

ENVS 403 Environmental Ethics & Law Courses Syllabus: Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Lin Guo

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Classroom: **online course**

Office location: Science building 352

Office hrs: MW 9-10 am; 12-2 pm

Fax: 903-886-5997

Time: 8/20/26-12/11/26

Required text Book:

1. Selected Environmental Law Statutes, Educational Edition. St. Paul: West Group (Current edition or year or two old is O.K.)
2. Kubasek, N.K., G. S. Silverman (2005) Environmental Law, 7th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ:Prentice Hall (Older or newer edition is O.K.)
3. Pojman, L.P., (2000) Global Environmental Ethics. Mountain View, CA : Mayfield Publishing Company

Course Description:

This course is designed to acquaint the student with numerous ethical issues and perspectives confronting society and environmental scientists and their influence on the development of environmental policy and regulation. Existing and proposed policies and regulations are examined as to their ethical background.

To be specific:

This course is designed to provide you with a practical (not moral) overview of environmental ethics, and a practical and working knowledge of environmental laws and regulations. In the first part of the course, you will learn about the structural framework of our legal system and how policies and laws are made and administered. We will then look more specifically at the political and economic realities involved in creating and administering environmental laws.

During the greater part of the course, we will look closely at the environmental laws and regulations themselves. The viewpoint of this study will not be that of lawyers, but that of people who are responsible, on behalf of a corporation, industrial facility, environmental consulting firm, or governmental agency, for overseeing compliance with state and Federal environmental regulations.

The mass of material and information in Environmental law and regulations is overwhelming--to EVERYONE! The object is not to memorize much of any of it, but to get an overview of the layout of the mass of material and--here's the important part--to be able to quickly find precisely what you need. You will also learn how to stay aware of the continuous changes to environmental laws and regulations that apply to you and your employer or client.

The course will be fairly intensive, and you will have to spend some time finding things in the appropriate legal references---primarily in your text, in the Code of Federal Regulations, and in the Texas Administrative Code. You will want to do this via Internet, but if you are on campus, you may find it worthwhile to also look, at least once, at the hard copies found in the library. As a result of this course, you will develop an excellent sense of the entire scheme of the environmental regulatory system in a way that will prove invaluable within most environmental careers.

Instructional Method:

The course will be fully online

Learning Objectives:

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

- A. Describe the U.S. and state-level legislative, executive, and judicial framework and hierarchy under which environmental laws and regulations are created and administered.
- B. Predict possible economic, political, societal, and environmental effects of existing and proposed environmental laws.
- C. Outline the essential provisions of all the major environmental laws.
- D. Locate and summarize the detailed Federal and state environmental regulations that apply to specific corporate, industrial, or client situations.

Evaluations:	12 homework	1200 points	A $\geq$ 90%
	15 Quizzes	1500 points	B $\geq$ 80%
	2 Exams	200 points	C $\geq$ 70%
	12 register summaries	60 points	D $\geq$ 60%
	Total	2960 points	F<60%

Homework, quiz and register summaries are due **by 12 pm of each Friday**. Late submission will get 0.

The details about the homework and register summaries are on D2L.

Topics:

Week 1-2 (Aug 20-28) : Source of Environmental Law & Regulations--The framework under which environmental laws and regulations are created and administered.

Week 3 (Aug 31-Sep 4): The Litigation Process--The court system under which environmental controversies are decided.

Week 4 (Sep 7-11): Environmental Idealism vs Politics and Economics--The realities of trying to protect our environment.

Week 5 (Sep 14-18): Overview of Environmental Law--A brief description of the major environmental

statutes. An introduction to the CFR, TAC, and Federal Register.

Week 6 (Sep 21-25): National Environmental Policy Act--which mandates that Federal agencies must consider the environmental impacts of their actions.

Week 7 (Sep 28-Oct 2): Clean Air Act--which mandates regional air quality standards as well as specific emission limits from industrial processes.

Week 8 (Oct 5-9): Clean Water Act--which mandates water quality criteria for bodies of water as well as specific effluent limitations for individual industries.

Week 9 (Oct 12-16): Safe Drinking Water Act--by which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets the maximum contaminant levels of our drinking water.

Week 10 (Oct 19-23): Toxicology & FIFRA--A look at how the toxic effect of various chemical is determined, and then an examination of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

Week 11 (Oct 26-30): Toxic Substances Control Act--which banned PCBs and was designed to fill in gaps left by other toxic regulation. **First Exam**

Week 12 (Nov 2-6): Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)--Sets the standards of exposure (mostly air) that are allowed in the industrial workplace to provide worker protection from toxic substances.

Week 13 (Nov 9-13): Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)--Deals with the management of solid wastes and establishes a "cradle to grave" management system for the treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste.

Week 14 (Nov 16-20): Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, "Superfund")--provides for the cleanup and containment of abandoned hazardous waste dump sites.

Week 16 (Dec 30-4): Endangered Species Act--Protects endangered and threatened species and their ecosystems.

Week 17 (Dec 7-11): Mining and Land Use Laws--Various laws that act to maintain public lands in a manner that will protect the quality relative to scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values. **Final Exam**

University Procedures:

Attendance:

The teaching/learning materials will be posted in D2L. Students have access to those materials anytime. However, all the assignments and quizzes are expected to be finished on time.

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure

13.99.99.R0.01. <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

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

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 East Texas A&M University 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:

East Texas A&M University 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>

Campus carry rules:

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University 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

D2L Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using D2L, the learning management system used by East Texas A&M University. 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 or office time. Generally, emails will be answered within 24 hrs. If I can not answer emails on time, I will let you know in advance.

AI Statement

East Texas A&M University 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>