

San José State University
College of Social Science/Department of Environmental Studies
ENVS/ECON 107, Introduction to Environmental Economics and Policy
Spring 2025

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Chiao Su
Office Location:	WSQ 115B
Telephone:	N/A
Email:	cheng.su@sjsu.edu (Best contact is through Canvas)
Office Hours:	By Appointment Only
Class Days/Time:	Lecture: Monday and Wednesday 3:00 PM to 4:15 PM Lab Session: Monday and Wednesday 4:30 PM to 5:30 PM
Classroom:	Synchronous Online
Prerequisites:	ECON 1B or Instructor Consent

Course Description

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

Course Overview

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the theory and practices of environmental economics. This course will provide a firm understanding of how economic concepts can be applied to address environmental issues. We will examine the economic underpinnings of environmental problems by exploring case studies on various topics. We will review, extend, criticize, and develop the basic economic tools that all students of environmental policy must understand.

Course Format

This class is taught in person. Students are required to have access to Microsoft Excel. Critical information for the class is posted on the Canvas website.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic environmental economic concept (e.g. externality, property rights)
2. Formulate conclusions by applying the basic concepts and tools from environmental economics and develop an understanding of how such conclusions can be used to guide environmental policy.
3. Understand the political and economic aspects of pollution, renewable and non-renewable resource consumption.
4. Help student build various spreadsheet and office software skills; provide more realistic applications of environmental economic theory.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Environmental and Natural Resource Economics: A Contemporary Approach (5th Edition), by Harris, J.M. and B. Roach. ISBN-10: 0367531380

Other Readings

Additional readings will be provided on Canvas

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

- USB Flash drive for lab sessions
- Computer, with access to MS Excel, MS Word, and Canvas
- Scientific or graphing calculator (please check with instructor for compatibility)

Course Requirements and Assignments

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 assignments.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

ENVS 107 Delineation of Workload (4 Units)

Course Component	Student Work	Instructor Engagement
Regular 3 units (9 hrs./wk.)	Reading, Reading Responses (in form of online discussion posts) Reading Quizzes, Problem sets (7), Exams (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.5 instructor contact hours/week• Prepare and deliver lecture and in-class activities• Evaluate student work and provide specific and actionable feedback
Lab Activity 1 unit (3 hrs./wk.)	Weekly hands-on lab exercise workshops and 5 write ups to supplement problem sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 instructor contact hours/week• Prepare and lead students through hands on Excel exercise in computer lab• Evaluate student work and provide specific and actionable feedback

Canvas Instructions

For this course, all take home assignments, papers, and lab exercises must be turned in through the Canvas learning management system, unless otherwise noted. If you have trouble with this, please come see me during class or office hours.

Exams

There will be 2 midterm exams and a final exam. Each subsequent exam will be cumulative, which will cover materials from previous exam plus any new materials. The exams will heavily focus on topics covered in the problem sets.

Assignments

Discussions: Each week there are discussions on Canvas, where students are required to post an original comment, and post a response to a comment from a fellow student. Comments should be a reasoned opinion that uses critical thinking. Comments will be graded based on insight, accuracy, reasoning, and grammar.

Problem Sets: There will be a problem set assigned after the conclusion of each chapter. Question formats will be multiple choice, numerical, and short response. The main purpose of these problem sets is to help students solidify their understanding of lecture material and to prepare for exams.

Lab Exercises

There will be 5 lab exercises assigned throughout this course. Lab exercises will be conducted during the lab sections. These exercises will correspond to the current problem sets and will primarily be completed using Microsoft Excel.

Grading Information

Your final grade in the class will depend on the following categories, which are weighted as follows:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>CLO Assessed</i>	<i>Percent of Grade</i>
• Discussions:	CLO 1, 2, 3	10%
• Problem Sets:	CLO 1, 2, 4	25%
• Lab Exercises:	CLO 4	25%
• Exam 1:	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4	10%
• Exam 2:	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4	10%
• Final Exam:	CLO 1, 2, 3, 4	20%

Determination of Grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>97 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 96%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89%</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

Late Policy

All assignments are due by the due date and time listed in the course calendar. If you miss the deadline and you haven't contacted me for an extension, the work will incur a point penalty of 10% per 24 hours. Exceptions may be considered in rare circumstances for legitimate and third-party documented circumstances (medical emergency, death in the family)

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to attend all lectures and arrive to class on time. Participation in classroom discussions is an important component of the course, and so students are expected to have completed the required reading for each lecture prior to class meetings. Laptop use during lecture is acceptable, however, use of cellphones is discouraged. Use of electronic devices may be prohibited if usage becomes disruptive.

University Policies (Required)

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>. **Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.**