

Department of Economics  
Environmental Studies Program  
University of Colorado at Boulder

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Office: Economics 102

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**ECON 8545**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS II**  
**FALL 2022**  
**TTH 11:15-12:30**

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**Overview:**

This course is an applied course in environmental economics with an emphasis on energy markets and energy consuming technologies. The focus is on empirical studies of environmental regulation, measurement of damages from pollution, producer and consumer behavior. The goal is to provide students interested in these topics, the tools necessary to begin conducting their own research.

**Office Hours and Contact Information:**

Professor: Jonathan Hughes  
Office location: Economics 102  
Office hours (Zoom): Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30pm to 2:00pm (or by appointment)  
Phone: (303) 735-0220  
Email: jonathan.e.hughes@colorado.edu  
Class web site: <https://canvas.colorado.edu/>

**Background Texts:**

There is no required textbook for this course. Course readings can generally be downloaded from JSTOR, NBER, etc. or for other working papers, from the web sites listed in the course schedule. Please *contact me* if you have difficulty downloading the required readings. In addition to these readings, graduate texts in environmental economics, industrial organization and applied microeconometrics will provide useful background to the topics covered in the course. Excellent examples include:

Kennedy, "A Guide to Econometrics."  
Angrist and Pischke, "Mostly Harmless Econometrics."  
Cameron and Trivedi, "Microeconometrics: Methods and Applications."  
Baumol and Oates, "The Theory of Environmental Policy."  
Freeman, "The Measurement of Environmental and Resource Values."  
Tirole, "The Theory of Industrial Organization."

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Reading/Paper discussions	25%
Referee reports	15%
Quizzes (4)	30%
Research paper/proposal	30%

**Reading/Paper discussions:**

Please come to class each day ready to discuss the assigned reading. **Prepare a summary of each paper using the “Discussion” section of Canvas, due by 9 am on the day of class.** Each discussion focuses on the paper’s contributions, empirical approach, identification of the parameter(s) of interest, etcetera; and any major assumptions or limitations of the study. Students will lead a portion of the in-class discussion based on their online discussion comments.

**Referee Reports:**

Each student is required to submit two original referee reports on unpublished empirical papers in environmental economics. I will select each paper from the NBER EEE or similar working paper series. The report should not exceed 4 pages. Each report should (briefly) summarize the main contribution of the paper, strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement. Your goal is to critically evaluate the manuscript and provide feedback the author(s) could use to improve their work. Due dates are: **October 11, 2022** and **November 15, 2022**.

**Quizzes:**

There will 4 take home (open book) quizzes on **September 13, 2022, October 4, 2022, October 25, 2022** and **November 29, 2022**. If you have a conflicts with any of these dates, please contact me during the first week of class to discuss alternate arrangements.

**Research Paper/Proposal:**

You have begun to transition from consumers of economics to producers of economics. An important part of this process is developing original research questions. Each student will complete a research paper or well-developed research proposal due on the last day of class, **December 8, 2022**. Students should submit a preliminary list of 3-5 potential research questions, including data sources if an empirical project, by **September 8, 2022**. I will meet with each of you during the week of September 11, 2022 to discuss these ideas. A one-page description of the project that identifies the data you will use and your research question should be turned in on **September 22, 2022**. The project should deal with an important empirical question in environmental economics. I am not necessarily looking for a finished paper. However, a successful project must: 1.) Pose an interesting and original research question. 2.) Identify and obtain data suitable for answering this question and 3.) Outline an empirical strategy that can plausibly answer the question of interest.

**Late Assignments and Missed Examinations:**

No late assignments will be accepted except in the case of documented medical or family emergency. No make-up quizzes will be given. If you foresee a conflict, contact me as soon as possible in order to make alternate arrangements for you to complete the requirements of this course.

**Campus Policies:** I will adhere to all campus policies with respect to disabilities, religious observances, appropriate behavior, discrimination and harassment, and academic conduct. See <https://www.colorado.edu/academicaffairs/policies-customs-guidelines/required-syllabus-statements>