



IMPROVE LIFE.

DEPARTMENT OF

**GEOGRAPHY,
ENVIRONMENT
& GEOMATICS**

1220 – Human Impact on the Environment | winter 2024

HUMAN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

GEOG*1220 | Winter 2024 PROVISIONAL OUTLINE

Department of Geography,
Environment and Geomatics |
University of Guelph

Course Description

This course provides foundational understanding in the societal dimensions and drivers of environmental issues. Our goal is to understand how some of the world's most pressing environmental issues - climate change, biodiversity loss, water pollution, and so on - have their roots in social, political and economic institutions and processes. We will achieve this goal by integrating perspectives from environmental and social sciences.

The course is best described in two parts. First, we review basic concepts that will help us to think about, or conceptualize, human-environment relationships. Here, we provide an introduction to ideas in environmental governance and environmental justice. Second, we will explore a range of key issues around resource use and environmental degradation, with particular emphasis on food, energy, and water systems. Throughout the course we will contrast issues and management approaches in various countries around the world, but with emphasis on Canadian and North American examples.

Course Organization

This course includes a combination of lectures and small group seminars.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe environmental changes from a biophysical perspective using the language of earth system sciences (e.g. feedback loops, open/closed systems, nutrient cycles, etc.)
2. Identify, apply, and evaluate different theories explaining what drives human impacts on the environment
3. Identify, apply, and evaluate approaches to managing human impacts on environment
4. Synthesize diverse sources of knowledge to communicate to varied audiences about real-world, place-based environmental issues

Readings & Resources

There is no textbook for this class. Required readings (journal articles, book chapters, reports) and other required course materials (e.g., media articles, podcasts and films) will be available through course link via the Ares library Tab.



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Assessments (provisional-subject to change)

- *Seminar participation & engagement: 25%
- *Research Journal & policy memo assignment: 50%
- *Final exam: 25%

University of Guelph Policy Statements

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 7 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.

More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the



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responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from



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responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

[The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g. final exam or major assignment).

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/> <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives.

Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.