and deliverables in this course. Visit and logon to the Blackboard Resources homepage now to become familiar with this system and its technical support features, and to make sure that your computer and servers are compatible.
  See [https://iol.tamucc.edu/bb_resources_students.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/bb_resources_students.html) for assistance with Blackboard.

- **CASA**
  Students are generally expected to submit major assignments in technical writing style. CASA’s Writing Center assists student-writers online and on campus. CASA responds to the writing needs of TAMUCC writers by providing consistent, knowledgeable and flexible support. If you need assistance with technical writing, spelling, or other study skills, please contact CASA at: [http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php](http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php).

M. GENERAL DISCLAIMER

The instructor reserves the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. He will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods and or online at the course website in Blackboard.