



Literature and Communications in the Environmental Sciences

The University of Toledo

Department of Environmental Sciences; The College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
EEES 3900

Instructor:	Daryl F. Dwyer, Ph.D.	Class Location:	BO 1014
Email:	daryl.dwyer@utoledo.edu	Class Day/Time:	T, R 12:30 – 1:45 pm
Office Hours:	T, R 2:30 – 4:00 pm	Lab Location:	N/A
Office Location:	BO 2001F	Lab Day/Time:	N/A
Office Phone:	530-2661	Credit Hours:	3
Term:	Spring 2015		

COURSE/CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Includes discussions of environmental issues featuring guest experts from a variety of environmental-related occupations, readings in environmental literature and student reports. Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing.

COURSE OVERVIEW

EEES 3900 is intended as a 'Capstone' course for students majoring in Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies; students from other majors often enroll as well. We do a wide variety of activities in this course to achieve three goals:

- (1) Critically examine and reinforce students' knowledge and analytical abilities as they relate to significant environmental issues in today's world.
- (2) Enhance students' communication skills when writing or speaking about these issues.
- (3) Expand students' understanding of how scientifically valid information is gathered and presented.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

- (1) Write concisely, technically and in a manner appropriate for the interpretation and dissemination of scientific information;
- (2) Orally communicate scientific knowledge with a focus on clarity, logic and the production of visual aids;
- (3) Prepare resumes, biographies and cover letters that may be used to obtain employment in their selected scientific fields.



TEACHING STRATEGIES

Based on each learning outcome:

- (1) Relatively quicker, in-class and longer, outside-of-class writing exercises will be used. Students will obtain feedback by reading some assignments aloud so that other students may comment and by editing in class assignments and reading some of the edits aloud. In addition, outside-of-class assignments will be edited and graded by the Professor. Outside-of-class assignments will include a term paper outline and a term paper on a theme selected by the individual student. In addition, three short papers based on current topics from scientific literature will be required. Experts from science will be brought in to speak to students in a “press conference” format. In this experience, the students will have read provided publications by the experts and prepared questions for the “press conference”. A news article will then be prepared which will be based on the entirety of the students’ questions and experts’ answers.
- (2) PowerPoint presentations will include “why I selected this topic for my term paper”, which will be based on the relevance of the topic to the student’s interests (See #3, below) and a final presentation of the term paper material. The initial presentation will help students in selecting a topic and in preparing background information for a term paper. Instructions for presentations will be by examples of both good and poor PowerPoint presentations presented by Dr. Dwyer. A number of in-class, group projects will be used whereby students work as a team to create presentations that will not require PowerPoint.
- (3) Students will be asked to think critically about their long-term career goals and to prepare a biographical sketch that focuses on the underlying interests that lead to the selection of these goals. Following this, students will prepare both a resume and cover letter that would be submitted to an entity for employment.

PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Junior or senior standing

REQUIRED TEXTS AND ANCILLARY MATERIALS

Assigned readings will be provided via BlackBoard. Students will be required to do scholarly research for their own papers by obtaining relevant articles from scientific journals and news clippings.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students will need to use word processing for their written papers and PowerPoint or some other related software for their presentations. Grades, notices, and assigned materials will be provided via BlackBoard.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University is an equal opportunity educational institution. Please read [The University’s Policy Statement on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability Americans with Disability Act Compliance.](#))

Academic Accommodations

The University of Toledo is committed to providing equal access to education for all students. If you have a documented disability or you believe you have a disability and would like information regarding academic accommodations/adjustments in this course please contact the [Student Disability Services Office.](#))



ACADEMIC POLICIES

Attendance: I will not record attendance, but your presence at each class will greatly impact your grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain any class notes or pertinent information from a fellow student. In-class assignments (ICW) cannot be made up and must be done in class. If you miss an in-class assignment without a valid reason, such as a medical emergency, you will receive a “0” for that grade. Valid excuses will allow you to drop that assignment from the calculation of your final grade.

Communication: All email correspondence will be sent to your BB account.

Academic dishonesty: Academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism) will not be tolerated. It is important that you do your own assignments. This is the manner by which we can learn – which is really our goal here. Students who violate the University of Toledo’s policy can expect disciplinary action. Please see the University’s academic dishonesty statement for more details:

(<http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/dishonesty.html>).

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Please note that extra credit will **not** be available for obtaining a grade in this course. Late assignments will have 10% of the credit value deducted for each day that the assignment is late (including weekends). In all assignments, grammar does count and points will be deducted for poor grammar. For students that wish to attempt to improve scores, written assignments can be done again, incorporating my comments and edits in order to gain 50% of the points that were originally deducted. You have one week from the time you receive a graded assignment to re-do it. At all times, a **valid** excuse such as a doctor’s note may be used to gain extra time to complete an assignment.

GRADING

Your grade will be assessed based on your performance in several areas, as described. The assignment of points (380 points total) is as follows:

- (1) Three short papers (60 points = 20 points each).
- (2) Term paper outline (30 points).
- (3) Term paper (50 points) consisting of a five-pages on a topic chosen by the student with Dr. Dwyer’s acquiescence.
- (4) Oral term paper presentation (30 points). Given near the end of the semester, this presentation will be based on your written term paper topic.
- (5) “Term paper idea” presentation (30 points). Each student will present an informative lecture (using Power Point) on a scientific topic that s/he likes. We will go over what should be in the lecture. The idea is to lay the foundation for the written term papers that will be due at a later date.
- (6) Miscellaneous exercises (160 points). Mostly these are done in class. If you are not in class, you cannot receive those points. The point total may vary if all exercises cannot be completed (e.g. class is canceled due to a snow-day).
- (7) News article from the interview of a scientist (20 points).

Midterm Grading

A grade will be assigned to you at midterm, which will be based on the percentage of the point



total you attained at that time. This is a means for you to determine the level of your performance within the course and to take actions as necessary.

Final Grading

A final grade for the course will be determined as a percentage of the available points that you obtained. The grade will follow the normal sequence of A > 90 points; B > 80 points; C > 70 points; D > 60 points; F < 60 points. Plus/minus grading will be used at margins of the point totals.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Confidential communication of grades and of other important information related will be via BlackBoard. If you write an email to Dr. Dwyer outside of BlackBoard and do not get a response, please attempt to contact him again. Communication via normal emails can be sketchy at times.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The BlackBoard site for this course has a listing of important offices for student support resources and services. Please see this site for a complete listing.

COURSE SCHEDULE

See attached.