

# ECON 3545: Environmental Economics

## Syllabus

**Instructor:** Grant Webster

**Office Hours:** M/T/W 9:30-10:30am

**Office:** ECON 401

**TA:** Dongkyu Yang, ECON 309B

**E-mail:** grant.webster@colorado.edu

**Class Hours:** M/W/F 2:30-3:20pm

**Class Room:** CLRE 207

**TA Office Hours:** Friday 1:30-3pm

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## Course Description

This course introduces students to the economic analysis of environmental issues and policies. Highlights the causes of excessive environmental pollution and tools for controlling it through economic analysis. This course will cover topics on the values of preservation, climate change, and the distribution of costs and benefits from environmental policies.

## Course Materials

**Optional but recommended:** Harris, Jonathan and Roach, Brian. *Environmental and Natural Resource Economics: A Contemporary Approach*, 5th edition

## Prerequisites

ECON 2010 (Principles of Microeconomics), with a minimum grade of a C-. Economics (ECON) majors may be approved to enroll with advisor & instructor approval and count towards the major GPA. Majors must consult with assigned ECON advisor to determine eligibility to be enrolled. Degree credit not granted for this course and ECON 4545.

## Course Objectives

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Use evidence to identify sources and consequences of environmental degradation associated with human activity.
2. Understand and explain the incentives and economic fundamentals that underlie these activities and develop policies that balance the costs and benefits associated with environmental economic policy.
3. Comprehend research in environmental economics and critically analyze policy and media surrounding environmental issues.

4. Develop and concisely communicate environmental policy in a manner that is understandable to policymakers and the general public.

## Grading Criteria

### Grading Policy

The typical Colorado grading scale will be used. I reserve the right to curve the scale dependent on overall class scores at the end of the semester. Any curve will only ever make it easier to obtain a certain letter grade. The grade will count the assessments using the following proportions:

- Attendance: 5%
- Homework: 20%
- Writing Assignments: 20%
- Midterm: 25%
- Final Exam: 30%

### Homework

Each week there will be one homework assignment on the material for that chapter. Homework assignments will be due at 11:59pm on Sunday each week. These assignments will be completed on canvas and may consist of a few multiple-choice or short-answer questions.

### Writing Assignments

Two written assignments will be given out over the course of the semester. These assignments will give you an opportunity to write about current environmental economic issues. These writing assignments will be about 2 pages double spaced. More details on the topic of these papers will be provided further into the course. You will be graded on how relevant the article you choose is, the quality of your writing, how well you relate the article back to class, and how well you use evidence and economic principles to back up your policy recommendations. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a zero for the assignment.

### Midterm and Final Exam

The midterm exam will be given on **March 22th**.

The final exam will be given on **May 7th** from 1:30-4 pm.

### Attendance Policy

As this is an upper-level course, attendance is strongly recommended but not required. Attendance will be taken at 7 random times over the course of the semester. You will need to be present during 5 of these times to earn the full 5% attendance grade. If you are present the other times as well this will count as up to 2% extra credit.

## **Course Policies**

### **During Class**

I will expect you to maintain a high standard of professionalism at all times in this class. Please be respectful to your peers as we discuss environmental and economic concepts. I understand that the electronic recording of notes will be important for class and so computers will be allowed in class. Please refrain from using computers for anything but activities related to the class. Eating and drinking are allowed in class but please refrain from it affecting the course.

### **Policies on Incomplete Grades and Late Assignments**

Late assignments will be accepted for no penalty if a valid excuse is communicated to the instructor before the deadline. After the deadline, assignments will be accepted for a 50% deduction from the score up to one week after the deadline. After this, any assignments handed in will be given 0.

### **Communication**

To make things easier on everyone, I will try to communicate to the class primarily through Canvas announcements or email, so be sure to have Canvas notifications on so that you do not miss anything. If you need to contact me, feel free to visit during my office hours or send me an email and I will get back to you as quickly as possible. I do ask that before emailing me, you check this syllabus for an answer to your question first. Please allow 24 hours for me to respond before sending a follow-up email.

## **University Policies**

### **Classroom Behavior**

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the classroom behavior policy, the Student Code of Conduct, and the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance.

### **Requirements for COVID-19**

As a matter of public health and safety, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. CU Boulder currently requires COVID-19 vaccination and boosters for all faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff must upload proof of vaccination and boosters or file for an exemption based on medical, ethical or moral grounds through the MyCUHealth portal.

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask-optional. However, if public health conditions change and masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

If you feel ill and think you might have COVID-19, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)). If you are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay home; rather, you should self-monitor for symptoms and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)).

### **Accommodation for Disabilities**

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see Temporary Medical Conditions on the Disability Services website.

### **Preferred Student Names and Pronouns**

CU Boulder recognizes that students’ legal information doesn’t always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors’ class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student’s legal name.

### **Honor Code**

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code may include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the Honor Code will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found on the Honor Code website.

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## **Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation**

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about university policies, reporting options, and support resources can be found on the OIEC website.

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit [Don't Ignore It](#).

## **Religious Holidays**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. See the campus policy regarding religious observances for full details.