

ECON225 – McGill University

Economics of the Environment  
Fall 2023 Syllabus

**Class Times:** [REDACTED]  
**Room:** [REDACTED]  
**Credits:** 3

**Instructor:** Michael Babcock  
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**Office Hours:** TBD

***Students are expected to read carefully and follow instructions below:***

*1) In accord with McGill University's Charter of Student Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives. (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)*

*Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue. (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 21 janvier 2009)*

*2) 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. (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See McGill's guide to academic honesty for more information.)*

*L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et procédures disciplinaires. (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le guide pour l'honnêteté académique de McGill.)*

*3) Lecture and associated material for this course are not to be reproduced or placed in the public domain. Each of you are permitted to use these materials for your own purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it by posting it online or giving it or selling it to others who may copy it and make it available. Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions) may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission*

of the instructor. Note that copyright infringements can be subject to follow-up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

4) The University and your course instructor are committed to maintaining teaching and learning spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all. To this end, offensive or harmful language arising in course contexts may be cause for disciplinary action.

5) In the event of circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change. As such portions of the course may be offered remotely, if conditions lead to this being necessary.

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### ***I. 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.

### ***II. Required Textbook***

***ECONOMICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT***

**ISBN: 9781119693505**

**BY GOODSTEIN, EBAN S. AND POLASKY, STEPHEN**

The required textbook is available on mycourses for purchase. Please follow the instructions on mycourses after clicking on the "Willo Reader Links" tab under the ***Content*** tab.

### ***III. Course Assessment:***

<b>Component</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Description</b>
Mid-term 1 (in-class)	15	Chapters 1-5 (Weds. Sept 27)
Mid-term 2 (in-class)	15	Chapters 6-10 (Fri. Oct. 27)
Essay	25	*See below (Due: Nov. 12)
Reflections	15	*See below (Due: throughout term)
Final Exam	30	Chapters 11-21 (Date and Time TBD)

### ***IV. Course Lectures***

- The lecture format for ECON 225 largely follows the assigned textbook. The ultimate goal for the course is to become conversant in issues associated with our current economic system, the environment, and how economics attempts to approach issues such as climate change and pollution. Focus will largely be on understanding how economists and economic thinking think their way through these issues, as well as on some of the analytical

tools they use to make decisions. The objective for the course is in teaching students not only about economic theory and tools, but also how to approach complex societal issues affecting almost all nations today. In working towards these objectives it is expected that you read the assigned textbook material associated with each class prior to lecture.

- There will be several lectures that deviate from the textbook to explore topics in greater detail throughout the term. There will also be three (3) review lectures and one (1) lecture on academic writing prior to submission of the course essay.
- Material associated with the course, including lecture slides and supplementary readings, are found on mycourses. Supplementary readings will NOT be part of the examinations but are there for your interest and, hopefully, your enjoyment.
- There is a feature on mycourses that allows you to turn off notifications emanating from this course. If you do this and you miss a direct message from me over the course of the semester that might mean you miss something very important. So be careful with this. I understand notification/email fatigue, but there are times that I really need to pass on a message to students and if you miss this it could be problematic.
- Lectures are not recorded nor are they live-streamed during class hours. The class will remain this way unless there are directives issued by the university stipulating a change. Attendance at lecture is not mandatory and we will not be taking attendance. We just do the lecturing and mark the assignments and history overwhelmingly shows that those who attend lectures get higher grades than those who do not. While it is likely possible for you to learn all the material on your own without attending class, that's a gamble. In short: if you want to do well, you need to come to class.

#### ***V. TAs and TA Protocol***

- The two (2) wonderful TAs for this course will be the point of contact for students throughout the term. After the add/drop deadline the class will be divided and half of the class will be assigned one (1) TA, and the other half of the class the other TA. For students, this is who you will be having office hours with and who you should contact for these and other inquiries. Office hours will be set up virtually and we will communicate with the class once the hours have been set. Your assigned TA will also be doing your marking for the entirety of the term and all of your assignments. In exceptional circumstances students may email Babcock, but generally emails are to be directed firstly to your TA.
- Regarding emails, it is not that we do not enjoy student emails and interacting with students this way, but any email to which an answer is to be found either in this syllabus or in course/assignment instructions will not be responded to. So, as a quick guide to you, the student, if you send an email asking a question about course materials/instructions and do not receive a response within a few days, check the syllabus and/or assignment instructions. It is probable that the answer to your question is there. We love to help students. It is our job and it is the most rewarding part of this job. But we are also active researchers and

students on tight schedules and we cannot be expected to spend our time responding to questions and emails when the answer is in plain sight.

## ***VI. Written Exams***

- The two mid-term exams will take place in class according to the dates give above in Section III. These will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. Each exam is worth 15 marks and thus 15% of your final grade.
- Barring a significant medical emergency, there are zero exceptions for an absence on one of these dates. Any absence will result in a grade of zero.
- TAs and the instructor will be monitoring students during the writing of exams and will be able to help, if necessary, with any questions. Any student caught with their mobile phone out during the exam will have their exam taken away from them, will be asked to leave the lecture hall, and will receive a grade of zero. The use of scrap paper is permitted.
- Review classes prior to each exam, including the final examination, will focus on material associated with questions on the exam and will help students to focus on particular areas in which they should spend their study time. All examination material will come from the textbook and lecture slides.
- Students registered with McGill's Student Accessibility and Achievement Office are requested to contact this office at the beginning of the term and request documentation outlining any possible accommodations. If applicable, examination and other necessary accommodations will be communicated between student and instructor.
- If you miss or otherwise cannot write the final exam please follow the steps outlined on McGill's *Deferred and Supplemental Exams* webpage.

## ***VII: Essay and Reflections***

- Please see individual course instruction documents uploaded to mycourses for detailed outlines and instructions.