# Course Outline Form: Fall 2015

## General Information

**Course Title:** ENVS\*2330Current Issues in Ecosystem Science and Biodiversity

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to a range of specific environmental and scientific issues relating to ecological sciences. Issues to be covered include the biology of climate change, forest science and management of terrestrial ecosystemsm. Examples of current problems of societal concern will be used as starting points to examine the role of science in addressing them, while developing students' knowledge of the underlying science and its relation to policy and economics.

**Credit Weight:** 0.50

**Academic Department (or campus):** School of Environmental Sciences

**Campus:** Guelph

**Semester Offering:** F

**Class Schedule and Location:** Lecture – Tues, Thurs 11:30am-12:50pm MCKN 120

Lab section 1: Thurs 2:30pm-4:20pm MCKN 311

Lab section 2: Fri 11:30am-1:20pm MCKN 307

Lab section 3: Mon 8:30am-10:20am, MCKN 317

## Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Neil Rooney and Dr. Shelley Hunt

Instructor Email: nrooney@uoguelph.ca and shunt@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours: Dr. Rooney – Rm. 2107 E.C. Bovey Building

Dr. Hunt - Rm. 220 Alexander Hall

Office Hours by appointment.

## GTA Information

GTA Name:

GTA Email:

GTA office location and office hours:

## Course Content

### Specific Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete this course will achieve the following Learning Outcomes (LO):

* Identify information from the scientific literature that is relevant to a current ecological issue (LO1)
* Analyze the scientific evidence related to current issues of concern to society that relate to ecosystems and biodiversity (LO2)
* Communicate orally and in writing their analysis of the scientific evidence related to an ecological issue, by arguing for their position in a debate-style presentation and a position paper (LO3)
* Practice critical thinking by reading and group discussion of ecosystem-science-related scientific literature, and by discussion of lecture content during lecture periods and on exams (LO4)
* Practice working effectively in small groups (LO5)

### Lecture Content:

Lectures will examine a variety of current environmental/societal issues and how they are being addressed by the scientific study of ecosystems. Broadly, these issues will be used to explore the following themes:

1. Biodiversity, food web structure and the stability of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems  
2.  Anthropogenic effects on the structure and function of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems  
3.  Linking biogeochemical cycling to biodiversity and ecosystem function

### Labs:

None.

### Seminars:

Approximate schedule of seminar activities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Week of** | **Topic** |
| 14 September | No seminar |
| 21 September | Literature research workshop |
| 28 September | Introduction of debate topics |
| 5 October | Journal article discussion |
| 12 October | No seminar |
| 19 October | Writing workshop |
| 26 October | Journal article discussion |
| 2 November | Debate presentations |
| 9 November | Debate presentations |
| 16 November | Debate presentations |
| 23 November | Debate presentations |
| 30 November | No seminar |

### Course Assignments and Tests:

| **Assignment or Test** | **Due Date** | **Contribution to Final Mark (%)** | **Learning Outcomes Assessed** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Seminar Assignment 1 | Week of October 5th (Day before your section’s seminar) | 5% | LO1, LO5 |
| Quiz 1 | October 15th | 15% | LO2, LO3, LO4 |
| Discussion Paper | October 23rd | 20% | LO2, LO4 |
| Seminar Assignment 2 | Week of October 26th (Day before your section’s seminar) | 5% | LO1, LO2, LO5 |
| Oral Debate | Month of November | 20% | LO1, LO2, LO3, LO5 |
| Position paper | 1 week after your group’s debate | 10% | LO1, LO2, LO3, LO5 |
| Peer Evaluation | Month of November | 10% | LO5 |
| Quiz 2 | December 1st | 15% | LO2, LO3, LO4 |

Additional Notes (if required):

None.

### Final examination date and time: None.

### Final exam weighting: Not applicable.

## Course Resources

### Required Texts:

None.

### Recommended Texts:

Botkin, D. and Keller, E. 2014. Environmental Science: Earth as a Living Planet. 9th Ed. John Wiley and Sons of Canada, Ltd. 688p.

### Lab Manual:

None.

### Other Resources:

Lecture notes and other course material will be made available via D2L.

### Field Trips:

None.

### Additional Costs:

None.

## Course Policies

### Grading Policies:

Written assignments will be submitted via Dropbox on D2L, before midnight on the due date. Oral presentations will be due during the appropriate lab period or otherwise as assigned. All late assignments will receive a 10% deduction for each day, or part thereof, that they are late. Keep paper and/or reliable electronic back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit your work at any time.

### Course Policy on Group Work:

Group work will be allowed only where specified (e.g. for debate assignment).

### Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

## University Policies

### Academic Consideration:

The University of Guelph is committed to supporting students in their learning experiences and responding to their individual needs and is aware that a variety of situations or events beyond the student's control may affect academic performance. Support is provided to accommodate academic needs in the face of personal difficulties or unforeseen events in the form of Academic Consideration.

Information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions, including categories, grounds, timelines and appeals can be found in [Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml).

### Academic Misconduct:

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Detailed information regarding the Academic Misconduct policy is available in [Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml).

### Accessibility:

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS), formerly Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD), as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca or visit the [Student Accessibility Services website (http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/)](http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/).

### Course Evaluation Information:

End of semester course and instructor evaluations provide students the opportunity to have their comments and opinions used as an important component in the Faculty Tenure and Promotion process, and as valuable feedback to help instructors enhance the quality of their teaching effectiveness and course delivery.

While many course evaluations are conducted in class others are now conducted online. Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](https://courseeval.uoguelph.ca/) **for more information.**

### Drop period:

The drop period for single semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period and extends to the Fortieth (40th) class day of the current semester (the last date to drop a single semester courses without academic penalty) which is listed in [Section III (Schedule of Dates) of the Undergraduate Calendar](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/).

The drop period for two semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period in the first semester and extends to the last day of the add period in the second semester.

Information about Dropping Courses can be found in [Section VIII (Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures) of the Undergraduate Calendar](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/).

## Additional Course Information

None.