

Course Syllabus

ESPM 4021W Problem Solving: Environmental Review

Spring 2016

Instructors

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Course Information

Prerequisites: ESPM 2021 or instructor approval

Credits: 4

Schedule: 1:30-2:45 MW, 302 Kaufert Laboratory

Moodle: <https://ay15.moodle.umn.edu/course/view.php?id=9467>

Textbook: none

Student Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- explain the environmental assessment process and the steps required for conducting an environmental review;
- understand the role of project proposers, regulatory agencies, consultants, and private citizens in the environmental assessment process;
- demonstrate improved writing and teamwork skills;
- demonstrate professional practices and behaviors.

During this course, students will read and work with actual environmental review documents (Environmental Impact Statements [EIS] and Environmental Assessment Worksheets [EAW]) to gain an understanding of the environmental review process. Students will also conduct an environmental review of, and write an EAW for, a small local project to experience the full environmental assessment process. Writing is an important component of the course and will be a part of every assignment. There will also be numerous opportunities for oral presentations.

Assignments

Detailed assignment descriptions will be posted on the Moodle site. Deadlines posted with the assignment will be the official deadlines for the assignment and will supersede any other deadlines posted in the Class Schedule (which is subject to modification) or anywhere else. File names for all assignments should start with your last name (individual assignments) or team

numbers (team assignments). Your name (individual assignments) or team number (team assignments), date, and assignment name should appear at the top of the assignment.

Individual Writing Assignments

1. Apply for the position of EAW Project Manager. Provide a cover letter and a resume.
2. Review and critique EAW
3. Review and critique an EIS document.

Journals

A journal topic will be announced every two weeks. You will write and submit a 300-400-word journal on the topic and submit to Moodle.

EAW Project

This multi-part team project constitutes 50% of your course grade. The project consists of 7 parts:

1. Site Assessment
2. Site Plan
3. Citizen Petition
4. Environmental Assessment Worksheet Report Rough Draft
5. Environmental Assessment Worksheet Report Final Draft
6. Questions for EAW Review
7. Record of Decision

Final Project

Making recommendations for improving the EAW process.

Exams

Both exams for this course will be take home exams.

A midterm exam will be posted to the Moodle site prior to Spring Break.

A final exam will be posted to the Moodle site during the last week of class.

Midterm and Final Self and Team Member Evaluations

At the midterm exam and on the final exam each student will be required to fill out a self and team member evaluation form. This form will be used to assess your individual contributions to team projects and for you to evaluate the contributions of your team members. The instructors will compile the team evaluations and, along with their own observations, will develop a "contribution scalar" which will range from 50% to 125%. Your individual grade on all team assignments will be the team score multiplied by your contribution scalar. Obviously, this scalar can significantly raise or lower your grade compared to the overall team score for these assignments.

The Self and Team Member Evaluation used in 2013, titled "Self and Team Member Evaluation", is posted with this document on the Moodle site. Please take a moment to look at it.

Class Policies

Attendance

This course requires regular attendance. Your absence will hurt your team's performance. For that reason, attendance will be taken every day. Absences will only be excused with written documentation (from a doctor, employer, etc.). You are responsible for getting notes, making up work, etc. for the class you missed. Getting your work to your team during absences is the important thing to do. Remember, your team members will determine much of your contribution grade both when you are present and absent.

Class begins at 1:30. Attendance will be taken at 1:35; you must be in the classroom at that time to be considered "present." Arrival any time after 1:45 is considered an unexcused absence for that day's class. Arrival between 1:35 and 1:45 is considered "late." Three late arrivals constitute one unexcused absence. Your letter grade for the course will be reduced by one-third for every 2 unexcused absences you have. For example, if you have 2 unexcused absences, an A- would be reduced to a B+. For 4 unexcused absences, your grade will be reduced two-thirds of a grade, from an A- to a B.

Your letter grade for the course will be reduced by one-third for every 4 excused absences you have. For example, if you have 4 excused absences, a B+ would be reduced to a B. For 8 excused absences, a grade of B+ would be reduced to a B-.

Participation

You should be an active participant in course activities, including discussions, presentations, working sessions with your team, answering questions, and working with others. Participation will be evaluated by your peers and the instructors. Please conduct yourself as a professional at all times.

Workload

This is a 4 credit course. For the average University of Minnesota undergraduate student, 16 hours of academic work per week is expected to be the workload (including lectures, laboratories, recitations, discussion groups, field work, study, and so on), or approximately 225 hours of work over the course of the semester. It may be that more work will come in the second half of the semester while you are working on the EAW projects. This course is also writing intensive. You will have numerous writing assignments besides those specifically listed on the syllabus. You will also be asked to review the writing of fellow students and will be evaluated on your critique.

Grading

Individual Writing Assignments	9%
Online Quizzes	6%
Midterm Exam and Team Assessment	5%
EAW Team Project	50%
Final Team Project	10%
Journals	15%
Final Exam and Team Assessment	5%
Total	100%

Course grades will be (%) 100-94 (A), 93-90 (A-), 89-87 (B+), 86-84 (B), 83-80 (B-), 79-77 (C+), 76-74 (C), 73-70 (C-), 69-60 (D), 59-0 (F).

A grade of incomplete (I) will be assigned when part of the course requirements are missing at the end of the quarter, unless in our opinion there is no possibility they can be completed to give a grade above an N. If you have completed less than 80% of the team assignments, there is no possibility to make up that portion. The work must be turned in by the first week of Fall Semester 2016 to remove the I, except in unusual circumstances and after negotiation with the Instructors.

Additional Assignments

The instructors will not assign or provide additional extra credit assignments for students seeking to improve their grade in the course. This practice is unfair to other students and creates an additional workload for the instructors. There are ample opportunities for students to earn grade points during regularly assigned coursework.

Late Assignments

Assignments turned in after the deadline will be automatically reduced to 75% of the graded value of that assignment unless you have received permission in advance from the Instructors to turn the assignment in late. For example, if your grade on an assignment was 80 but you turned it in late, your score would be $80 \times 0.75 = 60$. Failure to turn in an assignment within one week of the deadline will result in a grade of zero for that assignment. All deadlines will be posted on the Moodle site with the assignment/exam and with the upload site.

Personal Information

Many assignments require business letters that require contact information for proper formatting. You should use your real name and e-mail address for these letters, but all other contact information (physical address and phone number) can be fictional to protect your privacy.

University Policies and Resources

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community. As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference item 8 in: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. See item 4 in: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy, Section VI, Subd. 6 and 8: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Disability Accommodations

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability. It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructors early in the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations.

<http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/DisabilityServices.pdf>

Mental Health and Stress Management

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>

Use of UM Moodle

In this class, our use of technology may make students' names and U of M Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in our class. Since we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this will not increase the risk of identity theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If you have concerns about the visibility of your Internet ID, please contact the Instructors for further information.