Environmental Science Seminar, ENV 493-001
Spring 2021
Credit Hours: 1
Meets: W 1:00 – 3:50p, Online

Instructor: Dr. Hopfensperger
Office: Natural Science Center (SC) Room 247; Online
Office Hrs: By appointment, please email to schedule
Phone: 859-572-5305
Email: hopfenspek1@nku.edu

What does ONLINE SYNCHRONOUS mean for ENV 493?
Online synchronous learning for ENV 493 means several important things:

- Most important is that students should always <u>keep this time period on their calendar</u> (the whole 3 hours) set aside for working on ENV 493 course work.
- When we meet as a class, we will use the <u>Zoom platform</u> provided through NKU. However, we will not meet every class period and when we do meet, we may not meet for the entire time allotted. On days we are not meeting as a full class on Zoom, students will be expected to be working on course material, either in small working groups or individually.
  - Meeting as a class or in small groups will always be done virtually, so students must think about technology. Become familiar with the technological resources we will use for the class – mostly Zoom and Canvas, and <u>think about back-ups for technology</u>. For example, all exams will be taken at a set date and time, think about back up options for internet or a computer in case something should happen at that time.
  - When meeting synchronously for an online class, aim to <u>have a space that is free from distractions</u> (if possible). Try to be in a space that will allow you to focus on the course and to be fully engaged during the short times we meet together.
- Your <u>organization will be key to success</u>. Be sure to use a scheduler for this and all of your classes. Use a calendar to mark all due dates and meeting dates (large class and small group). Do this for all of your classes, so you can anticipate busy days, weeks, etc. By doing this, you can gift yourself time to prepare for those busy times. To help, I will send reminders and updates as emails and texts (optional). This means you will need a good organizational system for your email. Create a folder just for ENV 493 in your email account.
- <u>Communication is key</u>. Clear, two-way communication between professor and among students will lead to success in this course. Be sure to read all course emails. <u>Change your notifications settings in Canvas</u> to receive all announcements as emails right away (instructions just below). Be sure to <u>ask lots of questions</u>, all the time. Because we are not in class face-to-face, students tend to ask less questions and not receive important feedback that may help to better understand concepts. Ask me anything – I'm happy to help! Also, I love feedback from students on how the class is going. I regularly change how things are being done in a course to fit the needs of the current group of students, so please speak up – I want to make this course work for you. I will be reaching out with <u>several opportunities for feedback</u>, including options for anonymous feedback.

Attendance Policy, ENV 493: Attendance is required for synchronous meetings. If you are a parent and a child-care issue arises, please contact me ahead of our class meeting time to arrange accommodations. I anticipate technological challenges this semester as well, contact me immediately when issues arise.

Texts: You are not required to purchase any texts. Readings will be provided for you on Canvas.

Catalog Description: ENV 493 Environmental Science Seminar Discussion and analysis of current environmental problems. For juniors and seniors majoring in environmental science or minoring in environmental studies.

Communication: Course announcements will be posted on Canvas or emailed through NKU Canvas. Students should check Canvas and NKU email daily.
Be sure to set-up your Notifications settings in Canvas:
- On your Canvas dashboard, click the Account button on the left
- Click Notifications
- Click the check mark so it turns green for Announcement

Opt in for **additional reminders via text or email here**: https://www.remind.com/join/env493
Remind is a tool I can use to send you course reminders, according to your settings. I will never see your phone number or personal email addresses, it will stay anonymous. See Canvas for specific instructions.

Course Description for S2021: Hands-on, active, service-learning approach to learning about current issues in environmental science. Students will have the opportunity to work for a real-world employer and gain experience in the field of environmental science by creating products useful to community partners. Through these efforts, the class will be participating in the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.

Course Objective: The objective of this course is to provide students an opportunity to delve into a complex environmental issue. In doing so, students will benefit either the campus or larger region with a finished product. The process of completing the final product will allow students to hone their critical thinking skills in environmental science and prepare for their next career steps.

Course Objectives Specific to S2021:
1. Build experience with real-world environmental science work and knowledge on career readiness.
2. Actively participate in environmental science efforts through community-based team projects.
3. Advocate and support community efforts through the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.

Student Learning Outcomes: Through active participation in this course,
1. You will be able to better devise solutions for environmental problems.
2. You will demonstrate your ability to communicate science.
3. You will develop your skills as a team member while working towards a common goal.

Student Expectations:
- Communicate with the instructor with all questions and concerns. I am here to help you succeed. Clear communication can result in higher course performance.
- Arrive on time, even when online. If you do not, it is very disrespectful and disruptive to your classmates and the instructor. In addition, you will miss important class information and updates.
- When in class online, your focus should be 100% on class. You should not be on other screens.

- Do your own work, when appropriate. Some work will be completed by the individual and some work will be completed by the team. (see the Student Honor Code in Policies below)
- Understand plagiarism and how to paraphrase and cite properly. Plagiarism is cheating and goes against the NKU Student Honor Code. (see the Student Honor Code in Policies below)
- Grades cannot be given to students via email. Grades will be posted in your Canvas-Gradebook or on items handed back in class.

Student Learning Assessment:

<u>Attendance is required</u>.

- Students will be assessed on their ability to solve environmental problems and communication skills through peer-led discussions, active service-learning, and participation in the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.

<u>Projects</u>: Each student will work in a team to complete a semester project. There are times during the semester when feedback will be provided by classmates and the instructor, but while working as a team-member, each student must put forth an individual effort. Students will rank their preferred projects and be assigned a single semester project to complete. The projects are of specific interest to community partners in the region. Student teams will work closely with community partners and the professor to complete the projects. The final products and presentations will be made available to the community partners at the end of the semester where they may guide future activities and decision-making.

Service Learning Projects: Student teams will work with community partners to complete a semester project. Community partners will help guide the direction of the project and give input and provide answers when needed. The format of the final product will vary depending on individual projects. Some groups may complete a more technical style report, while others may complete lesson plans, and others may even use a different media such as audio or video. The instructor will work with each group to help craft the style of the final product. A <u>completed</u> final product will be **due on Apr. 13th**. This should be as if the team were turning in the final version to their employer. The instructor will grade and return it to the group with comments for the team to revise the final product before turning it into the community partner. **Revisions are due 4/27**.

Progress Checks: There will be four progress checks (**2/10, 3/3, 3/31, 4/14**) during the semester. Specific tasks will be assigned and the students must demonstrate completion to the *instructor and peers* at each of these progress checks. Progress checks will help to ensure teams stay on task with their project. Teams will make goals together for each progress check.

Presentation: Each group will present their final product and experience to the class and community partners at the end of the semester. This will allow students to practice oral communication skills about environmental science and will allow all class members to learn about a variety of current environmental topics. Presentations are **due on April 27th**.

<u>Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project (MSPP)</u>: The Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project is a student philanthropy and service learning experience. The service occurs when students work with nonprofit agencies in the community that address the issues discussed in class. Students are asked to make the connection between what they are learning in class and what they are observing within the community. When students make this connection, service learning occurs.

This class has been selected to participate in the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project. During the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to distribute $2,000 in grant money to a local nonprofit whose mission aligns with the topics covered in this class.

For the MSPP, you will work in a team. Each team's community partner is eligible to win the MSPP award. Each team will present to the class on the behalf of their organization via a persuasive presentation to the class describing their community partner's organization and why they should be selected to win the class funds. After all teams have presented, the class will make their final decision as to who should receive the funds through individual votes. Further instruction regarding all aspects of the MSPP will be provided and discussed in class. There will be one individual reflection assignment and one team presentation associated with the MSPP.

Career Readiness: We will have three opportunities this semester to gain skills and reflect on future employment. The first will be an assigned reading and subsequent class discussion, the second will be an assignment focused on job searching and interview skills, and the third will focus on creating a LinkedIn portfolio.

The Breakdown:
Points

Progress checks	(3 @ 50 pts ea)	150
Final team responsibility form		50
Final product		150
Revised final product		50
Project presentation		100
MSPP presentation		50
MSPP reflection		50
Discussion on Careers		25
Job Search & Interview Assignment		100
Linked-In Profile		100
Attendance & Participation	(13 @ 10 pts ea + 45)	175
	Total =	**1,000 points**

Grades will be given according to the following scale:

A	94 – 100%	B+	87 – 89%	C+	77 – 79%	D+	67 – 69%
A-	90 – 93%	B	83 – 86%	C	73 – 76%	D	60 – 66%
		B-	80 – 82%	C-	70 – 72%		

DISCLAIMER: Schedule may change due to unanticipated circumstances; students will receive maximum prior notification possible.
**Use Canvas and a calendar to help you keep up-to-date and be successful in this course! **

Week	Activities	Due Dates*
Jan 13	Introduction to course, MSPP pre-survey, assign teams and projects, team contracts	
Jan 20	Teams discuss projects with community partners	
Jan 27	CAREER: Discussion on Environmental Careers Project work – check in with Dr. H.	**Discussion**
Feb 3	*Service learning day* – no meeting at class time	
Feb 10	Progress check 1 – Informally share project with peers Project work – check in with Dr. H.	**Progress check 1**
Feb 17	CAREER: Job Search & Interviews (NKU Career Services) (*if time*) Project work – check in with Dr. H.	
Feb 24	*Service learning day* – no meeting at class time	**Job search & Interview**
Mar 3	Progress check 2 Project work – check in with Dr. H.	**Progress check 2**
Mar 10	CAREER: Linked-In Profile Individual check-ins with Dr. H	
Mar 17	*Service learning day* – no meeting at class time	**Linked-In Profile**
Mar 24	Guest Speaker: Persuasive communication, Dr. Jeff Fox Project work – Check in with Dr. H.	
Mar 31	Progress check 3 – Work with teams, check in with Dr. H MSPP: Teams work on persuasive presentation	**Progress check 3**
Apr 7	MSPP: Presentations & students vote	**MSPP Presentation**
Apr 14	Progress check 4 (responsibility form) Project work – check in with Dr. H.	**Final product & responsibility form due**
Apr 21	Teams work on presentations Check in with Dr. H.	**MSPP Reflection due**
Apr 28	Team Project Presentations MSPP: Post-survey	**Revised final product Project Presentations**

*All assignments due Tuesdays by 11:59p