



Syllabus

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What You Should Already Know

The great thing about environmental science is that you probably already know the basics. You should have a basic scientific vocabulary as well as a general knowledge of world geography. If you have already taken a biology or a chemistry class, you won't have any trouble with this course. Don't worry if this is your first science class. If you spend the time reading the discussion material thoroughly, you will do just fine.

Learning Outcomes

For every unit in this course you will find a list of outcomes that you will reach by the time you finish the unit. The following list of outcomes is rather broad and encompasses all the goals for this course.

1. Natural Resources: Students will understand the variety of resources that the Earth provides and learn how to use these resources wisely.
2. Ecology Fundamentals: Students will be able to explain how all things on Earth are connected. Students will be able to describe how energy is transferred from one system to another.
3. Water: Students will be able to describe the importance of water in all types of ecosystems.
4. Human Impact: Students will be able to identify and understand how humans have both positive and negative influences on the Earth. Students will also be able to discuss methods of conservation of resources.

Course Materials

This course is self-contained, meaning that you will not need to buy an additional textbook. Each unit has at least one lab activity, and the materials for those activities are listed in the unit. The materials for the labs are common items that are most likely already in your kitchen or medicine cabinet (or they can be purchased at the grocery store).

Assignments

Each unit is basically in the same format. Below is a list of the items in each unit, and the order that you should do things.

Discussion Material

The reading in the discussion material will provide you with all the factual information you will need to be able to answer questions and participate in lab activities.

Self Check Assignments

After you have read the discussion material, do the Self Check questions. These questions are designed to help you determine if you have read the discussion material thoroughly. If you struggle with these questions, you may need to reread the corresponding material. Although Self Check questions do not count toward your grade, they will help you prepare for the unit quizzes and the final exam.

There is also a Vocabulary Self Check at the end of each unit. You will need to list the vocabulary word that matches the definition given in the question.

Mini-Labs

Every unit has at least one lab activity to do. These are ungraded activities that reinforce what you have learned in the discussion material. If there are questions at the end of the lab, you should answer them. The questions typically request your opinion, or ask what you have observed; so, there are no right or wrong answers.

Unit Quizzes

Once you have completed the reading, Self Check questions and mini-lab activities, you are ready to do the quiz. These quizzes will help you prepare for the final exam. They will also count toward most of your final grade.

Exams

There are approximately 70 multiple-choice questions on the final exam. It is closed book and notes, and no other materials are allowed.

The final exam is worth 28 percent of your final grade.

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Grading

Your grade for this course will be based on the scores for the unit quizzes and the final exam. Remember that you must pass the exam to receive credit for the course. See the following chart for percentages for each item.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Weight
Unit 1 Quiz	9%
Unit 2 Quiz	9%
Unit 3 Quiz	9%
Unit 4 Quiz	9%
Unit 5 Quiz	9%
Unit 6 Quiz	9%
Unit 7 Quiz	9%
Unit 8 Quiz	9%
Final Exam	28%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100-95%
A-	94-90%
B+	89-86%
B	85-83%

Letter Grade	Percentage
B-	82-80%
C+	79-76%
C	75-73%
C-	72-70%
D+	69-66%
D	65-64%
D-	63-60%
E (fail)	59% or below