

**EVR 1001 INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

**Syllabus – Spring 2020**

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**Course Description:** General education non-laboratory course which provides a survey of basic chemical, biological, and physical principles of environmental science and ecology, the application of these principles to current political, scientific, and economic issues and our responsibility for the environment. Students should be prepared to complete college level reading and writing assignments as part of this course.

This course is taught entirely online. All students are expected to have regular and reliable access to the internet and the online classroom.

**Text:** *Principles of Environmental Science, Cunningham & Cunningham, 9th Edition*. Additional reading may be provided or recommended by the instructor during the semester.

**Important Dates:**

See the Academic Calendar: <http://valenciacollege.edu/calendar/>

Drop/Refund Deadline: Monday, January 13th, 2020 at 11:59 pm

Withdrawal Deadline – “W” Grade: Friday, March 20th, 2020 at 11:59 pm

**Valencia Student Core Competencies:**

The faculty of Valencia College have defined four Core Competencies that describe the learning outcomes for a Valencia graduate. They are: THINK, VALUE, COMMUNICATE, ACT. These competencies are outlined in the College website.

**Prerequisites (Course and Skill Set):**

This course is taught entirely online. All students are expected to have regular and reliable access to the internet and the online classroom and be proficient with the tools in the online classroom.

**Availability of Course Content:**

Quizzes and class participation assignments will become available on Monday at the beginning of the week in which they are due, allowing a full week to complete each quiz or class participation assignment. The **final exam** will become available on **Wednesday April 15, 2020** and will be due on **Tuesday April 21, 2020**. Working ahead on tests will not normally be possible, unless we make special arrangements in advance. Students are required to keep up with the scheduled assignments each week.

**Required Interaction:**

Class participation in the discussion forums is required. See the information on class participation in the “Assignments” section of this syllabus for detailed information. Students are strongly encouraged to participate at a level beyond the minimum requirements in order to get the maximum benefit from this course. **All class communications should be conducted via the Canvas online classroom.** The prime responsibility for timely communications rests with you - the student. We will use the following methods:

1. **Discussion Forums:** I will create several discussion forums within the Canvas online classroom. Your class participation grade will be determined by your participation in the discussion forums. You are responsible for all information published here.
2. **Class Announcements:** I will be possibly posting announcements on a weekly basis. These will remind the class of upcoming due dates, assignment and exam information, and other important administrative information. You should look for new announcements every time you log into the online classroom. Occasionally, time sensitive announcements will be posted on Canvas. You should logon 2-3 times each week to check for time-sensitive messages. You are responsible for all information published here.
3. **Canvas Messages:** Canvas messages are private and secure text-based communication that occurs within a course and among course members. Although similar to e-mail, users must be logged into the course to read and send messages.
4. **Valencia E-mail:** You can reach me at the e-mail address listed above.

**What you can expect from me:**

I normally log in to Canvas and check for messages at least once per day. If you have an urgent message for me, do not post the same message both on a Discussion Forum and in an e-mail. Doing both will waste your time and will not result in my getting the message any faster. If I expect to be out of contact for more than a couple of days, I will inform the class in advance**. Important note:** If I have not responded to your e-mail by the end of the day after you left the message, you should assume that I did not receive it and leave another message.

**Other Critical Course Expectations:**

1. Each student must have reliable access to the internet and should plan to log into the course at least 2-3 times per week.
2. Regular access to a computer with an internet connection, web browser, word processing software and Adobe Acrobat Reader PDF viewing software is required.
3. Reasonable familiarity with web browsing, Canvas, e-mail and word processing is also required.
4. All assignments will be completed, submitted and returned by electronic means.
5. There is no requirement to take any tests on campus or in any proctored setting.

**Attendance:**

Each instructor must exercise professional judgment to determine if a student is actively participating in class. This policy will be used to determine grades as well as administrative withdrawals for lack of attendance.

1. Students may withdraw without academic penalty from any course by the established deadline published in the College’s calendar. This will result in a grade of “W” for the course and will not count against the student’s GPA.
2. It is the responsibility of the student wishing to withdraw from the course to do so by the date published in the College Academic Calendar. Any student wishing to withdraw from the course must do so himself or herself in accordance with current Valencia College procedures.
3. If you do not attend the class within the first days of class, you will be reported during the No Show reporting period **(January 14, 2020 through January 23, 2020)** and will be withdrawn from the course.
4. Students who abandon the course or do not withdraw themselves by the published deadline are subject to receiving a grade of F.
5. Valencia College requires instructors to monitor student attendance and participation in educational activities on a weekly basis. Students are required to participate in their online course each week as verified by activity within the Canvas Learning Management System.
6. There will usually be at least one assignment in this course that is due every week of the semester, unless the College is officially closed for the entire week. These may include discussion forum posts for class participation, exams and quizzes, homework, projects, or a combination of these. I will take attendance each week based on your submission of the assignments that are due that week, so it is important that you submit every assignment on time. If you submit all of the week’s assignments late, you will be marked as absent from class for that week. If at least one assignment is submitted on time each week, you will be marked as present.
7. Simply logging into the online classroom without submitting any of the assignments due is not sufficient to count for attendance purposes.
8. If you are in your third or subsequent attempt at completing a course, you will be given a grade of F at any point in the term that you exceed two consecutive weeks of unexcused or otherwise undocumented absence. Excused absences, of course will not count against you.
9. If you discover that your access to the online classroom has been removed, it is important that you contact me via internet e-mail as soon as possible to discuss the situation.
10. It is the student’s responsibility to find out what was covered in class if absent.

**Grading:**

The following grade scale will apply to this class

A: 90 - 100 %

B: 80 - 89.99 %

C: 70 - 79.99 %

D: 60 - 69.99 %

F: below 60 %

Your final class average will be determined using the following weightings:

Class Participation: 25% (16 discussion forums)

Quiz Average: 50% (5 quizzes)

Final Exam: 25%

Your grade will be determined by your weighted average. The weight of each component of your grade is listed in the above table. Your weighted average is determined by the following formula. Each grade is expressed as a percentage:

**Weighted Average = (Class Participation Grade \* 0.25) + (Average Quiz Grade \* 0.50) + (Final Exam Grade \* 0.25)**

DO NOT simply add up the points you have earned on each assignment and divide by the total number of points possible. This is not the correct way to determine your grade in this course.

**Late Work:**

1. All assignments, quizzes, and final exam are due no later than 11:59 pm Eastern Time on the date indicated in the Schedule of Assignments.
2. Any assignment, including class participation, quizzes and final exam, not submitted by the date and time specified in the Schedule of Assignments is considered late, unless you have contacted me and I have approved an extension in advance.
3. Assignments, including class participation, quizzes and final exam, will not be accepted late unless you have contacted me and we have mutually agreed on an alternate submission date in advance. Posting class participation messages late will add little to the class discussion of those topics.
4. Internet connection and/or computer problems are not an acceptable excuse for late work. You should have a plan in place for internet and/or computer access in case your primary method is unavailable. I strongly recommend submitting assignments at least one full day early to allow time to recover from technical problems.
5. If you are unable to access the online classroom due to a College server outage on the date that the assignment is due, the following guidelines apply. If I have not heard from you before the deadline I will not waive the late penalty describe above.
   1. Send me an internet e-mail before the assignment is due and attach the assignment to the e-mail if applicable.
   2. If there is a problem with the Canvas server that prevents completing an exam or quiz, I will make a reasonable accommodation and publish the information in the online classroom as soon as I am able to log on myself.
6. If you are out of contact and miss a deadline due to an extenuating circumstance, I expect you to contact me as soon as possible to discuss the situation. No exceptions will be made to the above policies unless you can provide documentation of the situation that I consider adequate.

**Assignments:**

**Course Schedule of Assignments:**

1. The Course Schedule of Assignments lists all of the assignments required by this course and their due dates. I strongly recommend you print this out and refer to it often.
2. Online classes require a large amount of motivation and discipline from the students to follow the schedule on their own. Students are responsible for following the class schedule. Consult your schedule before you start a new chapter or section. (Note: Some sections may not be covered in the same order as in the text). If you ever have a question that begins with “When is...” the answer is probably already published in the Schedule of Assignments. Looking here first will probably get you a quick answer to your question.
3. On occasion, I will assign additional work via the discussion forums. Pay attention!
4. There is NEVER an acceptable excuse for not knowing when assignments are due since this information is available to you on the first day of the semester.

**Class Participation:**

Some online students think that since we have no formal class sessions, they are left on their own and have nobody to turn to for help. Far too many students never ask a question, then quit because they are struggling alone in the dark. An active discussion forum is a great way to ask for and receive assistance when you need it, but too many students read very few of the posted messages. To encourage students to read the discussion forums, and to encourage you to ask questions when you are having trouble with a topic, part of your grade will be determined by your class participation.

Class participation is defined as posting a minimum number of substantial, separate, and distinct messages to the various discussion forums. These discussions board messages must be posted before the deadlines in the Schedule of Assignments to count toward your class participation grade.

**For the purpose of this class, a substantial message must:**

1. Make sure you answer the question proposed by the instructor in the discussion forum. Off-topic messages will not count toward your participation grade.
2. Provide a good explanation of a concept or concepts related to the material discussed in the forum, or give a good example of how a concept can be applied, or provide an insightful response to a previous post.
3. Don’t post a message that says things like “I learned how greenhouse emissions can be controlled” or “I learned about environmental conservation”. Nobody gets any benefit from writing it. Instead, post a detailed explanation of how greenhouse emissions can be controlled or explain the methods used for environmental conservation”. This will help you clarify your understanding of the topic, and readers will benefit from reading your posts. Write your discussion messages as if you were trying to explain a textbook topic to the class, unless you are replying to a previous post.
4. Be factually correct. The post should help your classmates, and yourself, learn the material.
5. **Be at least 150 words in length**. Messages that do not meet this length requirement will earn only a small amount of partial credit, even if they are only one word short.
6. Have acceptable spelling and grammar. Although this is not a writing class, this is College. Students should get into the habit of writing complete sentences that are grammatically correct. I don’t expect your spelling or grammar to be perfect, but it should be generally correct. Take advantage of the spell check and grammar check tools available to you. Some points will be deducted if any postings contain spelling and/or grammar errors. The actual deduction will depend on the total number of messages posted in each discussion forum and the number of messages that exhibit poor grammar and spelling. The maximum deduction will be 50% of the points available for each discussion forum.
7. Do not plagiarize from any source (internet, textbook, etc.) as the body of your post. Study the concept, and then express it in your own words. Copying from another student or copying from any source (internet, textbook, etc.) without referencing the source is prohibited at Valencia College. Make sure that you acknowledge any source that you use in your assignments.

Other key points

1. Only messages that meet all of the requirements of a substantial post listed above will earn full credit for discussion participation.
2. It is acceptable and encouraged for more than one student to respond to the same message. The best way to ensure we understand a topic is to try to explain it to someone else.
3. The word count requirement for a substantial message must be met by only ONE message in each discussion forum in order to earn full credit. If you post additional messages in that forum, they may be as long or as short as you wish.
4. **No class participation assignment will be dropped.**
5. **No make-up for class participation assignments will be available in this class.**

**To earn 100% for your class participation grade, you must do the following by the dates published in the Schedule of Assignments:**

1. Post an introductory message to the class in the Introductions discussion forum.
2. Post at least ONE substantial message in each discussion forum before its due date. (If two forums are scheduled during the same week, then one message must be posted in each forum).
3. If no substantial messages are posted on time in a forum, it will not be possible to earn 100% of the points for that forum.

**Exams and Quizzes Policy:**

1. I recommend the following general process for studying each chapter:
   * Read each chapter once to get an idea of its contents.
   * Read the chapter carefully, ensuring you understand each concept.
   * Use the chapter lectures available in the online classroom to supplement the text book.
   * Send a Canvas message to me if you have any questions about the material.
2. Quizzes may be taken any time during the period listed in the Schedule of Assignments. They will be available beginning on the **Monday** prior to the due date, unless otherwise specified.
3. The final exam may be taken any time during its period. It will be available beginning on the **Wednesday** prior to the due date, unless otherwise specified.
4. All exams and quizzes will be given online via Canvas. There is no requirement to take tests on campus.
5. All exams and quizzes are open book and open notes. Calculators may be used.
6. All exams and quizzes will have a time limit. My goal is to test what you have learned, not what you can look up. Every test should automatically submit itself at the end of the scheduled time, but it is your responsibility to track the time you have spent and how much time you have remaining. Exams not submitted by the end of the scheduled time will be penalized.
7. The questions will be challenging. You should study as if the exams and quizzes were closed book, because you won’t have time to look up every answer. If you have to look up more than few answers, you will run out of time.
8. Question types will be a combination of multiple choice, matching, true/false, fill in the blank and essay.
9. **No quiz or final exam grade will be dropped.**
10. **No make-up for quizzes or final exam will be available in this class.**
11. On occasion, computer problems will occur during an exam or quiz. If I have to reset your attempt to allow you to complete it, then I have lost control over the time allowed for the assignment. I may, at my discretion, have you take a makeup exam since the original exam environment will have been compromised. If I have to create a makeup exam, be advised that it will be more difficult than the original exam and will likely consist entirely of essay questions. So, you need to be very careful that you don’t inadvertently cause any problems during the exam. If your regular internet access method is not reliable, you need to find a reliable access method for exams. The College has computer labs available for your use.
12. I generally do not reset final exams. If a problem occurs during a final exam, I will create a makeup exam for you as described in the previous paragraph. Be extra careful that you do not inadvertently cause any problems during the exam.

**Extra Credit Policy:**

1. **No extra credit assignments and/or activities** will be available in this course.

**Delays in Getting the Textbook**

Having regular access to the textbook is a requirement for this class. Whenever possible students should have the text in hand before the first day of class each semester, but there will be times that students are unable to get the text until after the class begins. If you are in this situation, follow the guidelines below. Not having the text is not an acceptable excuse for doing no work at all in this class.

1. During the first week of the semester, complete all of the administrative items. This includes printing the Syllabus and the Schedule of Assignments and posting an introduction to the class. The text is not needed for any of these tasks.
2. Use any resources that are available in the online classroom such as PowerPoint presentations. You should do some internet or library research on some of the topics presented to minimize how far you get behind. This research should also help you learn enough to participate in the class discussions.
3. Reading all messages posted in the discussion forums may be the best way to keep up until you have the book in hand.
4. Look at the publisher’s website for the text. Most publisher text sites have student resources that can help you, and many of these are available even if you do not have the text. As a minimum, the websites usually have a Table of Contents, which can also help you get an idea what topics we will cover.
5. You are still required to participate in the discussions. If you follow these recommendations and take advantage of all the resources available to you, you will have no difficulty participating in the discussions even without a textbook.
6. Please let me know if you don’t have the text by the end of the first week of class. I will not be sympathetic if you wait until after the first week of the semester to tell me you don’t have the text.

The above guidelines will be probably not enough to replace the text entirely, but they will allow you to learn enough to participate in the discussion forums each week. This participation is critical to your grade and also for attendance purposes.

**Withdrawal Policy:**

Per Valencia Policy 4-07 (Academic Progress, Course Attendance and Grades, and Withdrawals), a student who withdraws from class before the withdrawal deadline will receive a grade of “W”. A faculty member is permitted to withdraw a student from the faculty member's class up to the beginning of the final exam period, for violation of the faculty member's attendance policy, as published in the faculty member's syllabus. A student is not permitted to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline. Any student who withdraws or is withdrawn from a class during a third or subsequent attempt in the same course will be assigned a grade of “F”. For a complete policy and procedure overview on Valencia Policy 4-07 please got to:

<http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/default.cfm?policyID=75&volumeID_1=4&navst=0>

**The professor of this course will not withdraw any student for any reason (except when a student does not attend the class before the No Show reporting period); it is the responsibility of the student to withdraw themselves before the withdrawal deadline and to be aware of the date of the withdrawal deadline.**

Students on financial aid should consult an advisor or counselor before withdrawing from a course; there may be financial implications to the student which he or she must know about to make an informed decision before withdrawing from a course. Students with some scholarships who withdraw or are withdrawn from a class must pay the college for the cost of the class. Other scholarship sponsors may also require repayment.

**STUDENTS’ EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTOR’S EXPECTATIONS**

**Expected Student Conduct:**

Valencia College is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning but is concerned with the development of responsible personal and social conduct. By enrolling at Valencia College, a student assumes the responsibility for becoming familiar with and abiding by the general rules of conduct.

The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. Students who engage in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty to leave the class. Violation of any classroom or Valencia’s rules may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Valencia. Disciplinary action could include being withdrawn from class, disciplinary warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, or other appropriate and authorized actions. You will find the Student Code of Conduct in the current Valencia Student Handbook.

Each student’s behavior in the classroom or Web course is expected to contribute to a positive learning/teaching environment, respecting the rights of others and their opportunity to learn. No student has the right to interfere with the teaching/learning process, including the posting of inappropriate materials on chat room or Web page sites. The instructor has the authority to ask a disruptive student to leave student to leave the classroom, lab, or Web course and to file disciplinary charges if disruptive behavior continues.

**Computer/Equipment Use Policy:**

Use of computers in the Business, IT, and Public Services classrooms at Valencia College is restricted to those activities designated by the instructor to enhance the class materials. Any other use is strictly forbidden. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:

1. Use of computer to send e-mail or access internet sites not specifically assigned in class.
2. Use of computer for job, internship, homework or other activities not assigned in class.
3. Modifying any hardware or software system configuration or setting.
4. Activities not in accordance with the Valencia Student Code of Conduct.
5. Use of computers in the Business Students open lab (Bldg. 2, Room 304) is limited to those activities involved with preparing homework or coursework in the IT or Business departments and is subject to the same restriction as listed above.
6. Computer use is remotely monitored; any student using computers inappropriately may be subject to dismissal from class or banishment from the lab. Subsequent offense may be sent to the campus administration for further disciplinary action.

**Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:**

Each student is expected to comply with the college policy on academic honesty as set forth in the admissions catalog and student handbook. Any student guilty of dishonesty and/or plagiarism will receive a zero on the exam or assignment and possible withdrawal from the class.

**Logging off from Canvas:**

In order to better serve our faculty and students, all Canvas users should use the logout button when completing online course work. By logging off instead of just closing your internet browser window, server space is freed and system performance is optimized. In addition, logging off will more accurately record each student’s time logged into the online course.

**Students with Special Needs or Disabilities:**

Students with special needs or disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a Notification to the Instructor (NTI) form from the **Office of Students with Disabilities** and discuss specific needs with the instructor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.

Academic accommodations are not retroactive, and will apply only to future assignments. For this reason, it is critically important to discuss these issues with your instructor as early in the course as possible.

**Disclaimer:**

Changes in syllabus and/or schedule of assignments may be made at any time during the term by announcement of the instructor. A revised syllabus and/or schedule of assignments may be issued at the discretion of the instructor.