

San José State University
ENVS/ECON 107, Environmental Economics and Policy,
Spring 2015

Instructor:	Dr. Alexander Gershenson
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Office Hours:	T/TH 11:00-12:00 or by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Sec. 1: T, Th: 12:00-1:15 Sec. 2 T, Th 3:00-4:15
Classroom:	Sec 1: BBC 107 Sec. 2 BBC 105
Prerequisites:	ECON 1B or instructor consent.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

This course is designed to engage students with concepts of environmental and ecological economics, and provide students with a firm grounding in understanding environmental economics through the prism of environmental issues. Economic thinking is integral to the way societies engage with problems, and understanding the way decisions are made, and factors that go into decisions making, are at the heart of economic approaches to such problems. Throughout the semester we will review basic economic concepts, and examine the way environmental and ecological economists adapt neoclassical economic tools to environmental issues. Topics include property rights and externalities, natural resource valuation, exhaustible and renewable resources, and sustainable development. We will review, criticize, extend, and develop the basic economic tools which all students of environmental policy must understand. It is equally critical to understand how economics can be used as an ideological tool to protect special privileged interests and to defend unsustainable strategies of “business as usual.” In this course we will explore political and economic aspects of the use and abuse of renewable and non-renewable resources. Given the increasingly serious world-wide human impact on the environment, it is hard to overstate the importance of this topic. I will also focus on a related skill set that is of paramount importance in today’s world, and that I discovered most students have trouble with. Throughout the semester, we will work on learning basic functions of Excel (or whatever your preferred spreadsheet software is). In the past I found out that most students had a very vague notion of how to use spreadsheet software, and it will be critical that you learn how to use it for this course, as well as for the future.

Canvas

All coursework, all readings, all lectures, etc., will be published on the course Canvas page. You can access Canvas here <https://sjsu.instructure.com/>, for help with logging into Canvas please see <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/docs/Canvas-Student%20Login%20Information.pdf>

Your first assignment is to create a profile on Canvas including a picture of your face, clearly visible.

Course Description

Catalog description

Analysis of basic economic and political factors related to the environmental crisis. Surveys policy approaches to the problem: regulation, taxes, subsidies, cost benefit analysis.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Harris, 2006. *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics*. Second Edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.

This text is available for free on Canvas, in PDF format. You may choose to buy a paper copy, there are plenty of used copies available on Amazon etc. There is also a newer edition available for sale, you may choose to use that one, it has additional useful materials, but nothing substantial enough to justify mandatory purchasing.

Other Readings

Additional readings will be made available to students electronically on Canvas. These readings will be assigned during the semester. It is your responsibility to pay attention to announcements on additional readings, which will be made in class. Do the reading; succeeding in the course will be difficult otherwise

Classroom Protocol

* The course will use the Canvas learning management system for announcements, readings, assignments, uploads of instructor presentations. You are responsible for regularly (daily, perhaps) checking the course's web page.

* Personal electronic devices: Turn off your cell phones, iPods, media player, and any other electronic device, or put them on silent mode while class in session. Do not answer your phone or text during class. Violation of these policies will result in the loss of participation points, and repeated violations will be referred to the SJSU's Judicial

Affairs Officer.

* Computers in the classroom: You may apply to use a computer during this class only for class-related activities. You must apply in writing to explain that you want to use a computer, and pledge that you will only use it for taking notes on an in-progress class lecture or discussion, following the lecture on downloaded presentations or readings. Students who use their computers for ANY other activities (email, facebook, surfing, etc.) will, at a minimum, lose 50% of participation points for the semester, and lose computer privileges for the rest of the course; at a maximum, they will be referred to SJSU's Judicial Affairs Officer for disrupting the course (and can lead to suspension from the University). Computer use for non-class activities is disrupting to you, the people around you, and the instructors.

* Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material

* Course material developed by either of the instructors is the intellectual property of the respective instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Assignments and Grading Policy

This is a participation-intensive course that relies on your consistent and active engagement. In case of an emergency, please do everything in your power to contact me prior to missing class or work. I will only accept late work in cases of extreme medical or family emergency. Otherwise, late work will be subject to a 10% grade penalty per calendar day.

Homework assignments (300 pts): There will be a series of homework assignments throughout the semester that you will complete on Canvas. You are responsible for accessing Canvas and completing assignments by the due date. I will drop the lowest score from your total. Excel assignments will be part of this grade

Participation (100 pts): The course requires participation in class. Participation includes being prepared for class (completing readings assigned for that day), participating in class discussion, doing well on pre-class quizzes, and most importantly asking questions in class. Studies have shown that simply being present for lecture does not result in successful learning outcomes. Engagement with the material, if students are to achieve successful understanding of the material, has to include active participation.

Midterm (250 pts): The midterm will assess your understanding of the course material, including readings, homework assignments, and lectures

Final (350 pts): The final will assess your understanding of the course material, including readings, homework assignments, and lectures. The final exam will be cumulative, but will focus heavily on the second half of the class.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following point scale:

A	925-1000 points	B-	795-824 points	D+	665-694 points
A-	895-924 points	C+	765-794 points	D	625-664 points
B+	865-894 points	C	725-764 points	D-	595-624 points
B	825-864 points	C-	695-724 points	F	0-594 points

At SJSU, students are expected to spend at least two hours outside of class for every one hour of in-person class time. Because this is a three-unit course, you can expect to spend a minimum of 6 hours per week completing class-related assignments in addition to the in-person class meetings. Assignments include reading for class, homework assignments, preparation for exams, and occasional pre-class quizzes. These assignments may require work beyond the minimum 6-hours of work outside the classroom. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to succeed in all your classes.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For

this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/> to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources (Optional)

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections (Optional)

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in

the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center (Optional)

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

ENVS/ECON 107 / Environmental Economics and Policy

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice via Canvas and/or email and/or class announcement.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
January 22	Introduction to Ecological Economics, Course Overview	
January 27	Basic Economics: Supply and Demand	H. Ch. 1
January 29	Basic Economics: Markets, Assumptions	H. Ch. 1
February 3	Wealth, Growth and Sustainability	H. Ch. 2
February 5	Intro To Excel	BRING LAPTOP
February 10	TED	TBA
February 12	Externalities and Property Rights	H. Ch. 3
February 17	Property Rights & Public Goods	H. Ch. 4
February 19	Resource Allocation Over Time	H. Ch. 5
February 24	Valuing the Environment	H. Ch. 6
February 26	Ecological Economics: A different path	H. Ch. 7
March 3	Ecological Economics: Accounting	H. Ch. 8
March 5	Ecological Economics: Modeling systems	H. Ch. 9
March 10	REVIEW	
March 12	MIDTERM EXAM	
March 17	Issues in Env. Econ: Population	H. Ch. 10
March 19	Issues in Env. Econ: Agriculture	H. Ch. 11
March 24	SPRING BREAK	
March 26	SPRING BREAK	
March 31	Cesar Chavez Day	
April 2	Issues in Env. Econ: Non-renewable energy	H. Ch. 12
April 7	Issues in Env. Econ: Energy future	H. Ch. 13
April 9	Issues in Env. Econ: Fisheries	H. Ch. 14
April 14	Issues in Env. Econ: Forests	H. Ch. 15 until p. 339
April 16	Issues in Env. Econ: Water	H. Ch. 15 pp. 340-353
April 21	Issues in Env. Econ: Pollution	H. Ch. 16
April 23	Issues in Env. Econ: Making things better	H. Ch. 17
April 28	Issues in Env. Econ: Biodiversity	TBA
April 30	Issues in Env. Econ: Climate Change	H. Ch. 18
May 5	Climate Change con't	H. Ch. 18
May 7	Issues in Env. Econ: Trade	H. Ch. 19, Ch. 20
May 12	REVIEW	
FINAL	SEC 1 Friday, May 15 09:45-12:00 SEC 2 Monday, May 18 14:45-17:00	