

Office of Academic Affairs
Tarleton State University
May 2004

Master Course Syllabus Outline

Department: Chemistry, Geosciences, and Environmental Science

Course Prefix/Number: ENVS 5283

Official Course Title: Environmental Literacy

Master Syllabus Approved by Department on: ____/____/____
month date year

I. **Catalog Description**

Scientific, social, business, and educational aspects of environmental topics, to include biodiversity, water quality, point and nonpoint source pollution control, carcinogens in the environment, industrial and agricultural chemicals, ozone hole and CFCs, global warming, deforestation, natural resource conservation, waste management, sustainable development, ecosystems, air quality, and green consumerism.

II. **Prerequisites** None

III. **Expanded Course Description**

Environmental literacy focuses on developing responsible environmental behavior, without specifying what that behavior should be. Literacy involves knowledge of significant ecological concepts, environmental relationships, and how humans relate to natural systems. Management of environmental issues includes political, economic and social considerations, in addition to the scientific and technical aspects. It is within these contexts that the course will examine current environmental issues. Important concepts of the course include the tragedy of the commons, the roles of private citizens in “watching the watchers” as state and federal agencies develop and implement rules in support of environmental legislation, formulation of public opinion, private property rights, and foundations of environmental law. Special attention will be given to water issues and global climate change. This course is for graduate students.

IV. **Intended Student Learning Outcomes**

Knowledge outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Be familiar with sources of common and statute environmental law.
- Be familiar with major environmental legislation (e.g., the Clean Water Act).
- Know private property rights as they affect environmental issues.
- Know the processes of administration of environmental law.
- Know fundamentals of conflict management.
- Know methods of achieving group consensus.
- Understand Hardin’s tragedy of the commons and the aversion of the tragedy.

- Understand Yankelovich’s three stages of shaping public opinion.
- Understand groundwater management in Texas.
- Understand the role of an environmentally literate citizenry.
- Be able to apply course material to the betterment of the student’s life.

Skill outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will increase their competencies in:

- Critical and analytical thinking in complex issues.
- Written and oral communication.
- Problem solving.
- Conflict management.
- Working with others.

Value outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will have an increased appreciation of the role of individual values, such as private property rights, in the analysis of environmental issues. Students will also have an appreciation of the interaction of technical, political, social, and economic factors in the management of environmental issues.

- V. Unless otherwise stipulated in this master syllabus by the department, the following items are subject to faculty discretion as described in each faculty member’s individual course outline/syllabus:
- a. Course Requirements (grading/evaluation procedures; class attendance policy; term papers, projects, field assignments; examinations; class participation, etc.) Using group consensus techniques, each class will select the environmental issues to discuss, the method of grading, and the weighting of each grading measurement.
 - b. Required Text(s) None
 - c. Bibliography Instructor notes will be furnished by email following sessions that develop background material. Handouts will be provided for additional source materials. The instructor notes will contain bibliographies.

Department Head Signature/Date:

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