**ECON 2505: Environmental Economics Syllabus**

Spring 2017

Room TBD

Monday 11:30am – 2:00pm

## **Professor:** Eric J. Osborne

**Contact:** eric.j.osborne@gmail.com

**Course title:** Econ 2505ID: Environmental Economics

**Course prerequisite:** Either Econ 1101 or Econ 1401; CUNY proficiency in reading and writing

**Course description**: This interdisciplinary course examines current environmental issues from a macroeconomic perspective, focusing on both the long and short-term economic viability of various proposals to address current environmental challenges. Traditional goals of economic efficiency will be examined in the context of the need to expand renewable energy sources, green design, sustainable construction and resource allocation and other efforts to combat climate change on a global scale.

**Required texts**: Environmental Economics, Field & Field, any edition.

**Other:** All other material will be free and distributed via e-mail.

**Intended learning outcomes/assessment methods:** To develop an understanding of the fundamental concepts of environmental economics. Specifically, course objectives include the following:

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| LEARNING OUTCOMES | ASSESSMENT METHODS |
| 1. Students in the course should be able to demonstrate an understanding of many dimensions of sustainability as they relate to the potential for renewed economic growth. | 1. The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| 1. Demonstrate a knowledge of the importance of changing economic behavior – from consumers, to business practices to government – to build upon the move toward sustainable economic practices | 2. Primarily in-class discussion. |
| 1. Identify a range of tools from environmental economics that can be applied to solving real world environmental challenges that impact the U.S. economy. | 3. Primarily the midterm and final exams and the research paper. |
| 1. Develop a breadth and depth of knowledge of how to begin to apply the concepts of sustainability to consumer, business and trade practices. | 4. Breadth will be displayed on the midterm and final exams and depth on the final project. |

**General education learning outcomes/assessment methods:**

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| LEARNING OUTCOMES | ASSESSMENT METHODS |
| 1. Knowledge: To develop a understanding of the key concepts that relate to environmental economics, the central topics and theories of how to address environmental problems through economic policy. | 1. The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| 1. Skills: Develop and apply the tools of environmental economics to be able to critically question, analyze, and discuss environmental economic problems and issues; Develop and strengthen the ability to discuss concepts and thoughts in writing. | 2. The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| 1. Integration: Apply the tools acquired in the course to be able to build upon an understanding of environmental issues and sustainability across disciplines, both in the social sciences and other disciplines. | 3. The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| 1. Values, ethics, and relationships: Develop an understanding of and ability to apply diverse perspectives to the understanding of sustainability/environmental economics; work creatively with others in group problem solving; develop a respect for diverse viewpoints and apply the skills and concepts covered in the course to the analysis of related issues and concepts across other disciplines | 4. The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |

**Interdisciplinary course learning outcomes/assessment methods:**

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| ***Learning outcomes*** | ***Assessment Methods*** |
| Purposefully connect and integrate across-discipline knowledge and skills to solve problems | Primarily in-class discussion and your research paper. |
| Synthesize and transfer knowledge across disciplinary boundaries | Primarily in-class discussion and your research paper. |
| Think critically, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively | The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| Recognize varied perspectives | The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |
| Become flexible thinkers | The midterm and final exams, class discussion, and the research paper. |

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**Grading scheme:**

Midterm exam 25%

Final exam 25%

Research project 20%

Research project presentation 15%

Participation: class discussions/group tour/attendance 15%

**Grading policy:**

Letter Grade Meaning of Letter Grade Number Grade

A Exceptional 100-93

A- Superior 92.9-90

B+ Very good 89.9-87

B Good 86.9-83

B- Above Average 82.9-80

C+ Slightly Above Average 79.9-77

C Average 76.9-70

D Poor 69.9-60

F Failure 59.9-0

**Academic integrity statement:** Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

**Allowable Absence:** 1

**Excessive Absence:** If a student’s class absences exceed the limit established for a given course or component, the instructor will alert the student that a grade of “WU” may be assigned. If a student remains officially registered for a course and never attends that course, a final grade of “\*WN” will be assigned. If the student withdraws officially from the course, he/she will be assigned a grade in accordance with the existing withdrawal policy of the College.

**Appeals:** A student wishing to appeal the excessive absence status and the impending grade should request a meeting with the chairperson of the department in which the course is offered. The chairperson will consult with the instructor to render a decision. A student wishing to appeal a “WU” grade may do so through the Committee on Course and Standards.

**Lateness:** It is the responsibility of the instructor to keep a record of lateness and to inform each class orally and in writing of the lateness policy during the first two weeks of class meetings of each semester

**Course outline:**

**Week 1: Course Introduction and Overview**

* **Syllabus review and course overview:** grading, class objectives, expectations.
* **What sort of problem do we face?** A detailed look at environmental economic issues.
* **Free writing exercise:** what topics might be of greatest interest to you?

**Week 2: Environmental Analysis.**

* **Cost & benefit; supply & demand.**  Field & Field, Ch. 3
* **Economic efficiency.**  Field & Field, Ch. 4
* **Economics of environmental quality.** Field & Field, Ch. 5

**Week 3: Environmental Analysis.**

* **Framework of analysis.**  Field & Field, Ch. 6
* **Cost-benefit: benefit.**  Field & Field, Ch. 7
* **Cost-benefit: cost**  Field & Field, Ch. 8

**Week 4: Research project**

* **Discuss two top two choices for the research project**
* **Group discussion:** How would you incorporate an*interdisciplinary perspective* into your research?

**Week 5: Guest Lecturer #1**

**Week 6: Mid-term exam review**

**Week 7: Mid-term exam**

**Week 8: Guest Lecturer #2**

**Week 9: Criteria and strategies**

* **Criteria for evaluating environmental policy.**  Field & Field, Ch. 9
* **Decentralized policies:** **liability law, property rights, moral suasion** Field & Field, Ch. 10

**Week 10: Criteria and strategies**

* **Command & control based strategies: the case of standards** Field & Field, Ch. 11
* **Incentive based strategies: taxes & subsidies** Field & Field, Ch. 12

**Week 11: Research project revisited**

* **Formatting**
* **What problem have you settled on?**
* **Define the issue in economic and interdisciplinary terms.**
* **How might you solve the problem?**

**Week 12: Guest Lecturer #3**

**Week 13: Final Exam Review**

**Week 14: Presentations**

**Week 15: Final Exam**