

SYLLABUS

ENR 5210

US Environmental Impact Assessment

Autumn 2021 (full term)

3 credit hours

Online, delivered asynchronously

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor

Instructor: Dr. Stacey Fineran

Email: fineran.2@osu.edu

Office hours: By appointment

SENR main office phone: 614-292-2265

Teaching Assistant (TA)

TA: Anna Liu

Email: liu.8203@buckeyemail.osu.edu

Office hours: By appointment

SENR main office phone: 614-292-2265

Prerequisites

Junior, Senior, or graduate level standing; or permission of instructor

Differential Expectations for Undergraduate and Graduate students

As a 5000-level course, ENR 5210 serves both undergraduate and graduate students.

Graduate students are expected to produce content and delivery of content that shows an exceptional understanding of the material. If it aligns with the graduate student's interests and graduate study goals, the instructor will discuss with them opportunities to perform more in-depth research for a selected case study topic.

Course description

This course provides students with a broad understanding of the fundamental concepts of US Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), including the laws, regulations, guidelines, and judicial interpretations that shape EIA's implementation in the United States. Students are equipped with the terms and concepts of EIA so they may effectively participate in the EIA process, e.g., as practitioners; as informed citizens. The course provides in-depth coverage of the EIA documents and process used by selected federal and state agencies to provide quality information to decision-makers through project alternatives designed to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for negative impacts to the environment. Connections are made to other environmental laws (e.g., Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, etc.) that underpin the performance of EIA for various impact types. Students are exposed to how impact analysis relates to selected fundamental concepts of the natural and social sciences, demonstrating the inherent interdisciplinarity of EIA. Case studies of national (US) significance will be presented, followed by student analysis, discussion, and critique, to enhance the student's understanding and provide an opportunity for student participation and engagement in an online format.

This is a completely online course, taught asynchronously, that will deliver content, assessments, and student interactions through Ohio State's Carmen system.

(<https://carmen.osu.edu/>).

Course learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students should successfully be able to:

- Correctly use the terms and concepts of Environmental Impact Assessment, particularly as it is performed in the United States.
- Analyze and critique key documents produced as part of the EIA process.
- Apply EIA concepts when considering how federal and state agencies manage the environment and natural resources to address environmental problems.
- Recognize and articulate how the natural and social sciences connect to the world of environmental law and policy in real world settings.
- Understand how citizen litigation shapes implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other major environmental laws related to federal and state agency actions subject to EIA.
- Understand how natural sciences, social sciences, and environmental law and policy can be used to create positive change and help achieve sustainable development.
- Have a fundamental understanding of the various impact types associated with the practice and performance of EIA and how they inform construction of alternatives presented to decision-makers as part of the EIA process.

HOW THIS ONLINE COURSE WORKS

Mode of delivery: This course is 100% online. There are no required lecture sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time. We may hold Instructor-Student and TA-Student conversation times, which will be scheduled with the individual student or student groups in advance and according to student, instructor, and TA availability.

Pace of online activities: This course is divided into **weekly modules** that we generally plan to release on Friday (11:59 pm) the week before the date of the given module. Please see Carmen Modules to view the release dates for the modules. Students are expected to keep pace and meet assignment deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within the time frame provided.

Credit hours and work expectations: This is a **3-credit-hour course**. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 3 hours per week of time spent on direct instruction (e.g., lectures) in addition to 6 hours of homework (reading and assignment preparation, for example) to receive a grade of (C) average.

Attendance and participation requirements: Because this is an online course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of students' expected participation:

- **Attendance and participation are required to earn a passing grade for this class.**
- **Participating in online activities for attendance: AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**
You are expected to log in to the course in Carmen every week. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*.
- **Office hours and live sessions: OPTIONAL**
All live, scheduled events for the course, including my office hours, are optional.
- **Participating in discussion forums: 2+ TIMES PER WEEK**
As part of your participation, each week you can expect to post at least twice as part of our substantive class discussion on the week's topics, although there will be several weeks where there will be no discussion assignment to lighten student workload, such as for holiday weeks, etc. See Carmen for specific discussion assignments.

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Textbooks

Required

Birkland, Thomas A. *An Introduction to the Policy Process: Theories, Concepts, and Models of Public Policy Making*. 5th ed., M.E Sharpe, 2019. ISBN-13: 978-1138495616; ISBN-10: 1138495611. To purchase, the current estimated cost is \$23 to rent or \$48 to buy new.

Five journal articles

Selected articles (shown below) are used to illustrate key concepts of the EIA process and show important paradigm shifts over NEPA's 50 plus years of development. Available within the course Carmen site or via the OSU Library.

1. Caldwell, Lynton K. "Perspective: An Interview with Lynton Caldwell on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)." *Environmental Practice*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2003, pp. 281-286.
2. Mas, Diane M.L. "A Comparison of Three Key Elements of National and Select State Environmental Policy Acts." *Environmental Practice*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2003, pp. 349-362.
3. O'Brien, Connor. "I wish they could all be California Environmental Quality Acts: rethinking NEPA in light of climate change." *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2009, pp. 239-271.
4. Smythe, Robert and Caroline Isber. "NEPA in the Agencies: A Critique of Current Practices." *Environmental Practice*, vol. 5, no. 4, 2003. pp. 290-297.
5. Steinemann, Anne. "Improving alternatives for environmental impact assessment." *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2001, pp. 3-21.

Course technology

Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** ocio.osu.edu/help
- **Phone:** 614-688-4357(HELP)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)
- Recording a slide presentation with audio narration (go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide)
- Recording, editing, and uploading video (go.osu.edu/video-assignment-guide)

Required equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Webcam: built-in or external webcam, fully installed and tested
- Microphone: built-in laptop or tablet mic or external microphone
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication

Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help.

Carmen access

You will need to use BuckeyePass (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass - Adding a Device help article for step-by-step instructions (go.osu.edu/add-device).
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new codes** button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application (go.osu.edu/install-duo) to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

GRADING AND FACULTY RESPONSE

How your grade is calculated

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE
Discussions	10%
Concept Checks	50%
Case Study Quizzes	20%
Impact Quizzes	20%
Total	100%

**Please refer to Carmen for due dates of assignments.*

Late assignments

To receive full credit for assignments, work should be turned-in on time and in condition to be evaluated. Work with excessive deficiencies will be returned for resubmission and will be treated as if they are late. If accepted, late assignments may incur a deduction of 10% of the total point value for each 24-hour period (or portion) that they are late (including weekends). Please refer to Carmen for due dates.

Make-up Work

Make-up for missed work might not be scheduled in the case of an unexcused absence and in some cases might not be rescheduled for logistical reasons. For those excused missed assignments that are not easily made-up (e.g., discussion activities), an alternative written report assignment may be assigned.

There are generally three situations that constitute an “excused absence” from class. They are: 1) students who participate in a *documented* University sanctioned event, 2) students who have a *documented* death in the family, and 3) students who have received *documented* medical attention for an illness. Students who will be participating in a University sanctioned event should provide the instructor with a copy of the scheduled event. This documentation should be on University letterhead, signed by the coach/supervisor, and given to the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester. Please feel free to discuss with me any missed work that you feel your reasons for missing it warrants make-up work be assigned, but please be sure to contact me as soon as possible.

Grading scale

93–100: A
 90–92.9: A-
 87–89.9: B+
 83–86.9: B
 80–82.9: B-
 77–79.9: C+
 73–76.9: C
 70–72.9: C-
 67–69.9: D+
 60–66.9: D
 Below 60: E

Instructor and TA feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of the instructor and TA's intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-4357(HELP)** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

- **Grading and feedback:** For weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **7-10 days**.
- **Email:** The instructor and (or) the TA will try to reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days (often much sooner)**, but please follow-up with us, if you do not hear back from us in a timely manner. We sometimes get busy handling 'immediate' needs, but all of your needs are important to us, so reminders are very much appreciated.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful, kind, and courteous.

- **Writing style:** While there is no need to participate in class discussions as if you were writing a research paper, you should remember to write using good grammar, spelling, and punctuation. A more conversational tone is fine for non-academic topics.

- **Tone and civility:** Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online.
- **Citing your sources:** When we have academic discussions, please cite your sources to back up what you say. For the textbook or other course materials, list at least the title and page numbers. For online sources, include a link.
- **Backing up your work:** Consider composing your academic posts in a word processor, where you can save your work, and then copying into the Carmen discussion.

Academic integrity policy

Ohio State's academic integrity policy

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (studentconduct.osu.edu), and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the university's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct."

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the university's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by university rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the university's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- Committee on Academic Misconduct web page (go.osu.edu/coam)
- Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)

- Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity (go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules)

Additional details on academic integrity policy for course assignments

- **Quizzes:** You must take all quizzes yourself, without any external help or communication, unless otherwise directed by your instructor.
- **Document-based activities, analyses, and discussions:** Document-based activities, analyses, and discussions should be your own original work.

Copyright for instructional materials

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Statement on Title IX

All students and employees at Ohio State have the right to work and learn in an environment free from harassment and discrimination based on sex or gender, and the university can arrange interim measures, provide support resources, and explain investigation options, including referral to confidential resources.

If you or someone you know has been harassed or discriminated against based on your sex or gender, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual exploitation, you may find information about your rights and options at titleix.osu.edu or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleix@osu.edu. Title IX is part of the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) at Ohio State, which responds to all bias-motivated incidents of harassment and discrimination, such as race, religion, national origin and disability. For more information on OIE, visit equity.osu.edu or email equity@osu.edu.

Commitment to a diverse and inclusive learning environment

The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each

member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

This course adheres to The Principles of Community adopted by the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environment Sciences. These principles are located on the Carmen site for this course, and can also be found at <https://go.osu.edu/principlesofcommunity>. For additional information on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in CFAES, contact the CFAES Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://equityandinclusion.cfaes.ohio-state.edu/>). If you have been a victim of or a witness to a bias incident, you can report it online and anonymously (if you choose) at <https://studentlife.osu.edu/bias/report-a-bias-incident.aspx>.

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. No matter where you are engaged in distance learning, The Ohio State University's Student Life Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) is here to support you. If you find yourself feeling isolated, anxious or overwhelmed, on-demand resources are available at go.osu.edu/ccsondemand. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766, and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org. The Ohio State Wellness app is also a great resource available at go.osu.edu/wellnessapp.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Requesting accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's request process, managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a

timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of CarmenCanvas (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- Canvas accessibility (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- CarmenZoom accessibility (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)
- Collaborative course tools

COURSE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO REVISIONS)

Refer to the Carmen course for more details, including the assignments and their due dates.

Week	Date of the Week	Topics
1	Aug 24	Introduction to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
2	Aug 30	The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
3	Sept 6	Judicial Interpretation of NEPA; CEQ Regulations
4	Sept 13	EIA Phases of Development; State Environmental Policy Acts (SEPA's)
5	Sept 20	SEPA Model: The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); Institutions, Actors, and Environmental Policy
6	Sept 27	Federal Agencies; The US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA); EIA Documents
7	Oct 4	Agenda Setting, Power, and Interests; EIA Process & Planning and The 10-Step Model
8	Oct 11	Cumulative Effects; Autumn Session Break
9	Oct 18	Description of Affected Environment (DAE); Alternatives
10	Oct 25	Air Impacts; Noise Impacts

Week	Date of the Week	Topics
11	Nov 1	Surface Water Impacts
12	Nov 8	Soil and Groundwater Impacts
13	Nov 15	Biological Impacts
14	Nov 22	Visual Impacts; Social (Socioeconomic) Impact Assessment
15	Nov 29	Environmental Justice; Cultural Impacts
16	Dec 5	'Time Travel' week (optional)
Finals Week	Fri. Dec 10 – Th. Dec 16	There is <u>no final exam</u> for this course.