

## ENVS 302 - Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Courses Syllabus: Fall, 2024

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### **Required Text:**

Socha, T.M. (2001) A Technical Guide for Performing and Writing Phase I Environmental Site Assessments. San Jose: Writer's Press Club.

### **Course Description:**

Introduce the principle and method for Phase I Environmental Site Assessments; culture students' practical ability to conduct Phase I Environmental Site Assessments.

### **Instructional Method:**

Students do Phase I Environmental Site Assessments and write the final reports. **The course is fully online.**

### **Course Objective:**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment;
2. present the results of Phase I Environmental Site Assessment in a professional written report.

### **Timeline:**

Aug 26-Sep 6 finish "unit 1" in D2L and find the first site

Sep 9- 13 finish unit 2; Sep 16-Sep 20 finish unit 3;

Se 23-Sep 27 finish unit 4; Oct 1-Oct 4 finish unit 5;

Oct 7-11 finish unit 6; Oct 14-18 finish unit 7 and **submit report 1**;

Oct 21-25 finish unit 8, find the second site;

Oct 28-Dec 13 conduct investigation in the second site and **submit report 2**;

### **Evaluation:**

Finish two reports and **submit to the assignment submission folder in D2L** on time (500 points total):

A  $\geq 90\%$  B  $\geq 80\%$  C  $\geq 70\%$  D  $\geq 60\%$  F  $< 60\%$

The first report must be turned in before **5 pm on October 19**. Feedback will be given to the first report which can be applied to improve the second report. The second report must be submitted before **5 pm on December 13**. Late reports will receive a "C" or less.

### **Grades will depend on:**

1. Quality and thoroughness of the investigations;
2. Quality, thoroughness, and professional appearance of the ESA reports.

### How To Proceed in this Course:

1. Read the book and the assignments in each unit completely, from which you can get basic ideas about how to conduct Phase I ESA and how to write final reports.

2. Phase I ESA will be conducted on two sites during the semester. Usually, these sites should be **unoccupied** properties. Sites are typically abandoned **commercial operations not residential property**, such as old gas stations, restaurants, laundries, etc. You need to get permission from the site owner, operator, manager, or managing real estate company before you begin the investigation. If you can, **try not to use sites in Commerce, TX as our previous students have done investigation on many sites in Commerce, TX. If you can not find any site, let me know as soon as possible.**

4. During the investigation, you need to determine all of the past uses of the property **and the adjacent properties**, all the past owners, any hazardous chemicals that were used or may have been used on the property **and on adjacent properties**, and the potential for such contaminants to migrate within the subsurface of the property. Your investigation and report **may include but not limited to** (when possible):

(1) Historic and current use of property and Information of environmental settings

(a) A title search, who own it now, who once owned it, when, how long ...**back to 1940**;

(b) Previous environmental assessment record, if applicable;

(c) Building permits;

(d) Street directory and zoning records;

(e) Visits to regulatory agency, such as the fire department, EPA and city offices, that may have record of any hazardous chemicals used on the property or on adjacent properties;

(f) Aerial photos of the site;

(g) Property sketch;

(h) Proximity to population centers; environmentally sensitive areas, etc.

(i) A topographic map which may be obtained from United States Geological Survey (USGS);

(j) Sanborn maps, if possible;

(k) A description of the site's geology, such as soil and rock type, native plants, etc. Information may be gotten from U.S. Department of Agriculture soil survey maps;

(l) A description of the site's hydrology, such as the depth, flow rate, directions of groundwater, information may be gotten from well driller, well maps, soil survey maps and state agency.

(2) Complete description of your site visits and **take photographs** of items of interest. Site visit provides an opportunity to get more information. An inspection of all aspects of the property, such as exterior site conditions and inside of the building. There are many things to look for, depending on the nature of your site:

(a) Type or condition of vegetation, areas where grass doesn't grow because of chemical pollution;

(b) Drain pipes sticking out the back of buildings;

(c) Gullies; pools, or lagoons;

(d) Dead critters;

(e) Pipes sticking out of the ground;

(f) Underground storage tanks;

(g) Stained curbs around the property;

(h) Hauled-in dirt or gravel;

(i) Mounds where something may be buried;

(j) Odors

(k) Wells including dry wells, irrigation wells, abandoned wells...

- (l) Transformers and old light ballasts may suggest the presence of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs);
- (m) Waste water and other liquid discharges from the site;
- (n) Any other unusual or unnatural features you might observe.

(3) Interviews with the previous and present owner of the property, with owners of adjacent properties, and with neighbors and/or long-term employers to get further information of the sites. Interviews may be conducted prior or during site visit. Always document names, relevance to the property, time, date, form of communication, etc. Questions depend on the characteristics of the sites which may be related to:

- (a) History of the site;
- (b) Nature of the site;
- (c) Waste disposal practices;
- (d) Past environmental emergencies, etc.

5. **Record everything** you do in a “diary” and **turn it in with your report**: when and where you do all of the above, who you talk to, a summary of the information, or if it failed to discover any information.

6. Follow the guidelines of the text book and submit the assignments on time.

7. Other things need to keep in mind: due dates; try your best to do investigations then you will not have “no data available”; share the sources of information with your classmates and save them for future use; grades depend on the quality, thoroughness of the investigations and presentation of final reports (professional looking, tidy, nice format, etc).

### **Possible Helpful Recourses**

#### Property Assessors:

US Property Assessors  
Collin County  
Dallas County  
Tarrant County  
Denton County

#### Maps:

Bing.com (use aerial view)  
Topo Maps:  
US Geological Survey  
USGS  
FEMA  
National Wildlife Refuge  
North Central Texas Council of Governments  
National Wetland Inventory  
Texas Well Reports  
US EPA Envirofacts Query  
TCEQ Central Registry  
TCEQ PST Database

Natural Resource Conservation (Soil Information)  
USDA Web Soil Survey  
Texas Aquifers  
TX Railroad Commission  
Coastal Barrier Unit Maps  
Endangered Species  
National Register of Historic Places

Regulatory:

EPA  
CFR Title 40-Protection of Environment  
OSHA – 29 CFR  
Texas Administrative Code (TAC)  
TX Drycleaners  
TX Drycleaners Database  
EPA regions and state links  
Texas Asbestos Program  
HUD Lead Laws  
Environmental Information Association

**Attendance**

**The teaching/learning materials will be posted in D2L. Students can access to those materials anytime. However, assignments and reports are expected to be done on time. Again, if you have troubles to do those assignments on time, please discuss the situation with the instructor timely.**

**University Procedures:**

“A&M-Commerce requires the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories. Exceptions may be made by faculty where warranted. Faculty have management over their classrooms. Students not using face-coverings can be required to leave class. Repetitive refusal to comply can be reported to the Office of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities as a violation of the student Code of Conduct. “

“Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.”

**Students with Disabilities:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities.

If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services, Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 Email: Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

**Academic Integrity:**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

**Nondiscrimination Notice:**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**Student Conduct:**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

**Early Intervention for First Year Students:**

Early intervention for freshmen is designed to communicate the University's interest in their success and a willingness to participate fully to help students accomplish their academic objectives. The university through faculty advisors and mentors will assist students who may be experiencing difficulty to focus on improvement and course completion. This process will allow students to be knowledgeable about their academic progress early in the semester and will provide faculty and staff with useful data for assisting students and enhancing retention. Grade reports will be mailed by the end of the sixth week of the semester.

**Campus carry rules:**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

**Technology Requirement:**

At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

**D2L Access and Log in Information**

This course will be facilitated using D2L, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to myLeo, then select Apps, and then select myleo online (D2L Brightspace).

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu. If you are having technical difficulty with any part of D2L Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778.

**Interaction with Instructor Statement**

If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course, please contact me via email. Generally, emails will be answered within 24 hrs. If I can not answer emails on time, I will let you know in advance.

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

**AI Statement**

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>