

# Environmental Impact Assessment

Winter 2019–GEOG4004A  
Instructor: Sheryl-Ann Simpson, office:TBA, phone: TBA,  
Email: sheryl-ann.simpson@carleton.ca,  
Office hours: TBA  
Seminar: Mondays 14:35-17:25; Mackenzie Building; Room: 3165

**Course Description:** Principles, scope and purpose of environmental impact assessment, from conceptual and methodological points of view; range of environmental issues, with emphasis on Canadian case studies.  
Also listed as ENST 4004.

**Prerequisite(s):** fourth-year Honours standing in Geography or Environmental Studies or Environmental Science, or permission of the Department. GEOG 3022 or ENST 3022 is recommended.

**Learning Objectives,** participation in this course provides students an opportunity to:

- \*Understand the history, legal frameworks and contemporary practice of EIA;
- \*Practice skills and methods involved in contemporary EIA;
- \*Analyze and Evaluate underlying assumptions driving contemporary EIA, alongside critiques and possible alternatives;
- \*Reflect on the practice of EIA and propose alternatives.

## Texts:

Required course reading will be available on cuLearn

## Course Calendar:

### 1) Introductions

In the first session we will review course the outline and do a general course introduction. We will also do a broad introduction to what EIA is, why it is needed, and some of the critiques of the contemporary practice.

W1 - Jan 7 - Course Introduction + Introductions to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

### 2) Roles and Responsibilities

In this section of the course we will review some of the roles and responsibilities, legislation governing, tasks and steps involved in EIA from the perspective of different government and non-government actors.

W2 - Jan 14 - nation-to-nation relations: International, Crown, First Nations, Inuit, Métis treaties, agreements and laws

W3 - Jan 21 - local governments: provincial, regional, municipal

W4 - Jan 28 - non-governmental actors: communities, consultants, developers

## Policy Analysis due Feb 1

### 3) Theories and Assumptions

The practice and legislation of EIA is driven by a set of assumptions about relationships to nature and the environment, as well as the tradeoffs between economic growth and equity, development and conservation, governments and the market. In this section of the course we will discuss both contemporary assumptions, and alternative theories.

W5 - Feb 4 - current assumptions

W6 - Feb 11 - critiques and alternative ideas and ideals

Winter Break - Feb 18

#### 4) Case Studies

We will discuss various elements of the EIA process including scoping, calculating impacts, planning for mitigation, monitoring, public consultation and cumulative impact assessment through the examination of cases at different scales or in different domains.

W7 - Feb 25 - social impact assessment

W8 - Mar 4 - energy development

W9 - Mar 11 - infrastructure + site development

W10 - Mar 18 - watershed assessment

EIA practice study due [group] Mar 22

#### 5) EIA Global Perspectives

For most of the term we have focused on the Canadian case, in this final section we will take a more international look at both global challenges, and what Canadian practice might learn from other jurisdictions.

W11 - Mar 25 - Majority World

W12 - Apr 1 - Europe, US, Aotearoa New Zealand

WFn - Apr 27 take-home final EIA practice study revisions + policy recommendations due

#### Evaluation:

Detailed assignment descriptions will be provided throughout the term.

##### Policy Analysis (25%)

due Feb 1, 11:59p on cuLearn

an opportunity to engage critically with the legislation governing EIA at different scales

##### EIA practice study (25%)

due Mar 22, 11:59p on cuLearn

[groups to be determined collectively]

an opportunity to practice skills, steps and methods involved in EIA process

##### Reading Responses (15%)

due ongoing throughout term, submit by noon Sunday before class on cuLearn

throughout the term you will be required to submit five reading responses, only the highest four grades will be included as part of the final evaluation.

##### Take-Home Exam (revision 10% + policy recommendation 25%, total 35%)

due Apr 27

There will be two parts to the exam first a revision of your group EIA practice study, second an individual policy recommendation, an opportunity to reflect on and propose changes to EIA legislation.

Late assignments will be accepted, but points will be deducted.

## Academic Integrity:

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- \* reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- \* submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- \* using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- \* using another’s data or research findings;
- \* failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- \* handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

## Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

**Religious obligation:** write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

**Accommodation for Student Activities:** write to the professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

**Survivors of sexual violence:** As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Violence-Policy-December-1-2016.pdf>

## Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).