

GGR 416F – Environmental Impact Assessment

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY
University of Toronto

Fall 2017

LECTURE DETAILS: Tuesdays 5-7 pm
TUTORIAL DETAILS: Selected Tuesdays (see schedule), 7-8 pm
LOCATION: UC 330
INSTRUCTOR: Laura Tozer
OFFICE: SS 5038
OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays 1 - 3 PM, or by appointment
EMAIL: laura.tozer@mail.utoronto.ca
COURSE WEBSITE: Blackboard (accessible via <http://portal.utoronto.ca>) *Please consult the course website regularly for course readings, lecture slides, and announcements*

COURSE OVERVIEW

Society's attempts to predict and mitigate the impacts of development are important in this time of growing social and biophysical challenges. This course focuses on the theory and practice of environmental impact assessment (EIA), an environmental protection planning tool. Using a broad definition of environment, various components of EIA are addressed, with an emphasis on principles, legal and institutional frameworks, stages in the process, and specific analytical techniques. This course covers the origins, purpose and processes of EIA in Canada and Ontario, as well as alternative approaches to environmental assessment. We will also critically examine environmental decision-making practices by considering criticisms of EIA, including shortcomings in considerations of climate change and cumulative effects, long-term impact monitoring, meaningful public engagement, Indigenous peoples rights and environmental justice. The course is designed to provide students with knowledge of current practices in EIA, as well as the skills to critically examine and improve environmental decision-making processes.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will:

- gain an understanding of the history of EIA and current challenges and opportunities in the application of EIA in Ontario and Canada
- be able to describe the steps of the environmental assessment process, particularly in Canada
- be able to critically examine environmental assessment thought and practice
- develop their teamwork and presentation skills
- be well prepared to participate effectively in research or professional practice courses in the area of environmental assessment

COURSE MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course. All course readings listed in the schedule will be posted on Blackboard. Students are expected to have done the readings before the class meets and come prepared to participate in discussions and ask questions.

CLASS FORMAT

- One weekly lecture time (lectures, discussions, and guest speakers)
- Four tutorials over the semester (for group work, mandatory participation)
- Group presentations (last two weeks of semester)

EVALUATION

Participation (In-class & tutorial exercises)	10%
Commentaries (2 x 10%)	20%
Midterm	20%
Report Proposal	5%
Group Presentation (10% for the individual contribution and 5% for the overall group effort)	15%
Final Report	30%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) **Reading Commentaries:**

Students will prepare two 750-word commentaries on the course readings' main points and findings. These are analytic responses (not summaries) that evaluate arguments and identify connections between the readings. (More details to come)

2) **Midterm:**

The midterm will be held in class on Week 6 (October 17th). It will be based on course readings and lectures from Weeks 1-5.

3) **Group Project:**

In groups of 3 or 4, you will evaluate a real Canadian EIA case study. Each group member will be responsible for analyzing an aspect of the case study. Group members will divide the main components of the EA into: 1) Biophysical effects; 2) Socio-economic effects; 3) Cumulative effects; 4) Follow-up and monitoring and; 5) Consultation.

- *As a group you will:*

- o Use tutorial time to meet
- o Prepare a group presentation on the EA process for your case study and the strengths and weaknesses of the EA report (20 minutes total with each group member contributing, more details to come)

- *As an individual you will:*

- o Write a report proposal (2 pages double spaced, details to come)
- o Write a final report (10-15 pages double spaced, details to come)

4) **Participation:**

Participation is based on not just attendance at lectures and tutorials, but also participation in class discussions, asking relevant questions about course material, and active attention to guest lectures.

DUE DATES

Commentary 1	Tuesday October 3	Hard copy, at the beginning of class
Midterm	Tuesday October 17	In class
Report Proposal	Tuesday October 31	Hard copy, at the beginning of class
Commentary 2	Tuesday November 14	Hard copy, at the beginning of class
Group Presentation	Tuesday November 28 or December 5	In class
Final Report	Friday December 8	Electronic submission by midnight

LATE PENALTY

There is a late penalty of 5% for each day late. Late assignments must be placed in the Geography Department drop box outside the main office (SS5047). No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date unless prior permission has been obtained from the instructor.

The only exemption from the late penalty will be for work which is late for health reasons, if a University of Toronto Verification of Student Illness or Injury form is provided or other personal reasons, with documentation provided from a College Registrar or Accessibility Services.

PLAGIARISM

For information on documenting sources and problems of plagiarism, see: "How not to plagiarize" (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using_sources/hownottoplagiarize).

Please be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated and that according to the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters, it is an offence for a student to:

1. "represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e., to commit plagiarism."
2. "submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere."
3. "submit for credit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted."

POLICY ON USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Cell phones and other communications devices should either be turned off or in silent mode and should not be used during class or tutorials. Please use your laptop for taking notes in a way that does not disturb other students or distract the instructor.

Taking photos and video recordings are not permitted. Ask permission if you would like to audio record.

SUPPORT AND ACCOMODATION

Accessibility

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

Writing Support

You can get writing support from one of the college writing centres:

- [Innis College Writing Centre](#), Innis College Rooms 315 and 321.
- [New College Writing Centre](#), Wilson Hall, Rooms 2045 and 2047.
- [St. Michael's Writing Centre](#), Kelly Library Learning Commons.
- [Trinity College Writing Centre](#), Larkin Building, Room 302.
- [University College Writing Centre](#), Laidlaw Library, Rooms 214, 216, and 218.
- [Victoria College Writing Centre](#), Northrop Frye Hall 103, Room A and Room B.
- [Woodsworth College Academic Writing Centre](#), Woodsworth Room 214.

All students taking courses in the Faculty of Arts and Science on the St. George campus can make appointments in these writing centres, no matter their college affiliation. This includes UTM and UTSC students (though only for work for St. George campus courses). Go to <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science/> for information about booking an appointment.

Online Resources

More than 60 Advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available from <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>.

English Language Learning

You can find more resources on the webpages of the English Language Learning program (ELL) at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

Mental Health

Many undergraduate students have mental health concerns - you are not alone. Please contact the Health and Wellness Centre for help: <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>

Geography Math Help Centre

Another resource for this course is the department's Math Help Centre. Geography TAs will be available to help refresh and explain math concepts and techniques that may come up in your Geography courses. This includes working with formulas, graphing data, completing calculations, and so forth. It does not matter how basic your questions are! No appointment is required, just drop by. There will also be table space available in the room, allowing students to get math help as they work through assignments. Details on location and TA times will be posted here: <http://geography.utoronto.ca/undergraduate/math-help/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings	Notes
Class 1 Sept 12	Course overview and introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course syllabus 	
Class 2 Sept 19	EIA in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Canada. 2017. Environmental and regulatory reviews: Discussion paper. Morgan, R. 2012. Environmental impact assessment: the state of the art, <i>Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal</i>, 30(1): 5-14. Gibson, R. 2012. In full retreat: the Canadian government's new environmental assessment law undoes decades of progress, <i>Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal</i>, 30(3): 179-188. 	
Class 3 Sept 26	EIA in Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lindgren, R. and Dunn, B. 2010. Environmental assessment in Ontario: Rhetoric vs. Reality, <i>Journal of Environmental Law and Practice</i>, 21: 279-303. Savan, B.I. and Gore, C. 2015. Translating strong principles into effective practice: Environmental Assessment in Ontario, Canada, <i>Journal of Environmental Planning and Management</i> 58(3): 404-422. 	Tutorial 1 Guest Speaker: Richard Lindgren, Canadian Environmental Law Association
Class 4 Oct 3	EA Process: Screening, Scoping, and Impact Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tsui et al. 2010. Getting back to the basics: the Victor Diamond Mine environmental scoping process and the issue of family-based traditional lands versus registered traplines. <i>Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal</i>, 29(1): 37-47 Ehrlich A and Ross W. 2015. The significance spectrum and EIA significance determinations. <i>Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal</i>, 33(2): 87-97. 	Commentary 1 due Tuesday Oct 3
Class 5 Oct 10	Indigenous Peoples' Rights Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booth, A.L. and Skelton, N.W. 2011. Improving First Nations' participation in environmental assessment processes: recommendations from the field. <i>Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal</i>, 29 (1): 49 – 58 Walker, G. 2010. Environmental justice, impact assessment and the politics of knowledge: The implications of assessing the social distribution of environmental outcomes, <i>Environmental Impact Assessment Review</i>, 30(5): 312-318 	Tutorial 2 Guest Speaker Sara Mainville, Senior Associate, Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP
Class 6 Oct 17	Midterm		
Class 7 Oct 24	EA Process: Follow up and monitoring Cumulative Effects Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunsberger CA, Gibson RB and Wismer SK. Citizen Involvement in sustainability-centred environmental assessment follow-up. <i>Environmental Impact Assessment Review</i> 26(5): 609-627. Noble and Birk. 2011. Comfort monitoring? Environmental assessment follow-up under community-industry negotiated environmental agreements, <i>Environmental Impact Assessment Review</i>, 31(1): 17-24. 	Guest Speaker: Erin Flanagan, Program Director, Federal Policy, Pembina Institute
Class 8	Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retief F, Bond A, Pope J, Morrison-Saunders A and 	Tutorial 3

Oct 31	Environmental Assessment, Cumulative Impacts, and Climate Change	<p>King N. 2016. Global megatrends and their implications for environmental assessment practice, <i>Environmental Impact Assessment Review</i>, 61: 52-60.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Byer, PH, Lalani, MJ, and Yeomans, JS. 2009. Addressing and communicating climate change and its uncertainties in project environmental impact assessments. <i>Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management</i> 11(1): 29-5. 	Report Proposal Due Tuesday October 31st
Nov 7	No Class		Reading Week
Class 9 Nov 14	EIA and Global Environmental Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richardson, T. and Cashmore, M. Power, knowledge and environmental assessment: The World Bank's pursuit of 'good governance', <i>Journal of Political Power</i>, 4(1): 105-125 	<p>Commentary 2 due Tuesday Nov 14</p> <p>Guest Speaker: TBA</p> <p>Tutorial 4</p>
Class 10 Nov 21	Effectiveness of EIA Alternatives to EIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pope, J, Bond, AI, Morrison-Saunders, A., Retief, F. 2013. Advancing the theory and practice of impact assessment: Setting the research agenda. <i>Environmental Impact Assessment Review</i> 41: 1-9. Northey, R. 2016. Fading role of alternatives in federal environmental assessment. <i>Journal of Environmental Law and Practice</i>, 29, 41-64. 	
Class 11 Nov 28	Group Presentations		
Class 12 Dec 5	Group Presentations		Final report due Friday December 8th

*The proposed schedule of lectures may be subject to change