

Montgomery County Community College  
ECO 117  
Introduction to Environmental Economics  
3-3-0

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Students will learn how managing natural resources while maintaining a healthy environment presents a significant challenge in a capitalistic economy. Students will apply economic tools and principles to environmental policy making. The course integrates analysis of current economic policy, examination of human impact on the planet, ethical decision-making, and development of sustainable policy recommendations with the constraint of scarce resources in a market economy. Topics include water and air pollution, energy, climate change, national parks, and human health issues.

**REQUISITES:**

*Previous Course Requirements*

- ENG 010A Basic Writing or ENG 011 Basic Writing II or ESL 011 Basic Writing II
- MAT 080 – Fundamentals of Mathematics or MAT 011 Beginning Algebra or MAT 011B Beginning Algebra with Review of Arithmetic with a minimum grade of “C” within 5 years
- REA 011 Fundamentals of College Reading or REA 017 Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension Development II

*Concurrent Course Requirements*

None

LEARNING OUTCOMES Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1. Employ the vocabulary of environmental economics.	Lecture Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
2. Evaluate key environmental economic concepts through the application of the economic decision making process.	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations
3. Explain the role of incentives in producing results when developing environmental policy in the short-run and long-run.	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations
4. Analyze the impact of current environmental policies at the local, national and global level on the overall environment in the short- and long-run.	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Wiki Blog Podcast Group Project or Presentation
5. Analyze and interpret primary source documents from the Library of Congress in the area of conservation in the United States.	Primary Source Analysis	Primary Source Analysis Wiki Blog Podcast Group Project or Presentation

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
6. Critique the ethical consequences of human decisions under the condition of scarcity and their impact on the local, national and global environment.	FTE Site Selection Activity Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	FTE Site Selection Activity Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Examinations
7. Explain that viewing the environment as an “economic good” is related to cultural perspective.	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations
8. Critically evaluate the role of individuals as citizens of the planet and their civic responsibility to weigh the costs and benefits of short-term decisions and their long-term consequences.	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations	Primary Source Analysis Problem Solving Article Summaries Wikis Podcasts Class discussion Small Group Projects and Presentations Quizzes Examinations

At the conclusion of each semester/session, assessment of the learning outcomes will be completed by course faculty using the listed evaluation method(s). Aggregated results will be submitted to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The benchmark for each learning outcome is that *70% of students will meet or exceed outcome criteria*.

#### SEQUENCE OF TOPICS:

1. Introduction to Course Expectations
  - a. Student Introductions
  - b. Introduction to Materials
  - c. Introduction to inquiry-based learning model with Primary Source Analysis

- d. Community Service Explanation
- 2. Introduction to Environmental Economics
  - a. What is environmental economics?
  - b. How are the economy and the environment related?
- 3. Tools for Environmental Economic analysis
  - a. What are supply, demand, equilibrium, and efficiency in economics?
  - b. How do markets achieve efficiency?
  - c. How is the environment an economic good?
  - d. How can environmental quality be analyzed using economic tools?
- 4. Environmental Analysis
  - a. What is Benefit-Cost Analysis?
  - b. How do we evaluate environmental policies?
  - c. What role do externalities, liability laws, property rights and voluntary action have in policy analysis?
  - d. Which allocates more efficiently and when: Command-and-Control vs. Incentive-Based Strategies.
  - e. How do we include ethical and cultural issues in the decision making process?
- 5. Sustainable Development & Environmental Policy: Local, State and National (Case studies, research and cooperative partnership with an outside partner).
  - a. Energy
  - b. Water
  - c. Land
  - d. Climate Change
  - e. Agriculture
  - f. Forests
  - g. Air
  - h. Toxic and Hazardous Substances
- 6. Global Impacts & Social Welfare
  - a. How is environmental policy impacted by economic development of developing and emerging countries?
  - b. What are the trade-offs associated with maximizing social welfare verses maximizing economic growth?
  - c. How can society make efficient environmental decisions?
  - d. Can we achieve sustainability and have economic growth without imposing our culture and values on other peoples in the global community?

#### LEARNING MATERIALS:

Field, Barry & Field, Martha. (2012). *Introduction to Environmental Economics* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Rockliff, Mara. (2010). *Get Real: What Kind of World Are You Buying?* Running Press Kids. 978-0-76243745-0.

Primary Source documents from the Library of Congress website found at [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov).

Access to Wikispaces or Google for sharing Wikis created with partner students.

Other learning materials may be required and made available directly to the student and/or via the College's Libraries and/or course management system.

#### COURSE APPROVAL:

Prepared by: Jill Beccaris-Pescatore	Date: 2/2011
VPAA/Provost Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 9/20/2011
Revised by: Jill Beccaris-Pescatore and Lee Bender	Date: 3/2013
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 5/2/2013
Revised by: Lee Bender	Date: 1/2014
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 1/16/2014
Reviewed by: Jill Beccaris-Pescatore	Date: 11/13/2017
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 11/14/2017
Reviewed by: Jill Beccaris-Pescatore	Date: 6/7/2023
VPAA or designee Compliance Verification:	Date: 6/7/2023



*This course is consistent with Montgomery County Community College's mission. It was developed, approved and will be delivered in full compliance with the policies and procedures established by the College.*