

GEOL10500 - Introduction to Environmental Studies
Wednesday 10:10 am to 1:00 pm, @ Hunter W615/online
synchronous
Professor Haydee Salmun

Office location: Hunter North Room 1035 (10th floor)
Email (preferred means of contact: hsalmun@hunter.cuny.edu). Please (1) include the course name; (2) include your entire name. I try to answer all emails within 24 hours. Allow for a 48-hour delay on the weekends.

Office Location: 1035 Hunter North
Office Phone: 212 772 5224
Office Hours: Wednesday 3:00pm – 4:00pm; virtual meetings by appointment

Our synchronous sessions will be conducted either via BlackBoard Collaborate or Zoom. All our sessions will be recorded. While I acknowledge that some of you are working from home and have no dedicated quiet office, I urge you all to be fully present (without distractions) during our synchronous sessions.

Course Description

This course explores important environmental issues facing society today and investigates the science behind those issues. We will study earth's physical systems to understand global climate change, pollution, the use of natural resources, alternative energies and sustainable agriculture. We will also study the fundamentals of evolution and population ecology to understand biodiversity, conservation and the impacts of human activities on different habitats. Finally, we will examine the connections between the biological and physical sciences and environmental politics, environmental economics and environmental ethics and how they each figure in solving environmental problems.

(3 credits; satisfies GER 2E, non-laboratory science; Flexible Core-Scientific World)

Course Learning Objectives

You can expect to finish the course with a basic understanding of:

- The fundamental principles of the physical and biological sciences that govern ecosystems
- The production and uses of energy, mineral and agricultural resources and their related issues of sustainability
- The main sources of environmental pollution and their local and global implications for human and nonhuman life
- The promises and limitations of science and technology for addressing environmental problems
- The complex relationship between science, technology, politics, economics and ethics regarding environmental issues and their potential solutions

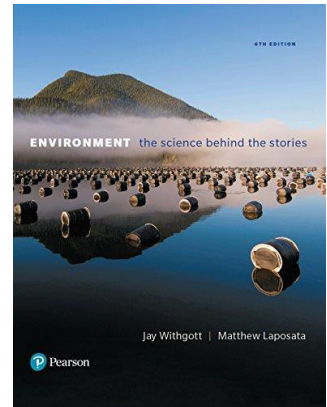
Additional Learning Objectives

GEOL 10500 is designed as a first-year, non-lab science course. As such, in addition to learning the basic concepts of environmental science, you will learn:

- How science works
- Quantitative and qualitative reasoning skills
- How to interpret graphs and tables
- Critical thinking skills
- How to locate and read scientific materials

Required Textbook:

Jay Withgott and Scott Brennan (2017) *Environment, The Science Behind the Stories*, San Francisco: Benjamin Cummings.
ISBN-13: 9780321712738.



This textbook is out of print at this time. Although the lectures are based mostly on the current (6th) edition of this text, an (any) older edition contains the same fundamental information and contents and therefore can be used for the course. may be less expensive, and the basic concepts do not change from the previous edition.

Blackboard

Blackboard will be used as a communication and lecture tool for this course. All course lecture slides, announcements, quizzes, and important documents, including the syllabus and assignment instructions, will be posted and available for your reference. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to the course Blackboard site and to check it regularly for notifications and announcements.

Participation

Proactive engagement with the required readings, and participation in class discussions will count towards your participation grade and will impact your quality of learning and personal growth from this course. The course covers a lot of material over the semester, and the only way we will be productive as a class is if each individual completes the work expected of them. This means you should complete the assigned readings and assignments **PRIOR** to the class for which they are due.

At times we may discuss topics that have strong political or ethical views attached to them. A comfortable and respectful environment is to be maintained in our classroom. Individuals should feel free to express their viewpoints on topics, and we will each respect the views expressed by others. Offensive speech and inflammatory comments will not be tolerated. Keep in mind that while many opinions and solutions may exist for the topics we discuss, we will primarily be concerned with those that can be backed up with information and data obtained through use of the scientific method.

Attendance

The mode of instruction for the course is hybrid: 50% in-person instruction, 50% online instruction. **FULL TIME** attendance is required to receive credit at every class session. You should arrive to class sessions **on time**. If you have a legitimate reason for

missing a session, **you should let me know as soon as possible and may be excused.** In addition, you should check Blackboard immediately for missed information so that you do not fall behind. We will be moving quickly in this course, and it is your responsibility to keep up.

Extra Credit

I **do not** offer extra credit. By participating fully and thoughtfully in in-class discussions, completing the assigned readings and quizzes, and consistently attending lectures, you can expect to see positive outcomes both in your overall learning in this course as well as in your final course grade.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation and Attendance	10% of your total grade
Scientific article/projects.....	20% of your total grade
Chapter quizzes.....	20% of your total grade
Midterm Exam	25% of your total grade
Final Exam	25% of your total grade

Group Project-Synthesizing a Scientific Article

You will work with a small group (2-3 people) to prepare an oral presentation on a project or scientific article relevant to the syllabus. A range of topics will be provided for students to choose from and group arrangement will be determined by the instructor. Time will be allocated for students to meet and discuss their projects over the course of the semester, which requires your attendance to participate. Each presentation will be approximately 10 minutes long. In addition, each individual will submit a written summary report of the scientific article and a group evaluation of their group work. Further details will be provided after the semester begins.

Chapter Quizzes:

Starting on 9/22, weekly quizzes will be assigned consisting of multiple-choice questions from the assigned readings and course lectures. Links to the quizzes will be posted on Blackboard. Quizzes must be submitted between the time the material is presented in class and the midnight before the next class. Quizzes will have a 1-hour limit and must be completed when the quiz is started. Questions will be randomized for each student, and students may only access the quiz one time. The answer key will only be available after the quiz link expires. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

Exam Guidelines and Policies

Exams will be based on assigned textbook readings, journal articles, materials covered in class and class discussions. Therefore, your attendance, attentiveness, and participation at in-class lectures and discussions will be extremely important to your success in the course. Dates are CLEARLY posted on the Course Calendar and Content. Examinations are 1 hour and 15 minutes for the mid-term and 2 hours for the final exam. No electronic devices or reference materials will be permitted on the desk during exams unless specified. No late examinations will be accepted. However, if due to a valid medical emergency, you do miss an exam or assignment, you must contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam and present

acceptable documentary evidence for your absence. This means that make-up exams are ONLY available in extreme cases, and with medical (or other) forms that confirm the absence.

CR/NCR Policy

The CR-NCR option will be honored as allowed by Hunter College standards and policies.

Attendance and Classroom Policies

Attendance and class participation constitutes 10% of the final grade. Attendance is required at all lectures. All students are expected to abide by the following policies when in lecture in order to provide a more respectful and productive learning environment.

- All cell phones must be silenced.
- Laptops are permitted for note taking purposes only.
- Texting and other non-class related smart phone activities are not allowed. Students should quietly excuse themselves from the lecture if substantial external electronic communication is required.

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice whenever possible. Updates will be posted regularly on BlackBoard.

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL INFORMATION

My Teaching Philosophy: My goal in teaching is to help students in becoming confident and responsible professionals and to make this experience an enjoyable one. My approach to teaching involves being a facilitator in the learning process as opposed to being the authoritarian lecturer at the front of the room with a “one-way information transfer” style. I understand and respect individual differences in learning and do my best to promote learning in the classroom by working with individual differences rather than against them. At the same time, I wish to impart technical skills and a sense of responsibility by encouraging students to play the role of professionals in the classroom.

I expect students to put their best effort in this course. This involves participating in the in-class exercises, reading the assigned material, working out in-class assignments and/or class projects, editing when necessary until they are clear and correct, and preparing for quizzes and exams.

I strongly recommend that students start with a good study habit. Consistency is the key. Forming study groups is extremely helpful. Use my office hours and any other resource available to you throughout the semester. Make progress steadily as the material in this course cannot be understood the night before the exam. Concentrate on understanding rather than ‘regurgitating’. Put out your best effort every day.

The following are useful tips to do well in this or any class:

- Attend class and take detailed notes.
- Read the assigned material in the text (or other) *before* coming to class.

- Re-write your notes as soon as possible after class. This will allow you to fill in the details still fresh in your memory, and prepare questions for the next time the class meets.
- Test yourself by answering the questions in the book and in class.
- Carefully study the diagrams and charts in the book and in the lectures.

**** A detailed schedule of classes, topics and reading assignments is available on BlackBoard ****

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION – A PERSONAL STATEMENT

I am committed to fostering an intellectual environment that is enriched and enhanced by diversity in all dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. I am especially committed to increasing the representation of populations that have been historically excluded from participation in U.S. higher education in STEM fields, particularly in geoscience and earth science. It is my hope that we can work together and collectively move closer to accomplish that objective

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

ADA POLICY

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230.

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College affirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-biased harassment retaliation against student, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationship. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

- A. **Sexual violence:** students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College’s Public Safety Office (212-772-4444)
- B. **All other forms of sexual misconduct:** Students are strongly encouraged to contact the College’s Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean Jean Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or

212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barr7@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complementary services through the Counseling and Wellness services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link:

<http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/policy-on-sexual-misconduct-12-1-14-with-link.pdf>