

**ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS
AGECON 430/ECON 430 - FALL 2020
SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE –
WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Kevin J. Bacon
Office Phone: 309/298-1084
Office Fax: 309/298-2280
Email: KJ-Bacon@wiu.edu

Office: 309 Knoblauch
Office Hours: MWF 10–11, M 1-2 or by appointment.
Virtual Office Hours Preferred!

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATION

AGECON 430/ECON 430 is a cross listed course. We will meet in 307 Knoblauch Hall from 9:00 – 9:50 MWF. In addition, course materials will be made available through Western Online.

EMAIL

Email is the preferred way to get in touch with me. **Please be sure to include the class number in any emails** either in the subject line or the body of your email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES

This interdisciplinary course examines economic issues involving the interactions between humans and the environment. The course addresses conflicts in land, air, and water use and the role of assigned property rights and public policies in resolving environmental problems. Not open to students with credit in ECON 430. The prerequisite is either *AGRI 220 Introduction to Agribusiness Concepts* or *Economics 232 Principles of Microeconomics*. *If you do not have the prerequisite, you are advised to drop the course.*

TEXT

Tietenberg, Tom and Lynne Lewis. (2016). *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*. Tenth Edition. Routledge Publishing Company. ISBN 10# 013347969-2 ISBN 13# 978-0-13-347969-0. While the book is available through the bookstore, online prices are likely to be significantly less expensive. Please note the bookstore will have the 11th edition in stock. You are free to use it but the 10th edition is sufficient and will be much less expensive.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To identify important natural resource management issues.
- To evaluate basic concepts such as supply, demand, and implicit prices as related to natural resource issues.
- To evaluate the applicability of alternative economic concepts such as public choice to the resolution of natural resource problems.
- To analyze specific natural resource and environmental problems such as pollution control, energy and water issues, and other economic concerns pertinent to agriculture and the environment.

USE OF CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

As a courtesy to other students and to the instructor, all cell phones should be turned off or on vibrate prior to class. Continued disregard of this policy may result in ejection from the course. If, due to medical or public safety concerns, a student needs an exception to this policy he/she should inform the instructor prior to class. Cell phones may not be used for any reason during an exam. Texting is not allowed during class and repeated violations will lead to dismissal from the course with an assigned grade of F.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance in class is expected. It is your responsibility to get any missed material from a classmate. To be able to participate effectively you will have to read the assignments before class. Plan not only to show up, but to ask questions, take notes, to think, and to speak.

USE OF TOBACCO

Use of tobacco in any form is prohibited in university buildings/classrooms.

ONLINE ABSENCE REPORTING SYSTEM

The university has implemented an online absence reporting system. Please note that this system does not excuse your absence – it merely documents. It is still up to the instructor to excuse the absence. For more information please see: <http://wiu.edu/oars>. The Student Health Center no longer issues absence forms.

IMPORTANT DATES

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Sept. 7 | - | Labor Day – No Class Day– No Class Nov. 1 |
| | - | Last Day to drop with a W |
| Nov. 3 | - | Election Day – No Class |
| Nov. 23-27 | - | Thanksgiving Break |
| Nov. 30 – Dec. 11- | | Classes will all be online |
| Dec. 16 | - | Final Exam – 8:00- 9:50 |

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Participation: Students are expected to regularly attend class and to actively participate in discussions.

Academic Integrity: The rules and regulations outlined in the University's policy on academic integrity are applied to this course.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Detailed information regarding student rights and responsibilities can be found at <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the posted information.

Special Accommodations: If you need special accommodations, please feel free to stop by and discuss your needs or contact Disability Support Services at 298-2512.

GRADING POLICY - Undergraduates

The course grade will be based on the following factors, with weightings as indicated:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------|
| Exam I | 20% | A = 93% or above | C- = 70-72.99% |
| Exam II | 20% | A- = 90-92.99% | D+ = 67-69.99% |
| Comprehensive Final Exam | 30% | B+ = 87-89.99% | D = 63-66.99% |
| Quizzes and Homework | 10% | B = 83-86.99% | D- = 60-62.99% |
| Article Reviews (3) | 15% | B- = 80-82.99% | F = <60% |
| <u>Presentation</u> | <u>5%</u> | C+ = 77-79.99% | |
| | | C = 73-76.99% | |
| Total | 100% | | |

GRADING POLICY - Graduates

The course grade will be based on the following factors, with weightings as indicated:

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|------------------|
| Exam I | 20% | A = 90% or above |
| Exam II | 20% | B = 80-89.99% |
| Comprehensive Final Exam | 30% | C = 70-79.99% |
| Quizzes and Homework | 10% | D = 60-69.99% |
| Article Reviews (2) | 10% | F =< 61% |
| Research Paper | 10% | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Total | 100% | |

Grade breaking points may be lowered, but in no case will they be raised. These breaking points will be evaluated only after final numerical grades have been calculated. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be docked 10% per day (including the due date.) Assignments will not be accepted after the homework has been discussed in class.

Attention Education Majors. To meet state certification requirements, Education majors are required to receive a grade of a "C-" or better in this course.

Exams. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice and short essays. The exact nature of the exams will be indicated one week in advance. Three exams are planned during the semester (two mid-terms and a final). Under no circumstances will exams be given early. The final will be comprehensive. Makeup exams will be given only in extreme situations.

Article Reviews. Each undergraduate student will write (3) 2-3 page papers over a particular issue related to the class as found in a journal or popular press. The first half or so of the paper should consist of a synopsis outlining the issue (free from personal value judgements). The second half should be your view of whether or not you agree with the article and why. Your argument for or against the article should incorporate the concepts we have covered in class. Graduate students will be required to write 2 article reviews.

Research Paper. Graduate students will be required to write a 7-10 page (typed, double-spaced) policy paper discussing a "significant issue" in environmental economics (the topic of "hydraulic fracturing" is reserved for class discussion). While the paper's topic may be controversial, it is expected that the student will present both sides of the issue in a fair and balanced manner. The issue selected must be approved by your instructor before writing the paper. Details on issue paper topics will be distributed at a later date. The paper should be well organized and should use section headings. The writing component (format, grammar, spelling, etc.) will account for approximately 25% of the grade for the paper. Use a 12-point font-size, Times New Roman or similar style font, and one-inch margins on all sides. The 7-10 page requirement relates only to the text -- title page and other attachments are not included in the 7-10 page requirement. Be sure to include in-text source identifications and a *bibliography* page. The paper is due on or before November 6, 2020.

Class Presentation. Each student will give a brief discussion on at least one of their issue papers. These presentations will serve as the basis for at least one on-line quiz and will be considered "fair game" on the final exam. The presentations will be scheduled during the last three weeks of class.

Quizzes and Homework. Participation in each class is both encouraged and expected. The timing and number of quizzes will be determined in part by the level of participation in class discussions/activities and attendance. All of the quizzes will be administered online.

ACCREDITATION

The School of Agriculture is housed in the College of Business and Technology which is accredited by AACSB-International.

NOTICES

Please be advised that this syllabus is tentative. All classes are different and we may or may not be able to address all of the content areas or stick with the anticipated number of exams and/or assignments. Any deviations from the syllabus will be announced as soon as possible.

COURSE OUTLINE:

- I. Introduction and Basic Methods
 - A. What are Resources and what is Natural Resource Economics?
 - B. Chapter 1 – Visions of the Future
 - C. Chapter 2 – Economic Approach: Property Rights, Externalities, and Environmental Problems.
 - C. Chapter 3 – Evaluating Tradeoffs: Cost-Benefit Analysis
 - D. Chapter 4 – Valuing the Environment – Methods
 - E. Chapter 5 – Dynamic Efficiency and Sustainable Development

- II. Natural Resources Applications
 - A. Chapter 6 – Depletable Resource Allocation

Exam I

- B. Chapter 7 – Energy – Transition
- C. Chapter 8 – Recyclable Resources
- D. Chapter 9 – Water
- E. Chapter 10 – Land
- F. Chapter 11 – Forestry (selected sections)
- G. Chapter 12 – Fisheries (selected sections)

Exam II

- III. Environmental Applications (selected sections)
 - A. Chapter 13 – Ecosystem Goods and Services
 - B. Chapter 14 – Economics of Pollution Control – An Overview
 - C. -Chapter 15 – Stationary-Source Local and Regional Air Pollution
 - D. Chapter 16 – Climate Change
 - E. Chapter 17 – Mobile Source Air Pollution
 - F. Chapter 18 – Water Pollution
 - G. Chapter 19 – Toxic Substances and Environmental Justice

- IV. Student Presentations

Final Exam

Course Adjustments Due to the Pandemic

Course Adjustments Due to Pandemic

- Facial masks must be worn in class – no exceptions.
- Attendance will be taken for face to face classes to assist with contact tracing should this become necessary.
- I will be limiting my time on campus and will be working from home as much as possible. I will respond to emails as quickly as I can.
- All assignments will be completed online. No hardcopy of assignments will be accepted.
- All assignments will be graded electronically.
- No hardcopies of excuse letters/Drs. notes will be accepted. If you need to provide a copy to me, scan it or take a picture of it and email it to me at kj-bacon@wiu.edu.
- For help with any assignments, email your content and question to me rather than bringing in your computer.
- In person office hours will still be available but **virtual meetings will be preferred.**
- All exams will be online.
- Student presentations will occur during the last two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to use Zoom or Google Hangouts to record their presentations. Optionally, students may add sound to their PowerPoint slides using the Record Audio feature. Students are NOT to use Google Slides for adding sound (technical limitations). Google Slides may be used to create the presentation, as long as the presentation is recorded using either Zoom or Hangouts (more detail will be provided in class). Sound can be added directly to PowerPoint but this can be more complicated if one or more students is using an Apple computer.

Potential Disruptions to Face-to-Face Classes

- It is the intent of WIU to offer face-to-face classes where possible throughout the fall. However, there may be a period where individual faculty members (including myself) will have to self-isolate.
- There is a risk that the university will have to return to all online course before the semester is over.
- Any disruptions requiring me to move my classes to an online format (whether briefly or for an extended period) will be handled by moving content to Western Online in an asynchronous format. Course notes will be supplemented by brief videos as relevant in such a situation. If we move back as a university to all online, my courses will be offered as an asynchronous online class with weekly check-ins to review key concepts and for discussion. Additional discussion boards may be added as needed.

Positive Actions You Can Take

- Wear your masks when around others and encourage others to do the same.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Think about the risk of social interactions with others – minimize as much as possible.
- Understand we are all in this together. Have patience with everyone as we adjust to this change in our environment.
- Complete the University's Self Check before coming to campus each day at wiu.edu/Selfcheck/