University of Guelph, Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics

GEOG*4230 Environmental Impact Assessment
Winter 2021

Instructor: Marcus Edino, PhD. (medino@uoguelph.ca)
Classroom: Online/Remote (via Zoom)
Office Hours: Thurs 5:45-6:45pm (Please email for an appointment)
Teaching Assistant: Gideon Binobo - gbinobo@uoguelph.ca (please email for an appointment)
Course Credit Weight: 0.5
Prequisite(s): GEOG*3210
Equate(s): ENVS*4220

ABOUT THE COURSE
The aim of this course is to assist you in acquiring a foundational understanding of the contextual, conceptual, operational and legislative foundations of environmental impact assessment (EIA) in Canada, and its many forms within different Canadian regulatory regimes. It is also to understand different career opportunities and perspectives in EIA. The course will also introduce you to EIA from international perspectives to give you a basic understanding given that the department is preparing you to become global leaders that will impact the world beyond Canada. This course is designed to improve students’ skills in the areas of critical and creative thinking, literacy, global understanding, communication, and professional and ethical behaviour as future leaders.

APPROACH
The course is structured around three components: lectures, presentation and discussion groups.

• Lectures will provide an overview of key topics and highlight important themes.
• Weekly presentation and discussion groups will build students’ confidence especially in the 21st century where presentation skill is a must to survive competition. The weekly presentations and discussion groups will promote teamwork, encourage and facilitate more in-depth peer-to-peer learning on lecture topics.
• This course will be delivered entirely online with synchronous and asynchronous mix.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE COURSE
At the end of the course, you can expect to have acquired the following:

• An understanding of the role of EIA in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (2030 Agenda)
• Succinct writing skills in the communication of EIA policy matter to senior management and diverse set of audience
• An understanding of EIA as a core framework for environmental planning
• An understanding of regulatory regimes and their key elements as they relate to EIA
• Knowledge of environmental impact assessment procedures, techniques, outputs, and issues in Canada at the federal, provincial and territorial levels
• An understanding of EIA as a technical, social and political process and experience with EIA documentation
• An understanding of the strengths and limitations of EIA within the context of environmental management and governance
• Knowledge of EIA legislation and regulations that apply in Canada
• Knowledge of EIA processes, legislation and regulations that apply in different Canadian jurisdictions and international contexts
TEXT BOOK AND ASSIGNED READINGS

Readings will be assigned in advance of each lecture, including textbook chapters and supplementary readings. The course textbook- which is highly recommended to purchase and is available at the University bookstore is:


Supplementary readings will be available on the course website (Courselink).

CLASS FORMAT

Each weekly class will have the following format:

7-7:10 pm- Logistics and assignment information and questions
7:10-8:30 pm- Lecture
8:30-8:40 pm- Break
8:40-9:00 pm- Presentation
9:00-9:45 pm- Discussion group summary presentations and discussions

COURSE EVALUATION

This section briefly describes assignments and the final exam. Additional details for each component will be provided on the course web site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Value (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature review assignment (Due Feb 4th, 2021)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation, attendance, and participation plus attendance at Guest lectures (Weekly)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA Policy Briefing Note Assignment (Due March 4th, 2021)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test (March 25th, 2021)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam (Take home) (7th – 14th April, 2020 @ 11:59pm)</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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LECTURE, SEMINAR, AND READINGS SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Textbook Readings*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 14</td>
<td>Lecture 1- Course introduction – EIA Overview</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 21</td>
<td>Lecture 2 – EIA Policy communication: Introduction to Briefing Notes</td>
<td>To be posted on courselink</td>
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<td>Guest Lecture: Dr. Joseph Ayeni, LLB, PMP. Manager, Government of Alberta.</td>
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<td>Thursday, January 28</td>
<td>Lecture 3- Canadian EIA legislation and governance</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 4</td>
<td>Lecture 4- The role of Screening and Scoping in EIA</td>
<td>Chapters 4-5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lit Review Assignment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Lecture Title</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 11</td>
<td>Lecture 5- EIA’s role in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals</td>
<td>To be posted on courselink</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 18</td>
<td>NO LECTURE- Reading Week</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, February 25</td>
<td>Lecture 6- Effects assessment / Cumulative effects assessment</td>
<td>Chapters 6</td>
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<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 4</td>
<td>Lecture 7- Mitigation</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Briefing Note Assignment Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 11</td>
<td>Lecture 8- Significance determination</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 18</td>
<td>Lecture 9 - The Duty to Consult and accommodate Indigenous peoples Guest Lecture</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Thursday, March 25</td>
<td>Lecture 10- EIA follow-up Test (after the lecture)</td>
<td>Chapters 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 1</td>
<td>Lecture 11- Public consultation</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, April 8</td>
<td>Lecture 12- EIA and Disaster / Rapid Environmental Assessment in Disaster Practitioner Panel discussion- EIA perspectives and career opportunities (panel members TBA)</td>
<td>To be posted on courselink</td>
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*Note: Other readings might be assigned to accompany the textbook readings. Details of such readings will be provided on the Courselink page.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSESSMENTS**

1. **Literature Review: The role of environmental impact assessment in the 21st century (Due on February 4, 2021)**

As a student taking the environmental impact assessment (EIA) course in a prestigious department, the world is excitedly looking up to you to minimize the environmental and social impact of developments in the nearest future. It is therefore important that you become familiar with EIA as well as its opportunities and challenges internationally. This is because EIA is not just about Canada. Since this course is preparing you to become future global leaders, it is essential that you understand EIA in the 21st century. For this assignment therefore, you will describe and critically assess (contrast/synthesize) peer-reviewed journal articles related to the following topic: **The role of environmental impact assessment in the 21st century.** The assignment consists of the following tasks:

   1. Select search terms that can be used to identify relevant peer-reviewed journal articles.
   2. Search for and identify at least five relevant peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2014 and 2021.
   3. Write a literature review that compares and contrasts the five selected journal articles you identify.
   4. The five articles (published between 2014-2021) should focus on different countries with at least 2 focusing on countries in the Global South (developing countries) and 2 in the Global North (developed countries). If in doubt, please send an email to the instructor. You are encouraged to select one country per continent.

When you are reviewing your articles and writing up your literature review consider the following questions.
Considering all the articles:

- What is the geographical area of interest or focus?
- What do the articles tell us about EIA?
- How do the articles relate to each other?
- Are the findings similar or different? Do they confirm or contradict each other?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the articles?
- What are the EIA opportunities and challenges across the various jurisdictions and implications for responsible resource development in the 21st century?
- What are your recommendations and conclusion.

Your review should include relevant titles, headings and subheadings not limited to an introduction, main body, and conclusion, and a list of references. Please use 12 font, and single or 1.5 spacing. The maximum word limit is 1500 words (please include a word count). Full citations for your five articles should be included in the reference list.

2. Policy Briefing Note Assignment (Due on March 4th, 2021)
Succinct writing is a necessity in the 21st century as executives are busy people. Senior management expect that their employees will keep it simple and short. That is one of the major expectations of graduates of this department and university. Briefing note is a policy communication tool by which decision makers are kept informed about issues they are responsible for. The enormous demands of government requires that senior management need to constantly learn and retain a significant amount of information on a variety of topics and issues. Concise, clear, and reliable briefings often make their work easy. This exercise therefore provides you with experience in preparing a concise briefing note (maximum 2 pages). The briefing note should clearly describe the issue, make a well-reasoned argument why it is important and needs to be addressed or brought to the attention of the Minister or Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer etc, identify potential courses of action/recommendations, and explain how to implement them. Briefing notes need be succinct, focused on salient points, and they are expected to be convincing! They are more effective when supported by evidence and other research. The decision maker should be left with the impression that the problem that you have identified requires action, and happy to consider your recommendations. It is important that your briefing note clearly show the issue, background, analysis, options, recommendations/next steps. Details of the rubrics will be posted on the courselink page.

3. Tests (March 25th, 2021)
Tests may include multiple choice questions, definitions, short answer questions, and long answer questions. Test is cumulative and includes all or some of the materials covered to that point in the course.

4. Presentation, Attendance and Participation (Weekly)

Presentation:
As part of developing teamwork skills, students will be paired to make powerpoint presentations on assigned readings every week. Presentations will start after the day’s lecture by the instructor. The group presenting on a given day is expected to outline at least 5 questions at the end of their presentation which will be discussed in breakout rooms (one question per room). The class will reconvene where members of the respective breakout rooms will appoint a moderator to lead discussions on the question they addressed. Good powerpoint presentations are creative, not text-heavy, explore graphics/charts/videos, appealing and fit for the audience, and well organized.
Questions for discussions are creative, make sense, and relevant to the topic. Team members are expected to demonstrate solid teamwork. In-fighting within teams will earn low grades to be shared by the group. Presentations will begin on the 28th of January 2021. A presentation schedule including groups and members will be posted on courselink.

**Attendance:**

*Regular attendance* is essential for optimal performance in any course including attendance at Guest lectures. Absences will reduce the number of opportunities for quality contributions to class participation, as such students are advised that missing any class will affect your class participation grade.

**Class Participation:**

a) There will be a moderate to relative heavy amount of reading and writing in order to fulfill the requirements of this course. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions and are encouraged to critically analyze the complex issues presented both in the reading material as well as in the classroom.

b) Your class participation grade will be determined by the extent to which you are present and engaged in the class. Be prepared, on-time and take an active and critical role in the class discussions.

c) There are several dimensions to the participation grade: presence, preparation and participation

*Presence:* Learning is a cumulative process and as such your presence is key to all the class sessions. As courtesy to all students please:

a) Arrive on time

b) Turn off cell phones or put them on silence to enable you enjoy class time without distraction

c) No texting, twittering, facebooking or the like as these could affect your concentration

d) No noisy food 😊

e) Be prepared to spend entire class period with minimal distractions

f) As this course is delivered remotely, please let us make it an enjoyable experience for each other

g) Please mute your mic when lecture is on, only unmuting when you need to make a contribution/participate, ask question or speak.

*Preparation:* You are expected to read all text prior to each session. This will allow you to be able to contribute to class discussions. When preparing for class, avoid last minute readings. Make notes of key points and concepts while reading. Also make note of questions of things that may not be clear for class discussions. Try to make connections between what you are reading and your personal experiences (if any). I will pair students to start discussions during each class (immediately after the lecture).

*Participation:* We are all learners and we can learn from each other. To facilitate this, we would respectfully listen to each person’s point of view and if the need arises challenge respectfully each other’s view. If a person feels he/she will have difficulty speaking in class for any reason, please see me within the first 2
weeks of classes. Please send me an email if you find yourself struggling or need help so that we can support you. Please do not wait until it is too late.

Final Exam

The final exam will be a take home. It will be made available on Thursday, April 7th at 11:59 and is due electronically on Thursday, April 14th by 11:59 pm. **Late submissions of take home exams without prior permission will not be accepted.** Details about the exam and submission of the exam will be provided before the time.

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.

Online Behaviour

Inappropriate online behaviour will not be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate online behaviour include:

- Posting inflammatory messages about your instructor or fellow students
- Using obscene or offensive language online
- Copying or presenting someone else’s work as your own
- Adapting information from the Internet without using proper citations or references
- Buying or selling term papers or assignments
- Posting or selling course materials to course notes websites
- Having someone else complete your quiz
- Completing a quiz for/with another student when collaboration is not permitted
- Stating false claims about lost quiz answers or other assignment submissions
- Threatening or harassing a student or instructor online
- Discriminating against fellow students, instructors and/or TAs
- Using the course website to promote profit-driven products or services
- Attempting to compromise the security or functionality of the learning management system
- Sharing your user name and password
- Recording lectures without the permission of the instructor

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. The regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

DROP DATE

The last date to drop W21 one semester courses and W21 two semester courses is Monday, April 12. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.
COPIES OF OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Please 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 of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment.

Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible. For more information, contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca.

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 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 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.
**Disclaimer**
Schedule of lecture topics and assigned readings may change. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email.

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the [COVID-19 website](#) and circulated by email.

**Illness**
The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the Winter 2021 semester.