



SYLLABUS: ENR 5211 (32627 undergraduate section)

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SPRING SEMESTER 2023 – DELIVERY: ONLINE, ASYNCHRONOUS

Course overview

Instructor

Instructor: Sumia Mohamed

Email: mohamed.344@osu.edu

Office hours: by appointment

Mailbox: 210 Kottman Hall

Note: The syllabus may be updated as needed, although any changes are usually small adjustments to ensure the smooth running of the course or to better cover any international events that unfold during the semester.

Course description

This course covers the fundamental concepts of international environmental impact assessment (EIA), also known as impact assessment (IA), including the legal and institutional frameworks, professional practice and performance, and social and cultural contexts that shape IA's implementation worldwide.

This course aims to provide students with a broad understanding of IA and related processes as they are currently practiced by various world actors, such as nation-states (countries), Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), bilateral aid agencies, Export Credit Agencies (ECAs), the United Nations System, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). IA law archetypes (e.g., USA model; EU model; MDB safeguard policies, European Green Deal, EU Taxonomy, and Sustainable Finance, Vulnerability and Impact Assessment, Disaster Impact Assessments) are examined, including their relative strengths and weaknesses to achieve sustainability. This course covers both well-established and newly emerging forms of IA.

The dynamics of the complex international system that drive our globalized economy's impact on the environment is examined using a 'systems thinking' lens. Students will learn the 'systems thinking' conceptual model to identify patterns of systems behaviors that lead to positive and negative environmental outcomes and that can suggest ways to change system behavior for better outcomes. Students will be introduced to conceptual tools to effectively analyze existing practices and envision change in system structures to achieve sustainability. Students examine case studies of international significance throughout the semester to better connect course concepts to real world problems and solutions.

This course uses 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 International Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and related practices.
- Identify and describe the role of the various types of world actors influential within the international system of development and sustainability initiatives.
- Connect IA concepts to how countries and international organizations manage and make decisions that impact the environment.
- Recognize and articulate how environmental science, engineering, socioeconomic, environmental law, and policy fields of professional practice connect to international IA.
- Understand how people's (e.g., citizens; 'watchdog' organizations) engagement and empowerment with information can affect other world actors' actions, including through the rule of law.
- Understand the 'thinking in systems' conceptual model and how it can be applied to understand the complex system dynamics of international development projects and sustainability initiatives, identify system 'traps', and envision change to achieve sustainability by identifying leverage points for change.
- Connect with the IA professional practice community called the International Association for Impact Assessment (iaia.org).

Differential Expectations for Undergraduate and Graduate students

As a 5000-level course, ENR 5211 serves both undergraduate and graduate students. This section (32627) is designed for undergraduate students. A separate section offering (32628) is offered this semester concurrently to serve graduate students.

How This Course Works

Mode of delivery: This course is 100% online, asynchronous. There are no required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

Pace of online activities: This course is divided into **weekly modules** that are typically released one week ahead of time. Students are expected to keep pace with weekly deadlines but may schedule their efforts freely within that time frame. And please let me know whenever life circumstances occur for which adjustments to the assignment schedule would be helpful. I will do my best to make your studies in this course to be as low stress and enjoyable as possible.

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

Attendance and participation requirements: Research shows regular participation is one of the highest predictors of success. With that in mind, I have the following expectations for everyone's participation:

- **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*.
- **Participating in discussion forums: two or more 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. Some weeks we will not have discussion posts, to lighten the assignment load during busy times of the semester or just to provide some variety in the class activities.

Course materials and Technologies

Textbooks

Required:

Meadows, Donella H. 2008. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing Company, VT. ISBN-10: 1603580557; ISBN-13: 978-1603580557. Current est. cost: \$17

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

If you do not have access to the technology you need to succeed in this class, review options for technology and internet access at go.osu.edu/student-tech-access.

Required Software

Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Visit the [installing Office 365](https://go.osu.edu/office365help) (go.osu.edu/office365help) help article for full instructions.

CarmenCanvas Access

You will need to use [BuckeyePass](https://buckeyepass.osu.edu) (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 do each of the following:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the [BuckeyePass - Adding a Device](https://go.osu.edu/add-device) (go.osu.edu/add-device) help article for step-by-step instructions.
- 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.
- [Install the Duo Mobile application](https://go.osu.edu/install-duo) (go.osu.edu/install-duo) on 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 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

Technology Skills Needed for This Course

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

Technology Support

For help with your password, university email, CarmenCanvas, or any other technology issues, questions or requests, contact the IT Service Desk, which offers 24-hour support, seven days a week.

- **Self Service and Chat:** go.osu.edu/it
- **Phone:** [614-688-4357 \(HELP\)](tel:614-688-4357)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu

Grading and Faculty Response

Grades

Assignment or category	Percentage
(7) Thinking-In-Systems (TIS): quizzes that cover the textbook reading, videos, and other assignments related to the Thinking in Systems conceptual framework.	20%
(7) Newsfeed Discussions: class discussions covering current events that relate to the week's upcoming lecture topic.	20%
(7) Case Studies: quizzes to assess the student's understanding of Impact Assessment related case studies. Provides an in-depth look at documents and processes exemplifying the professional practice of impact assessment within different governance structures and organizations and for a variety of environmental problems and solutions.	20%
(10) Concept Checks: quizzes to assess the student's understanding of the in-depth coverage IA-related concepts and processes as they are presented in the weekly lectures and as supported by associated materials. Topics are chosen to represent environmental problems, solutions, and related IA practices occurring in different regions of the world.	40%
Total	100%

** Please see the Carmen course site for list of assignments and their due dates. Assignments will be adjusted as needed during the semester with advance notice and to best support your learning experience. I also plan to have a couple extra credit assignments along the way.*

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. 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).

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, an alternative written report assignment may be assigned.

Typically, there are 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 University sanctioned events should provide the instructor with a copy of the scheduled events and those classes that will be missed. This documentation should be on University letterhead, signed by the coach/supervisor, and provided to the instructor within the first two weeks of the semester.

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

Faculty feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course.

Grading and feedback

For assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **10 to 14 days**. The majority of assignments are automatically graded, so you will have immediate feedback for those assignments throughout the course.

E-mail

I will try to reply to e-mails within **24 to 48 hours on school days (often much sooner)**, but please follow-up with me if you do not hear back from me in a timely manner. I sometimes get busy handling 'immediate' needs, but all of your needs are important to me, so reminders are very much appreciated.

Discussion board

I will try to check and reply to messages in the discussion board every **24 to 48 hours on school days**, but don't hesitate to reach out to me in a follow-up email if I don't respond to something in a timely manner. And anything that needs more immediate attention should be sent to me via my OSU email address provided on page one of this syllabus.

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 and thoughtful.

- **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. I will provide specific guidance for discussions on controversial or personal topics.
- **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](http://studentconduct.osu.edu) (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](http://go.osu.edu/coam) (go.osu.edu/coam)
- [Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity](http://go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions) (go.osu.edu/ten-suggestions)
- [Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity](http://go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules) (go.osu.edu/cardinal-rules)

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.

Creating an Environment Free from Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

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 mental health resources](https://go.osu.edu/ccsondemand) (go.osu.edu/ccsondemand) are available. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at [614- 292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). **24-hour emergency help** is available through the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline website](https://www.suicidpreventionlifeline.org) (suicidpreventionlifeline.org) or by calling [1-800-273-8255\(TALK\)](tel:1-800-273-8255). [The Ohio State Wellness app](https://go.osu.edu/wellnessapp) (go.osu.edu/wellnessapp) is also a great resource.

Accessibility Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Requesting Accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. 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 \(SLDS\)](#). After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. 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.

Disability Services Contact Information

- Phone: [614-292-3307](tel:614-292-3307)
- Website: slds.osu.edu
- Email: slds@osu.edu
- In person: [Baker Hall 098, 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 as early as possible.

- [CarmenCanvas accessibility](http://go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility) (go.osu.edu/canvas-accessibility)
- Streaming audio and video
- [CarmenZoom accessibility](http://go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility) (go.osu.edu/zoom-accessibility)

Course schedule (subject to revisions)

Week	Dates: week beginning	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 9	Introduction to International Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Thinking in Systems: from the beginning of the textbook to the end of Chapter 1: The Basics.
2	Jan 16	World Actors & the Post-World War II Era (Part 1). Thinking in Systems: A Brief Visit to the Systems Zoo (Chapter 2).
3	Jan 23	World Actors & the Post-World War II Era (Part 2). Thinking in Systems: Why Systems Work So Well (Chapter 3).
4	Jan 30	Afghanistan: Infrastructure & land management, USAID, & UNEP. Thinking in Systems: Why Systems Surprise Us (Chapter 4).
5	Feb 6	The European Union (Part 1): EIA and SEA Directives. Thinking in Systems: Systems Traps & Opportunities (Chapter 5).
6	Feb 13	The European Union (Part 2): The European Green Deal. Thinking in Systems: Leverage Points (Chapters 6).
7	Feb 20	CITs (Part 2): Romania, The Iron Gates, and Natura 2000 system. Thinking in Systems: Living in Systems (Chapter 7).
8	Feb 27	CITs (Part 1): Ukraine: Damage and Loss Assessment and Humanitarian Aid.
9	Mar 6	Sudan (Part 1): The Nile, Dams, & EIA.
	Mar 13	Spring Break
10	Mar 20	Sudan (Part 2): The Blue Nile Basin & Vulnerability and Impact Assessment.
11	Mar 27	Kenya and Uganda: Climate Risk Assessment (CRA).
12	Apr 3	Democratic Republic of the Congo (Part 1): Post-conflict assessment.

Week	Dates: week beginning	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
13	Apr 10	Democratic Republic of the Congo (Part 2): The Virunga.
14	Apr 17	Disasters, Haiti, and Eco-DRR
15	Apr 24	Last day of classes: Extra credit opportunity.
Final Exams Week	Apr 26-May 2 (W-Tu)	No Final Exam.

** Please see the Carmen course site for list of a more detailed list of topics and assignments and their due dates. Topics of study and assignments will be adjusted as needed during the semester with advance notice and to best support your learning experience.*