ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS  
ESCI-6302.001   CRN 83971  
Department of Physical & Environmental Sciences  
Spring 2019  

COURSE SYLLABUS  

A. COURSE INFORMATION  

Course number/section: ESCI-6302-001 – FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS  

Class meeting time: Mondays - 1700-2000  

Class location: OCNR 222  

Website [83971.201901: [SP-19] ESCI-6302-001 – FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS](https://bb9.tamucc.edu)  

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: By Appointment. 8:00-5:00 M-F  
Telephone: (w) 361-825-3335  
E-mail: tony.wood@tamucc.edu  
Appointments: Students should submit a meeting request using Outlook Calendar. The meeting should not be considered confirmed until it is accepted by the instructor. (Walk-ins are sometimes accepted at the discretion of the instructor.)  

B. COURSE DESCRIPTION  

Catalog Course Description  
This course provides survey of major state and federal environmental laws and regulations, and their impact on the environment. Case studies of environmental issues and legislated regulations are reviewed and discussed.  

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. Each has the same core foundation. There are graduate level and undergraduate level sections.

It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with Blackboard. These course sections are merged in Blackboard so that discussions can be shared across both sections of the course. All course assignments will be delivered in Blackboard.

C. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites - POLS 2305 - U.S. Government and Politics and POLS 2306 - State and Local Government (or equivalent.) The instructor or academic advisor may grant permission to take ESCI 4301 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

D. 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.
- The following online references augment the textbook and must be used by students throughout the course:
  - http://www2.epa.gov/laws-regulations
- Other readings will be suggested over the course of the semester.
E. 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 on how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes students can more efficiently and effectively focus 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. Understand administrative law as it applies to environmental enforcement.
3. Know which agencies regulate environmental laws.
4. Demonstrate how to locate specific environmental laws and regulations.
5. Understand the primary components of major Federal environmental laws including the CAA, CWA, RCRA, CERCLA and NEPA.
6. Understand how environmental compliance inspections are conducted.
7. Understand how these and other environmental laws directly and specifically affect one (student selected) industry.
8. Graduate Students are required to attend a public meeting of a government agency or board where there are one or more environmental topics on the agenda. They will prepare a report and brief the class on this meeting.

F. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Participation - Weekly course participation is mandatory. There are weekly briefings, recorded lectures, current event discussions, research assignments, and other guidance. All of these will be posted on Blackboard. 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 (for each chapter of the book). Students are also expected to participate in class current events discussions after reviewing the postings of other students and to make some substantial comment to at least 10 of the other student’s initial postings over the course of the semester. 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.
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 by the instructor each week. 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 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 3 major assignment deliverables this semester: an Agency Essay, a Current Events Summary, and an Industry Report. See sections 5.1-5.4 for details.

5.1 **Agency Essay** - A 2-3 page, single spaced, essay describing the role of an International, Federal, State, regional, or tribal agency with riparian, wetland, coastal or marine environmental responsibilities will be required of each student. These essays should describe the mission, roles, and responsibilities of the selected agency, its organizational structure, the number of employees, the annual budget, and other important information. For extremely large agencies (like USEPA or USACE), a smaller subset of the agency should be chosen. The essay should be completed in technical writing style. (APA format is acceptable but not required.)

5.2 **Current Events Folder** - A current events discussion folder is contained in the Discussion Forum on Blackboard. Each student will submit current-event articles on environmental regulations, along with their personal commentaries. (A minimum of 10 articles over 13 weeks are required.) These weekly postings in the folder should include the web citation and a brief discussion (1-3 paragraphs) explaining why this article is relevant to the course. Students must also comment on at least 10 of the postings by other student over the semester. At the end of the semester each student must submit a one-page table listing their participation over the semester. The one-page deliverable must show:

- Student posting title /subject/the current event title
- Date posted
- Source Publisher
- Source website
- Date of publication
- Number of comments posted by other students to this posting
- Number of times you commented on other students postings during the week
5.3 Industry Report – Each student will personally 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.

6. Exams - There will be three (3) exams over the course of the semester. These exams will be based upon the readings, briefings, current events, and discussion postings.

G. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Agency Essay</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events Participation</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Events Summary Sheet</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry Report</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Meeting Report</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Exam</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Exam</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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H. 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 & 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 5-6
Reading: Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation & Liability Act (Chap 4)
Briefing: Superfund and its Amendments & Reauthorization Act
Discussion: Superfund sites near you

Week 7
Mid-Term Exam

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
Second Exam

Comprehensive Final Exam

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.

I. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance/Tardiness
Weekly attendance is mandatory. Attendance may be in the classroom or it may be accomplished by logging into the course website on Blackboard within each week of the semester. Students are expected to be courteous to others.

Late Work and Make-up Exams
Because assignments can be completed and submitted online at any time over the course week, extensions will only be granted for extenuating circumstances. Assignments that are delivered late may be accepted for reduced credit until grading has finished. Make up exams must be completed after the classroom exam but within 2 weeks.

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 – Only permitted for course relevant research and never during exams.

Laptop Use - Only permitted for course relevant research and never during exams.

Participation - Weekly course participation is mandatory. Participation in the classroom may be a function of personality type. In this course participation will be evaluated based on both classroom discussions and Blackboard Discussion Forum postings.

J. 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)**
  
  *I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. 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.*

  The University hopes that students never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and your instructor, before you decide to drop this course. 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. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. 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/

• 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.

K. 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.

https://iol.tamucc.edu/bb_resources_students.html
L. GENERAL DISCLAIMER

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