

NSCI 101H: Introduction to Earth's Environment

Instructor: Dr. David L. Brown

Syllabus

FALL 2008

Office: HOLT 312

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For e-mail, please contact the instructor via WebCT e-mail only.

Office Hours: M 11:30-12:30, Tu 1:00-2:00, W 10:00-12:00; other times by appointment

Required text: Custom version of Environmental Science, Kauffmann and Cleveland, 2008, McGraw Hill (DO NOT PURCHASE THE STANDARD VERSION OF THE TEXTBOOK)

General Course Information

NSCI 101 is a General Studies course in the B-1 category (physical science) of Natural Science. It is intended for those students with no previous college-level physical science coursework. Its objectives are to cover the fundamental concepts of matter and energy as they apply to environmental science, and to promote an understanding and appreciation of the methodologies of natural science as investigative tools and of the limitations of scientific inquiry.

There is a course fee of \$5.00 to cover cost of buses used on field trips in the laboratory portion of the course. This must be paid by the Fee Payment Deadline listed in the Course Schedule, at Cashiering, Kendall 212. Failure to pay will result in loss of University privileges.

Course Goals:

1. A student should be able understand, appreciate and apply the scientific method as an everyday problem solving tool.
2. Strengthen the student's understanding of the methodology of science, so as to foster critical thinking skills and the ability to make complex scientific and social choices.
3. Emphasize the impact of science on society and the impact of society on science.
4. Enable the student to understand the differences between belief and scientifically testable or verifiable results
5. A student should be able to read, critically evaluate and discuss contemporary popular scientific information
6. A student should be able to make informed decisions concerning scientific issues, as they pertain to society and their personal lives.
7. Stress collaborative learning and problem solving techniques
8. Enable students to understand and develop testable hypotheses that describe the natural world and predict the behavior of systems

Grading Procedure

Your grade in NSCI 101 will be determined by your performance in the following areas:

	Percent of overall course grade
Lecture component of course, assignments, quizzes, in-class exams , and projects	35%
Discussion/activity	30%
Laboratory	35%
TOTAL for course	100%

Lecture exams are multiple choice, fill-in, and short discussion questions. The dates listed in the schedule are approximate. On-line lecture study and laboratory attendance are extremely important to your grade. Attendance will be taken in the discussion session after the second week of classes and you will lose points for nonattendance.

Grading

Letter grade (Minimum score) A (93) A-(90) B+(87) B(83) B-(80) C+(77) C(73) C-(70) D+(67) D(63) D-(60) F(<60)

Dropping the Course

If you decide this is not the course for you, you are responsible for dropping it. This is easy to do through TRACS during the first two weeks. **After September 20, 2008 you will need a "serious and compelling" reason to drop.** (Failing the course or incompatibility with the instructor is not serious or compelling.) The Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences and the College of Natural Sciences strictly enforce this policy.

Making Up A Missed Exam

If you are sick the day of either exam, you must contact me in advance or the day of the exam to let me know you will miss the exam. **Make-up exams must be taken within one week of the scheduled exam day.**

OVERALL GUIDANCE

If you are having difficulty with any aspect of the course, you must contact the instructor immediately rather than wait until weeks go by and you fall behind.

Note regarding office hours and accessibility:

My goal is be as accessible to students as possible. I have set office hours that I will always try to keep. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, send an e-mail and I will arrange an appointment as soon as possible. You can also post voice messages on the Voice Board.

NSCI 101H Course Schedule Fall 2008

Week	Topic	Lab Activity
1	Framework of Science	Observations and the Scientific Method
Energy		
2	Introduction to Energy	<i>No lab meetings</i>
3	Energy resources	Radiation: Solar energy; UV Radiation
4	Energy use	Density, Buoyancy, and Convection
5 EXAM I	Water use; Hydrologic cycle	Field Trip
Water		
6	Surface Water	Rivers of Salt
7	Groundwater	Groundwater
8	Physical models	Heat Conduction; review
9	Water pollution	LAB EXAM I
10 EXAM II	The Sun and Earth's Climate	Water Pollution
Climate Change		
11	Planets; Earth	Sun-Climate Connection Lab
12	Atmospheric Processes and Pollution	<i>No lab meetings</i>
13	Climate Change	Planets and their Atmospheres
14	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	<i>No lab meetings</i>
Applications/Connections		
15	Terrestrial Ecosystems	Ecosystem Properties & review
16	Ecosystem alteration	LAB EXAM II
17	Finals week	No lab

Final exam week meeting: Final project due (via WebCT Vista) Friday, December 19, 12:00 - 1:50 PM PHSC 236
