



McGill

**McGILL UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS**

**ECON 225
*ECONOMICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT*¹
FALL 2020**

Instructor: Moshe Lander
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Office Location: LEA 321A
Office Hours: F 09:00 – 14:00
Lecture Hours: MWF 15:35 – 16:25
Lecture Location: ADAMS AUD
Teaching Assistant: Mr Aritra Basu (aritra.basu@mail.mcgill.ca)

Course Overview:

A study of the application of economic theory to questions of environmental policy. Particular attention will be given to the measurement and regulation of pollution, congestion and waste and other environmental aspects of specific economies.

Course Pre- and Co-requisite:

None

Course Restrictions:

Not open to students who have taken 154-325 or 154-425

Number of Credits:

3 credits

Required Textbook and Materials:

- Goodstein, E. and S. Polasky. *Economics and the Environment*, 9th Edition. Wiley, 2020.
 - Buy the textbook at www.wiley.com/en-us/Economics+and+the+Environment%2C+9th+Edition-p-9781119693314

Correspondence:

All email correspondence in this class is through McGill email addresses *only*. Any email coming from any other address is treated as spam and is neither read nor answered. If you have not activated your McGill email already, please follow the instructions at www.mcgill.ca/it/get-started-it/students.

¹ In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's and/or instructor's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change. Timely announcements will be made by email and/or on *myCourses*.



Course Assessment:

COMPONENT	WEIGHT	CONTENT	DATE
Midterm 1	20 percent	Chapters 1 – 6	October 4
Midterm 2	20 percent	Chapters 7 – 11	October 25
Midterm 3	20 percent	Chapters 12 – 16	November 15
Final	40 percent	Chapters 1 – 21	TBD

Grade Criterion:

Letter	Points	Percent	Letter	Points	Percent	Letter	Points	Percent
A	4.0	85 – 100	B	3.0	70 – 74	C	2.0	55 – 59
A-	3.7	80 – 84	B-	2.7	65 – 69	D	1.0	50 – 54
B+	3.3	75 – 79	C+	2.3	60 – 64	F	0.0	00 – 49

- The official grade in this course is the letter grade. Where appropriate, a class average appears on transcripts expressed as the letter grade most representative of the class performance.
- Consult your department for the minimum grade necessary to fulfill your programme requirements.
- The grade distribution will be approximately normal, centred around 70 – 75 percent.
- At the end of the course, if the distribution differs significantly, the instructor may exercise discretion and adjust the grade thresholds. This will not serve as grounds for grade appeals.

Instructional Method:

I have been told that my lecture style is fast-paced and intense but engaging and humorous. Although students often find that this style makes the concepts easier to understand, they are often disappointed when they fail to perform to the level to which they are accustomed on my exams. My exams tend to reward those that are sufficiently knowledgeable of the underlying concepts and have developed an intuitive approach to the material. **Memorisation is almost never rewarded.**

To give you the best chance for success in my course, I strongly encourage you stay on schedule as if you were in class, approach the material with a positive attitude, read the relevant materials before (and after) watching the videos, do the assigned homework before advancing to the next chapter, work in a comfortable environment and identify problems and seek help as soon as they occur.

Lectures:

- The international nature of the student body makes it nearly impossible to find a thrice-weekly one-hour timeframe in which all students can gather online to attend a live lecture.
- For that reason, lectures are pre-recorded and posted on *myCourses* according to a traditional in-class semester schedule (see *Tentative Lecture Schedule and Assigned Readings* on page 4).
- Lectures last 2 – 3 hours and, with the e-text, contain all the information needed to complete the course.
- Once posted, each lecture is always available (as long as *myCourses* is working) except during exams.

Office Hours:

- Office hours are not recorded, optional and take place online F 09:00 – 14:00 Eastern.
- As with traditional on-campus office hours, you are received on a first-come, first-served basis and not by appointment. You sit in a virtual waiting room until I am ready to receive you.
- If you use office hours, you are expected to “arrive” prepared (ie, with your questions ready) and to be efficient so that the maximum number of students can make use of the available time.
- If you are unable to attend office hours because of scheduling conflicts, you can email your questions with attached audio, video and/or pictures. The more precise the information you provide, the faster and more precise I can respond.

Exams:

- There are three non-cumulative midterms written outside of class time (Sunday, October 4, Sunday, October 25 and Sunday, November 15) and a cumulative final written during the final exam period. All exams are closed book, take-home exams available through *myCourses*. (See *Course Assessment* on page 2 and *Tentative Lecture Schedule and Assigned Readings* on page 4 for more details about the contents and weights.)
- You are responsible for knowing the date and time of the final exam.
- Exam questions involve algebra, equations, graphs, definitions, interpretations and multi-part questions where the answer to one question may lead to another.
- Although each exam should be completed in three hours, you will have a six-hour window, at a time of your choosing within the designated 24-hour period, to complete the “exam process”.
- The “exam process” consists of you downloading a file, containing a set of instructions and a declaration to behave in accordance with McGill University’s [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#), that you are to sign and then upload.
- After that, your six-hour window begins to download the exam, print it and answer the questions clearly and concisely by hand IN THE SPACES PROVIDED. Typewritten answers, additional sheets, scrap papers or any other materials submitted will NOT be considered.
- Before the window closes, you are to scan and upload the exam in PDF format with the pages in order, your name and student number printed and clearly visible in the top left corner of every page.
- Failure to follow the formatting and/or procedural instructions may result in a grade of zero.
- Late exams receive an automatic grade of zero with no weight transfer to other exams. The best way to avoid such a situation is to leave enough time before the deadline to upload the exams and allow for technical issues.
- While solution sets are likely available online or from previous students, if you acquire, distribute and/or utilise this material, intentionally or unintentionally, you are in violation of McGill University’s [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#) and will receive a grade of zero for the exam and will face academic misconduct proceedings. If you are aware of somebody else violating this policy, you are in violation of this policy. If you are unsure if what you are doing is acceptable, ask first.
- If you miss a midterm for any reason (eg, illness, technical, religious, work obligation, exam scheduling conflict, etc.), its weight is shifted automatically to the final. There are NO MAKEUP, ALTERNATE OR DEFERRED MIDTERMS under any circumstances, nor may they be written early.
- If you miss, or cannot write, the final, you must request a deferred exam according to the process described here (www.mcgill.ca/exams/dates/supdefer). Final exam accommodations are almost never approved for reasons relating to personal vacation/travel or family events.
- If you require university-approved special accommodations (eg, 30 min/hr extra writing time), you must notify me at least 24 hours prior to 00:00 Eastern on the exam day to receive it. You must factor these accommodations into your decision when to begin the exams.
- You may use a non-programmable calculator and scrap paper to assist you, but you may NOT use any other additional materials, including but not limited to the textbook, notes, slides, online or offline materials, external websites, formula sheets, previous exams, dictionaries, your phone/tablet or anything else that would normally fall within the GENERALLY-ACCEPTED definition of cheating. Furthermore, you are to do this exam ON YOUR OWN, without discussing the materials with anybody inside or outside of the class. If you fail to follow any of these instructions, you will receive a grade of zero for the exam and will face academic misconduct proceedings in accordance with McGill’s [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). If you are unsure if what you are doing is acceptable, ask first.
- It is not possible to review your midterms after you complete them. Do not worry though; the final consists of entirely different questions than those that appear on the midterms, so there is nothing to be learned from the exams after you complete them.



Tentative Lecture Schedule and Assigned Readings:

DATE	EVENT	COVERAGE
September 2	Four Economic Questions About Climate Change	Chapter 1
September 4	Ethics and Economics	Chapter 2
September 7	Ethics and Economics	Chapter 2
September 9	Pollution and Resource Degradation as Externalities	Chapter 3
September 11	Pollution and Resource Degradation as Externalities	Chapter 3
September 14	The Efficiency Standard	Chapter 4
September 16	The Efficiency Standard	Chapter 4
September 18	Measuring the Benefits of Environmental Protection	Chapter 5
September 21	Measuring the Benefits of Environmental Protection	Chapter 5
September 23	Measuring the Costs of Environmental Protection	Chapter 6
September 25	Measuring the Costs of Environmental Protection	Chapter 6
September 28	The Safety Standard	Chapter 7
September 30	The Safety Standard	Chapter 7
October 2	The Sustainability Standard	Chapter 8
October 4	MIDTERM 1 (00:00 – 23:59)	Chapters 1 – 6
October 5	The Sustainability Standard	Chapter 8
October 7	Measuring Sustainability	Chapter 9
October 9	Measuring Sustainability	Chapter 9
October 14	Natural Resources and Ecosystem Services	Chapter 10
October 16	Natural Resources and Ecosystem Services	Chapter 10
October 19	Is More Really Better? Consumption, Welfare and Behaviour	Chapter 11
October 21	Is More Really Better? Consumption, Welfare and Behaviour	Chapter 11
October 23	The Political Economy of Environmental Regulation	Chapter 12
October 25	MIDTERM 2 (00:00 – 23:59)	Chapters 7 – 11
October 26	The Political Economy of Environmental Regulation	Chapter 12
October 28	An Overview of Environmental Legislation	Chapter 13
October 30	The Regulatory Record: Achievements and Obstacles	Chapter 14
November 2	The Regulatory Record: Achievements and Obstacles	Chapter 14
November 4	Incentive-Based Regulation: Theory	Chapter 15
November 6	Incentive-Based Regulation: Theory	Chapter 15
November 9	Incentive-Based Regulation: Practice	Chapter 16
November 11	Incentive-Based Regulation: Practice	Chapter 16
November 13	Promoting Clean Technology: Theory	Chapter 17
November 15	MIDTERM 3 (00:00 – 23:59)	Chapters 12 – 16
November 16	Promoting Clean Technology: Theory	Chapter 17
November 18	Energy Policy and the Future	Chapter 18
November 20	Energy Policy and the Future	Chapter 18
November 23	Poverty, Population and the Environment	Chapter 19
November 25	Poverty, Population and the Environment	Chapter 19
November 27	Environmental Policy in Low-Income Countries	Chapter 20
November 30	Environmental Policy in Low-Income Countries	Chapter 20
December 2	The Economics of Global Agreements	Chapter 21
December 3	The Economics of Global Agreements	Chapter 21
TBD	FINAL	Chapters 1 – 21

**Language of Submission:**

In accordance with McGill University's [Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Academic Integrity:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).

Text-Matching Software:

As per McGill University's [Policy on Text-Matching Software](#), this course uses such software. Item 2 of the Policy states, in part, that, "*Students shall also be informed in writing before the end of the drop/add period that they are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative way of attesting to the authenticity of their work. Instructors shall provide students with at least two possible alternatives that are not unduly onerous and that are appropriate for the type of written work.*"

If you prefer an alternative way of attesting to your work's authenticity be used, you may choose to...

- Submit copies of multiple drafts;
- Submit photocopies of sources;
- Take an oral examination directed at issues of originality; or,
- Respond in writing to a quiz or questions directed at issues of originality.

Student Assessment Policy:

The [University Student Assessment Policy](#) exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. Students are encouraged to review this Policy, which addresses multiple aspects and methods of student assessment (eg, the timing of evaluation due dates and weighting of final examinations).

Copyrighted Materials:

Instructor-generated course materials (eg, handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).

Inclusive Learning:

While I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or with the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#).

End-of-Course Evaluations:

[End-of-Course Evaluations](#) are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available.

Students' Rights:

Additional policies governing academic issues that affect students can be found in the [Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).