Environmental Health in a Global World

Class code
UGPH-GU 9050 – 001

Instructor Details
Dr Jane Elkington
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Phone: 0425 200194
Office Hours: Consultation by appointment
Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
Fall 2015

Environmental Health in a Global World

Monday 12:00 – 3:00pm
August 31 to December 14
Room 304
NYU Sydney Academic Centre

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
This course will examine some of the key issues, achievements, shortfalls and principles of environmental health practice. It will focus on the how environmental health issues are defined, how they interact with other factors to impact health and how they are approached by civic groups, governmental officials and researchers. It will highlight how environmental threats come to the attention of the public and weigh the options for addressing these threats. Finally, it will underscore the need for multi-disciplinary approaches in understanding these threats and crafting solutions.

Desired Outcomes
Course Objectives:

- Define and describe the field of environmental health.
- Introduce students to the different roles and responsibilities of government agencies in monitoring and addressing environmental health.
- Consider aspects of environmental health issues both domestically and internationally.
- Acquaint students with the origins of the field, and with some of the current issues
facing it today.

- Understand the relationship between social movements and efforts to address environmental health threats.

Learning Objectives:
- To acquaint learners with the various dimensions of the field of environmental health.
- To examine the roles of different agencies in addressing such threats, and the roles of social movements in defining such threats.
- To understand some of the larger social forces that affect environmental health.
- To encourage careful and reflective analysis in proposing solutions to environmental health threats.

Assessment Components

Homework Assignments: 30% Sessions 3, 9, 12
Midterm 1: 15% Session 5
Midterm 2: 15% Session 10
Final Exam: 30% Monday 14 December 12:30pm – 2:30pm
Class Participation: 10%

Homework Assignments: Students will complete assignments posted on NYU Classes throughout the semester, generated from the readings.

Midterm Exams: Two in-class midterms will consist of a list of fill-in definition of key terms, and short essays designed to apply concepts to real world problems of environmental health and environmental risk.

Final Exam: The final will emphasize essays to synthesize concepts learned in the course.

Class Participation: Students are required to demonstrate accountability and responsibility in their preparation for, and engagement with, the course. Students are expected to engage in active discussion and to listen to and respect other points of view.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class.

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning.

Grade B: Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research.

Grade C: Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will
typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level.

**Grade D:** Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations.

**Grade F:** Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Work is unfinished or not submitted.

NYU Sydney uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>86-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>82-85</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>72-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>68-71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>64-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>54-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>40-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Submission of Work**

Should work be submitted as a hard copy, or electronically?

Unless otherwise specified, all written work must be submitted as a hard copy. The majority of written assignments must also be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. All in-class presentations must be completed during class time.

Who may submit a student’s work?

Each student’s assigned work must be handed in personally by that student. The student may not nominate another person to act on his/her behalf.

When and where should the work be submitted?

The hard copy of any written work must be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of class on the date the work is due. If the assignment due date falls outside of class time, work must be submitted to the Staff Member on duty in Room 2.04 during prescribed Office Hours (11:30am-12:30pm and 2:30-3:30pm Mon-Thur), or by appointment with the Academic Programs Coordinator. Each submitted item of work received in Room 2.04 will be date and time stamped in the presence of the student. Work submitted in Room 2.04 will not be considered “received” unless formally stamped.

What is the Process for Late Submission of Work?

After the due date, work may only be submitted under the following conditions:

- Late work, even if an extension has been granted, must be submitted in person by appointment with the Academic Programs Coordinator. Each submitted item of work must be date and time stamped in order to be considered “received”.
- Work submitted after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a
penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Written work submitted beyond five weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work.

- Because failure to submit or fulfil any required course component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to submit every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero. Early departure from the program therefore places the student at risk of failing the course.

**Plagiarism Policy**
The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are severe and are dealt with by the Director, NYU Sydney, not your instructor. Your home school will be notified and you will be dealt with according to the standards of that school. The codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges are outlined in the respective school’s academic resources.

**Attendance Policy**
Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will be penalised with a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade for every week of classes missed.

The class roster will be marked in the first five minutes of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences will result in harsher penalties, including failure.

**Classroom Expectations**
This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
• Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
• Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
• The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.
• Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

**Religious Observance**
Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Assistant Director, Academic Programs in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

**Provisions to students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

**Required Texts**


**Supplemental Texts**


Session 1:

Monday August 31

Overview: What is Environmental Health?
Required Reading:
- World Health Organization (2006): Preventing disease through healthy environments: Towards an estimate of the environmental burden of disease. Executive Summary (pp 8-17)
  http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/publications/preventingdisease.pdf?ua=1

Economic Context of Health
Required Reading:
  http://www.voanews.com/content/poverty-pollution-killers-in-nigeria/1363853.html


Session 2:

Monday September 7

Principles of Toxicology and Epidemiology
Required Reading:
- Chapters 2 and 3, Frumkin

Exposure Science and Risk Assessment
Required Reading:
- Chapters 4 and 29, Frumkin

Session 3:

Monday September 14

Environmental Justice
Required Reading:
- Chapters 8, Frumkin

Occupational Health
Required Reading:
- Chapter 20, Frumkin
Homework 1 due– student presentations (10%)

Session 4:
Monday September 21

Water
Required Reading:
- Chapter 15, Frumkin

Air
Required Reading:
- Chapter 12, Frumkin

Pesticides
Required Reading:
- Chapter 17, Frumkin
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (June 2014): Herbicides in Genetically Modified Foods [link]

Session 5:
Monday September 28

Food
Required Reading:
- Chapter 18, Frumkin

The Health of indigenous Australians
Guest Lecturer: A/Prof Marilyn Wise

Required Reading:

Midterm Exam 1 in class (15%)

Fall Break 5-9 October

Session 6:
Monday October 12
Children’s Health and Lead
Required Reading:

Children’s safety at home
Required Reading:

Session 7:
Monday October 19

The Built Environment
Required Reading:
- Chapter 14, Frumkin

Urban planning for health (Guest lecturer: Dr Jennifer Kent)
Required Reading:

Session 8:
Monday October 26

Required Field Trip/excursion - The built environment & health
More information will be provided in class. This field trip will be in place of our regular class.

Session 9:
Monday November 2

Injuries and the environment
Required Reading:
- Chapter 22, Frumkin

*Homework 2 due (10%)*
Session 10:
Monday November 9

Climate Change
Required Reading/Viewing:
- Chapter 10, Frumkin

*Midterm Exam 2 in class (15%)*

Session 11:
Monday November 16

Disasters & Disaster Preparedness
Required Reading:
- Chapters 23, Frumkin

Tobacco
*Guest lecturer: Dr Ross MacKenzie*

Required Reading:

Session 12:
Monday November 23

The environment and health behaviour – global and local issues
Required Reading:

*Homework Assignment 3 Due (10%)*

Session 13:
Monday November 30
Radiation & Hazardous Waste
  Case study: Asbestos – the Australian and global situation

Required Reading:
  • Chapter 21, Frumkin
  • Chapter 16, Frumkin

Genes and the environment
Required Reading:
  • Chapter 6, Frumkin

Session 14:
Monday December 7

Course Wrap up

Exam Week:

**Final Exam Monday 14 December 12:30-2:30pm (30%)**

Your Instructor:

Dr Jane Elkington (PhD, University of Minnesota) has worked in public health research, planning and policy development. Her research interests are in injury prevention and workplace health and safety. Jane is a board member of Youthsafe, and NGO devoted to the prevention of injuries to young people.