ISB 202 009: Applied Environmental Science and Organismal Biology

Fall 2020 Semester Syllabus

# Course information

**Instructor:** Dr. Jen C. Owen

**Course Overview**: This course meets Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:40-2:00pm from 9/3/20 – 12/10/20 and will consist of a combination of asynchronous and synchronous activities. Lectures will primarily be asynchronous and available on D2L.

**Tuesdays** 12:40-2:00pm (optional) – chat sessions via Zoom

**Thursdays** 12:40-2:00pm (required) – class discussion, assignments, and discussion groups via Zoom

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/91676921670>

Passcode: 632546

**Course Location**: D2L and Zoom

**Office Hours**: Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm via Zoom

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/95434792177>  
Passcode: 399449

**Email:** [owenj@msu.edu](mailto:owenj@msu.edu) (preferred contact)

**Phone Number:** Calls to Dr. Owen’s office phone will not be forwarded. Please contact her via email instead.

**Course Assistant:** Noelly Guerrero Gomez  
Email: guerre63@msu.edu  
Please email Noelly for questions and to schedule times to meet with her.

# Required course materials

* A stable internet connection (DSL, LAN or Cable connection desirable)
* Access to Desire2Learn (D2L)
* SaplingPlus (eTextbook included) for *Environmental Science for a Changing World* (Six Month (or ‘Term’) Access) by Susan Karr; Anne Houtman; Jeneen Interlandi

©2018 Third Edition

ISBN-10: 1-319-05964-3; ISBN-13: 978-1-319-05964-4

**SaplingPlus:** SaplingPlus for Scientific American Environmental Science for a Changing World by Susan Karr; Anne Houtman; Jeneen Interlandi is required for the course and will be used to assign online homework and other assignments. SaplingPlus also provides access to the ebook and all other resources including the learning curve, self-assessment quizzes, and study guides for the exams.

**Reading:** Your assigned reading will be from the textbook and articles via SaplingPlus. My lectures will serve to synthesize the topics covered in your readings as well as from other sources. While reading the assigned material will not serve as a substitute for watching and attending lectures, it will assist with your overall understanding of the topic.

**D2L:** Course materials, lecture powerpoints, grades, exams/quizzes, assignments, and additional resources will be available through the D2L course management system. You will need your MSU NetID to login to the course from the D2L homepage (<http://d2l.msu.edu>).

**Microsoft Office or Google Docs:** Both of these services are free and available to you through your university login information (the same information used to login to D2L). When submitting to D2L, you will be required to submit a **PDF or Word Document** to receive credit**. \*\*Please note that .pages documents will not be accepted, no exceptions.\*\*** We are unable to evaluate these documents on D2L.

**D2L Technical Assistance**: If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

* Visit the [Distance Learning Services Support Site](https://www.lib.msu.edu/dls/) (<https://lib.msu.edu/dls/>)
* Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](http://help.d2l.msu.edu/) (<http://help.d2l.msu.edu/>)
* Or call Distance Learning Services: (800) 500-1554 or (517) 355-2345

# Course description

Historical and recent development of ideas about behavior, ecological, and evolutionary processes. Critical evaluation of the use and misuse of human understanding of nature, emphasizing recent findings.

**Prerequisites:**

(MTH 101 or concurrently) or (MTH 103 or concurrently) or (MTH 103B or concurrently) or (MTH 116 or concurrently) or (MTH 124 or concurrently) or (MTH 132 or concurrently) or (MTH 201 or concurrently) or (LB 118 or concurrently) or (STT 200 or concurrently) or (STT 201 or concurrently)) or designated score on Mathematics Placement test.” (schedule.msu.edu).

# Course objectives & learning outcomes

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Understand what science is, how to recognize science and assess veracity, and recognize its relevance to society.
2. Understand the basics of how matter and energy cycle and how human activities directly affect those processes.
3. Describe the mechanisms by which populations evolve in response to modified environmental conditions and identify the characteristics of a species/population that affect their vulnerability to environmental change.
4. Understand the factors that determine the size and growth of human population and how they are linked with social, economic and environmental conditions.
5. Recognize the factors that determine the Earth’s carrying capacity.
6. Understand the interconnectedness of human and ecosystem health and how the decisions made, and actions taken by humans affect the health of our environment, which has consequences for the health and well-being of society.
7. Understand the role of social equity, economic strength, and environmental integrity in reaching a sustainable global society.

# Learning Outcomes

By successfully completing this course, you should be able to meet the learning outcomes that are listed in the description for each Unit on D2L.

# Core Competencies

This course will also meet the goals of the 200 level ISB courses which are INSERT HERE and meet the following core competencies.

* Recognize issues of access or lack of access to information sources
* Identify why some groups/individuals may be underrepresented or systematically marginalized within the systems that produce and disseminate information.
* Evaluate a source using specific criteria to determine whether a source meets their information need.
* Cite a source correctly and describe the need for doing so.
* Use research tools and indicators of authority to determine the credibility of sources, understanding, the elements that might temper the credibility.
* Recognize that authoritative content may be packaged formally or informally and may include sources of all media types.
* Define different types of authority, such as subject expertise (e.g. scholarship), societal position (e.g. public office or title), or special experience (e.g. participating in a historic event)

You will meet the course objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

* Discussion forums
* Homework assignments and activities via SaplingPlus
* Watching Zoom lectures
* Attending required Zoom lectures/classes
* Participation in discussions and assignments during class (via Zoom)
* Quizzes
* Exams

# Course schedule

To access the detailed course schedule for this course, please use this [link](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i4JixZyviFvCjzVus4tOMwvfuVJU3nkwzB7mpQ9_RDo/edit?usp=sharing) to see it all in one place. I will also use the calendar tool on D2L. Each unit within D2L will also contain a checklist with the required items and due dates. Please note that given this is the first time this course is being taught online, there is a good chance I will be adjusting the timing and topics of the different units. If you have any questions, please contact the instructor or course assistant.

# Grading policy

### Grades in this course are based on the following:

**Examinations:** There will be **three** exams given over the course of the semester, with the 3rd one being during finals week. ALL of the exams will be non-comprehensive. Questions will consist of matching, multiple choice, short answer, and essay. Exam material will come from the lectures, homework assignments/quizzes, and in-class assignments. Exams are each 100 points and together are 30% of your total grade.

The 3rd exam is the **Final Exam** which is scheduled for Thursday, **Dec 17, 2020** from **12:45pm - 2:45pm.**

**Class participation/quizzes/in-class activities**: Each Thursday we will have a mixture of in-class breakout group discussions, in-class assignments, and quizzes. Your participation in Thursday’s lecture via Zoom is a required part of the class. Attendance is required to receive credit for a Thursday class and is considered part of your participation grade. You can miss up to 2 Thursday classes without penalty but more than 2 and you will receive 0 for that class (25 points each). Please note that there are no make-up classes. Having the ability to miss 2 with no penalty allows for any absences due to doctor’s appointments, illness, family emergencies, etc. Class participation and in-class activities/discussion are worth 40% of your grade.

\*\***Please note** that in consideration of the diversity of students who are enrolled in this class, we may transition the course to a primarily asynchronous class with optional synchronous meetings. If so, class participation will consist of active participation into Discussion Forums on D2L and group assignments. I will be assessing the best way to deliver material to meet the needs of the class.

**Homework (out of class) Assignments:** These are activities that will vary from week to week and will include a combination of SaplingPlus homework assignments or quizzes, D2L Discussion forums, and other assignments with resources, which I will specify accordingly in D2L for that particular Unit. The due date (unless otherwise stated in the D2L calendar) is always 5pm on the Wednesday prior to Thursday's class. Note, that sometimes a homework will contain a couple mini-assignments that collectively are worth the 25 points for that week. Of the 11 weekly homeworks, you will be able to drop the equivalent of 1 week (25 points) of Homework. Homework assignments are worth 30% of your grade.

**Grade Assignment (Grading Scale):** The table below describes the relationships between letter grades, percent, and performance. The first column describes the letter grade. The second column describes the percentage associated with that letter grade. The third column describes the performance represented by that letter grade and percentage.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Point | Percentage | Performance |
| 4.0 | ≥90% | Excellent Work |
| 3.5 | 85% to 89% | Above average |
| 3.0 | 80% to 84% | Good Work |
| 2.5 | 75% to 79% | Mostly Good Work |
| 2.0 | 70% to 74% | Average work |
| 1.5 | 65% to 69% | Below average work |
| 1.0 | 60% to 64% | Poor work |
| 0.0 | ≤59% | Failing work |

**Makeup Policy**: Makeup exams (not quizzes) will only be given if student has (1) a medical excuse provided by a physician, (2) permission granted by professor **prior** to time of the examination, or (3) has lost a family member. To request a Grief Absence students should complete the [Grief Absence Request Form](https://reg.msu.edu/StuForms/Stuinfo/GriefAbsenceForm.aspx).

**Late Work Policy:** All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through D2L unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested from instructor before the due date. However, I recognize that we all have busy lives and there are times we fall behind on submitting assignments. Keep in mind, it is also important that we discipline ourselves to submit assignments on time to maintain professionalism. During the 15 week course, you will have no more than 2 opportunities to request a late submission. Given the topics build on each other, you would get up to 2 extra days from the deadline to submit the assignments. To have this grace period, you need to email the instructor/course assistant so they can keep count of your requests and grant you extra time.

**Viewing grades:** You will be able to view your grade on the D2L gradebook a week after you submit your assignments. It is your responsibility to check D2L for your grades and notify me or the Course Assistant that there is an error (e.g. missing grade or wrong grade). This notification MUST occur within a week of receiving the grade.

**Turnitin:** Consistent with MSU's efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, I have chosen to use a tool called Turnitin to compare your written submissions with multiple sources. The tool will compare each submission you submit to an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a 'similarity score.'  The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, I will make a complete assessment and judge the originality of your work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool.

You should submit papers to Turnitin Dropboxes **without identifying information included in the paper** (e.g., name or student number); the D2L system will automatically show this information to me when I view the submission, but the information will not be retained by Turnitin.  If you forget and submit your paper with your identifying information on it, it will be retained in the Turnitin repository.

# Course policies

**Attendance policy:** Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course. You are required to attend each Thursday Zoom class unless otherwise indicated on D2L. Recognizing that life happens, you can miss up to 2 required Zoom classes over the course of the semester without penalty (see up above for make-up policy). However, if you miss more than 2 classes and do not have proper documentation for a grief absence as stated in the [university attendance policy](https://msu.edu/unit/ombud./classroom-policies/index.html#attendance) then you will receive a 0 for participation for that week’s class.

**Participation and engagement:** Students are expected to participate in all online activities as listed in the course calendar. Your participation will be monitored through the D2L tracking tool, Discussion forums, and Zoom activities.

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During all classes, the instructor expects students to be fully engaged and prepared to discuss reading assignments. Students are encouraged to ask questions of the instructor, guest speakers, and their peers.

Active participation includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Asking and answering questions of the instructors, peers, or guest speakers
2. Bringing forth new ideas, information, or perspectives to academic conversations
3. Discussing your readings and reflections with instructors and peers
4. Meeting with the instructors to discuss your interests, assignments, or project
5. Questioning information presented and discussed
6. Participating in small group discussions and activities
7. Assuming responsibility for personal behavior and learning

While working on group projects, students should be mindful of other students in their group; therefore, it is important for all participants to exercise:

* Respect for themselves and each other
* Openness and a positive attitude toward new ideas and other’s ideas
* Flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity
* Good communications amongst themselves.

**Professionalism**: Disrespect of the professor and/or students will not be tolerated; it adversely affects my ability to teach and the other students’ ability to learn. Show your fellow students and instructors respect at all times, avoiding all invective language.

### Build rapport: If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution.

#### Zoom Policies:

* Sign in with your full first name and last name as listed on the class roster. Do not use a nickname or other pseudonym when you log in. It makes it impossible to know who is in attendance.
  + If you currently use a different name than what is listed on the official roster, please send a private D2L message so this can be noted on the roster and you can use your current name on Zoom.
* Stay focused. Please stay engaged in class activities. Close any apps on your device that are not relevant and turn off notifications.
* If you need technical help contact the IT Help Desk at ithelp@msu.edu.
* Mute your microphone when you are not talking. This helps eliminate background noise.
* Chats
  + Stay on topic. Use the chat window for questions and comments that are relevant to class. The chat window is not a place for socializing or posting comments that distract from the course activities. If you fill it up with random comments, I will be unable to sort through the information quickly to address students' real questions/concerns about the course.
* No disrespect or hate speech. Just like in our in-person class, respectful behavior is expected. Consider Zoom a professional environment, and act like you're at a job interview, even when you're typing in the chat.

**Email policy and guidelines**: Please remember that email is a professional mode of communication, and it is important to adhere to the following policies for communicating with me or the Course Assistant via email.

* + - 1. When sending an email please put “ISB 202” in your subject heading.
      2. Use salutations (e.g., Dear Dr. Owen, Hi Prof Owen, etc.). Do not use “Hey” in your salutation for any reason.
      3. Use professional language and tone, complete sentences, and correct grammar. Do not use slang or text message shorthand.
      4. Do not use email as a replacement for talking with me in person. Do not ask me to explain concepts, terms, class notes, etc. via email. Also, do not ask questions you would know the answer to had you been in class or watched the lectures, or that can be answered by a quick read of the syllabus or D2L, such as “What did I miss today?”; “Can you fill me in?”; “What is on the exam?”; “Do I need to know this?”; “Is this important to know?”
      5. I will not reply to emails on weekends or evenings.
      6. Please write out your full name at the bottom of your email. If you don’t tell me who you are, then I will not respond to your email.
      7. Please be respectful in your emails; remember emails are the same as writing a letter and signing your name to it. Before you push ‘send’ make sure the message is one that you want to convey and one you do not mind being on the permanent, public record.

**Understand when you may drop this course:** It is your responsibility to understand when you need to consider un- enrolling from a course. Refer to the [Michigan State University Office](http://www.reg.msu.edu/) [of the Registrar](http://www.reg.msu.edu/) for important dates and deadlines. The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with either a 100% refund and no grade reported or no refund can be found on the Registrar’s academic calendar: <https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/academic.aspx>

**Inform your instructor of any accommodations needed:** Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Resource Center for](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) [Persons with Disabilities](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) (RCPD), and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student’s responsibility to provide documentation of disability to RCPD and meet with an RCPD specialist to request special accommodation before classes start.

Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation (“VISA”) form. Please present this form to the instructor at the start of the term and/or two weeksprior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

RCPD may be contacted by phone at (517) 884-7273 (884-RCPD), or [via their website](https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/) ([http://www.rcpd.msu.edu](http://www.rcpd.msu.edu/)). RCPD is located in 120 Bessey Hall, near the center of the Michigan State University campus, on the southwest corner of Farm Lane and Auditorium Road.

**Academic honesty:** Article 2.3.3 of the [Academic Freedom Report](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." Academic integrity is a minimal expectation of this course. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, and submitting work of another person. Any student involved in academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs and a grade of 0.0 may be issued for the course.

Lectures and other course materials must remain the property of the Michigan State University and must not be copied from the internet for distribution to anyone who is not registered for this course. Online discussions and exercises are confidential and should not be discussed with others who are not enrolled in the class.

It is important for each course participant to express his/her ideas. All ideas need to be respected in discussions and exercises. Any “group projects” that are required still require individual work as a minimal expectation.

All assignments are to be done on your own, without the assistance of additional materials, i.e., internet, texts, articles, other people, etc., unless you are instructed to do otherwise. This includes weekly assignments and exams.

**Plagiarism:** Taking credit for someone else’s work or ideas, submitting a piece of work (for example, a paper, assignment, or discussion post) which in part or in whole is not entirely your own work without fully and accurately attributing those same portions to their correct source. This includes information taken from the Internet.

Unless authorized by their instructors, you are expected to do your own, original work on each assignment in each class. If you recycle your own course work from one class to another, you may face an allegation of academic dishonesty. If your instructor believes you have committed an act of plagiarism, he/she may take appropriate action, which includes the issuing of a “penalty grade” for academic dishonesty. [Article 11](http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university/article-11-definitions) of the Academic Freedom Report for Students at Michigan State University, or the “AFR,” defines a penalty grade as “a grade assigned by an instructor who believes a student to have committed academic dishonesty. . . .” A penalty grade can include, but is not limited to, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

For examples of what constitutes plagiarism, see:

* + - [Indiana University Writing Tutorial Services](http://www.indiana.edu/%7Ewts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)
    - [Purdue Online Writing Lab](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/)
    - [University of Alberta Guide to Plagiarism](http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/plagiarism/)

**Diversity, equity and inclusiveness:** Diversity, equity and inclusion are important, interdependent components of everyday life in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) and are critical to our pursuit of academic excellence. Our aim is to foster a culture where every member of CANR feels valued, supported and inspired to achieve individual and common goals with an uncommon will. This includes providing opportunity and access for all people across differences of race, age, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, migratory status, disability/abilities, political affiliation, veteran status and socioeconomic background. See the full CANR statement: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/canr-statement-on-diversity-equity-and-inclusion>.

### Limits to confidentiality: Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the Department of Police and Public Safety) if you share it with me:

* Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
* Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
* Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

**Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus during the course of the semester. Changes will be announced in the course announcement area.**