

GENERAL INFORMATION

Section Information

Course Title and Rubric: ECON 490 Int'l Environmental Policy

Meeting times and locations: [on Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00AM - 12:20PM Online](#)

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Instructor(s): [Dr. José J. Vazquez](#)

Course Description and Goal

This course explores the economic impacts and consequences of policies related to climate change and other international environmental issues. The first part of the course will be devoted to reviewing the standard competitive market equilibrium and how public goods and negative externalities, such as pollution, can lead to market failure. We will then explore how various types of environmental policies such as standards, emission taxes, subsidies, and tradable permits can be used to address both domestic and international market failure. In the later half of the semester we will explore issues related to climate change, International Environmental Agreements, renewable resources and energy efficient technologies, international waste and recycling trade, environmental regulation and trade and investment policy, and the pollution haven hypothesis.

General Course Objectives

At the end of the course, you will be expected to:

- **List** and explain the assumptions of the competitive market and what those assumptions imply about market efficiency.
- **Explain** and identify sources of market failure.
- **Explain** the strengths and weaknesses of command and control environmental policies.

- **Explain** the strengths and weaknesses of different environmental policies.
- **Differentiate** the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of various climate change policies.

Course Modality

This will be a fully online course (no face to face meetings of any kind), Hy-flex course, which means you can complete it in either an asynchronous or synchronous fashion. There will be a live (synchronous), web conference lecture every week. Yet, students have the option of skipping the live lecture and watch the recording instead.

My Teaching Style and Philosophy

I believe:

Students ARE human = I believe students are human, rational thinkers. Therefore, I tend to give them the benefit of doubt when designing my course. For instance, if I know most students don't like to read the textbook before coming to class, then I don't assume they are lazy. Rather, students are behaving as normal humans, and reading text is not the best way to transfer complicated information to humans. When we read, our brain is assimilating information through only one main channel: the eyes. This is very hard, specially when we have to go from one page of a textbook to another page to make sense of the information.

In contrast, consider how much better our brain can assimilate information through a lecture (either in a classroom or virtually); when the instructor talks and draws in the board (or makes hand gestures) at the same time. Now, our brain receives information through two channels: eyes and ears. So when students choose not to read the textbook before class, they are simply using their brains in the most effective way it was design. Hence, I do not assign textbook readings before class.

Each student is Unique = some students like to complete assignments very quickly, others tend to take a bit longer. Some students have to work while they attend college, others do not. Some students like to work in groups, others prefer to do it individually. Therefore, I do not design the course for just ONE student, but rather try to give students AUTONOMY in completing the assignments. This is the reason 50% of my course works on a self-paced basis: students complete it at their own pace; without any deadlines.

A motivated student WILL learn = I believe learning is a self-regulated event. In other words, I believe in order to learn anything a student must WANT to learn it. I simply can't force any student to learn, by pouring information into her brain.

Yet, when a student WANT to learn, there is very little I (or anyone else, for that matter) can do to prevent that student from learning. Therefore, I consider my main job not MAKE students learn, but rather to MOTIVATE them to learn on their own.

Some of this learning will take place during the semester, but also much of it will take place after the course is done. Therefore, I tend to focus my teaching on activities that spark's students internal motivation for learning. Three important internal motivations for learning are: curiosity, mastery, and autonomy. Therefore, I place those at the forefront of my teaching.

For instance, my classroom lecture is designed not to "explain" things from the front of the room, but rather to ASK students questions to spark their curiosity, and to encourage them to continue to ASK questions themselves.

In the same way, I tend to dislike using activities that rely on external rewards for learning, such as once-and-done (summative) exams, hard deadlines, and so forth.

Academic Integrity

At the University of Illinois, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of Academic Integrity. We believe that this is essential to the success of our Program in its mission to educate and train our students. In addition, maintaining high standards of academic integrity provides a foundation for responsible conduct in our students' lives after graduation. The following acts have been listed in the [Student Honor code as violations of academic integrity](#).

Students with Disability

If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, which will require academic accommodations, please notify me within the first week of the class and I will strive to accommodate your needs. However, to obtain official disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must also contact the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail dtheisability@illinois.edu or go to the DRES website. If you are concerned you have a disability-related condition that is impacting your academic progress, there are academic screening appointments available on campus that can help diagnosis a previously undiagnosed disability by visiting the DRES website and selecting "Sign-Up for an Academic Screening" at the bottom of the page.

Academic Assistance

Students are encouraged to utilize the many resources we have throughout campus to assist with academics. We recommend that you seek them out starting early in the semester, not just in times of academic need, in order to develop good study habits and submit work which represents your full academic potential. Many resources are found on the [Economics Website](#) including details about the Economics Tutoring Center, Academic Advising, and other academic support options:

Community of Care

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the [Student Assistance Center](#) (217-333-0050). Based on your report, the staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe. Further, we understand the impact that struggles with mental health can have on your experience at Illinois. Significant stress, strained relationships, anxiety, excessive worry, alcohol/drug problems, a loss of motivation, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can all interfere with optimal academic performance. We encourage all students to reach out to talk with someone, and we want to make sure you are aware that you can access mental health support at the [Counseling Center](#) or [McKinley Health Center](#). For mental health emergencies, you can call 911 or walk into the Counseling Center, no appointment needed.

Disruptive Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action.

Emergency Response Recommendations

Emergency response recommendations can be found at the following website:

<http://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/>. I encourage you to review this website and the [campus building floor plans website](#) within the first 10 days of class.

Religious Observances

The Religious Observance Accommodation Request form is available at [here](#). Submit the form to the instructor and to the Office of the Dean of Students (helpdean@illinois.edu) by the end of the second week of the course; in the case of exams or assignments scheduled after this period, students should submit the form to the instructor and to the Office of the Dean of Students as soon as possible.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) should self- identify to the instructor to ensure protection of the privacy of their attendance in this course. See <http://registrar.illinois.edu/ferpa> for more information on FERPA. Student information and records will not be released to anyone other than the student unless the student has provided written approval or as required by law.

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Obligation

The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. Faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX and Disability Office. In turn, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office will provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options. A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found [here](#). Other information about resources and reporting is available here: <http://wecare.illinois.edu/>.

Student Support

The Counseling Center is committed to providing a range of services intended to help students develop improved coping skills in order to address emotional, interpersonal, and academic concerns. Please visit their website to find valuable resources and services:

<https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/>.

Counseling Center Information: 217-333-3704

Location: Room 206, Student Services Building (610 East John Street, Champaign IL)

McKinley Mental Health Information: 217-333-2705

Location: 3rd Floor McKinley Health Center 1109 South Lincoln, Urbana, IL

Emergency Dean: The Emergency Dean may be reached at (217) 333-0050 and supports students who are experiencing an emergency situation after 5 pm, in which an immediate University response is needed and which cannot wait until the next business day. The Emergency Dean is not a substitute for trained emergency personnel such as 911, Police or Fire. If you are experiencing a life threatening emergency, call 911. Please review the Emergency Dean procedures: <http://odos.illinois.edu/emergency/>

TEXTBOOK

Textbook

- Environmental Economics: An Introduction, 8/e by Barry C. Field.
 - Hard copy from the Bookstore (ISBN 9781260243062, 1260243060) = \$98 + bookstore markup.
 - [E-book](#) (ISBN: 9781260736229) = starting at \$52 depending on the rental/purchase option.

You only need to purchase either the hard copy OR the e-book; not both. Either one would work fine.

HOW I WILL CALCULATE YOUR GRADE?

Course Activities

Below are the activities you are required to complete in the course, along with the weight each of them has towards your final grade. For a detailed description of each activity, click on that particular link in the left-hand navigation of this syllabus.

Course Activity	Weight (out of 100%)
Zoom Lectures	No credit/Not Required
Lecture Quizzes (16)	30
Problem Sets (4)	50
Exams (4)	20

Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned only at the end of the semester based on the overall score for the course. There is no curve in this class.

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A+	97.00–100	C+	77.00 - 79.99
A	93.00–96.99	C	72.00 - 76.99
A–	90.00–92.99	C-	70.00 - 71.99
B+	87.00–89.99	D+	67.00 - 69.99
B	82.00–86.99	D	62.00 - 66.99
B–	80.00–81.99	D-	60.00 - 61.99
		F	0 - 59.99

COURSE ACTIVITIES IN DETAIL

Zoom Lecture

What are they? I will cover about 1 chapter of the textbook per classroom lecture. Yet, I do not simply repeat the stuff in the textbook. Rather, I organize the lecture around a series of application questions that put the textbook concepts in perspective.

How are they graded? Lectures are not part of your grade and are completely optional. I think they are fun and useful. But you will get absolutely no course credit for attending them. I will record all of them and make them available for you the same day.

Where can I find them? The recordings of the classroom lecture will be available in Moodle.

When are they Due? Classroom lectures are not part of your grade and are completely optional.

Lecture Quizzes (LQs)

What are they? The LQs are a set of multiple choice and/or numerical questions. They serve to test your understanding of the textbook chapters. If you come to lecture, I will give you time during the lecture to complete them, usually working in teams alongside other students in class that day. But, you can also complete them on your own after the lecture.

Where can I find them, and when do they become available? A new LQ will be available before each week, usually just before the Tuesday lecture.

How are they graded? LQs are graded entirely on completion and not on accuracy. Simply click on each slide of the LQ, and/or answer every question, and you will get 100% credit for that particular LQ.

When Are They Due? All LQs are due at 11:59PM on Friday, December 10th.

Problem Sets

What are they? The Problem Sets are a collection of longer, usually graph, numerical and/or essay problems. These Problem Sets will serve as good practice for the Exams. There is ONE Problem Set for every two modules.

Where can I find them, and when do they become available? A new Problem Set will be available about every other week, usually on Mondays. I will email you when a new Problem Set is available. So make sure you are receiving my emails.

How are Problem Sets graded? You will get TWO attempts to complete each Problem Set. You can turn in any Problem Set for instructor feedback at any point during the semester, once it has been made available. We will mark the Problem Set and return to you with feedback. You will then have ONE WEEK to re-submit your Problem Set for a score improvement.

I encourage you to work in these Problem Sets collaboratively, along with other students in the class. Yet, remember that when you sit down to write down your submission, you must do so on your own. I will definitely mark/review your submission under the assumption it is yours alone.

When Are They Due? All Problem Sets are due at 11:59PM on Friday, December 10th.

Exams

What are they? The Exams are a collection of longer, usually graph, numerical and/or essay problems. They are very similar to the Problem Sets in format and content; with two important differences:

- You only have ONE attempt to complete them.
- Each Exam contains comprehensive material up to that point in the course. So, for instance, Exam 3 contains material for Modules 1 - 6.

Where can I find them, and when do they become available? A new Exam will be available about every other week, usually on Mondays. I will email you when a new Exam is available. I will post the corresponding pair of Problem Set and Exam at the same time. So make sure you are receiving my emails.

How are Exams graded? You will only have ONE attempt to complete each exam before the deadline. Therefore, I recommend that you do not attempt an Exam until you have already achieved your maximum possible score in the corresponding Problem Set.

When Are They Due? The Exams are due at 11:59PM on the following Fridays:

- September 17: Exam 1
- October 15: Exam 2
- November 5: Exam 3
- December 10: Exam 4

Any Exam completed after the deadline carries a 1% point penalty per day (24 hours) late.

Exam Extra Credit

Since you only get to submit Exams one time, I will provide plenty of Extra Credit opportunities throughout the semester, which you can use to make up any lost exam points. So make sure you are up-to-date about all of them.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Course Outline

The course is divided into the following Learning Modules. For the most part, each Learning Module is made up of one individual textbook chapter. We will spend about two weeks in each Learning Module before moving to the next.

Module Number	Module Title	Textbook Chapter
1	Introduction to the Main Problem of the Global Environment	1 and 2
2	The Supply and Demand Model and Environmental Market Failures	3 and 4
3	The Economics of Environmental Quality	5
4	Decentralized Policies vs Command-and-Control Strategies	10 and 11
5	Incentive-Based Strategies	12 and 13
6	Global Climate Change	18
7	International Environmental Agreements	19
8	Globalization and Economic Development and the Environment	20 and 21

Course Schedule and Deadlines

There are two [LQs](#) per module; and one [Problem Set](#) per two modules. The [Exams](#) contain any material up to that point in the course.

Due dates at a glance

Here are all the due dates in this course. Make sure to use this information to mark your calendars. But I will remind you of all of in the Weekly Announcements.

Due Date	What is Due that Day?
September 17	Exam 1
October 15	Exam 2
November 5	Exam 3
December 10	Exam 4 and all the LQs

Due dates for Exams

Course Activity	Modules	Due Date
Exam 1	1 and 2	September 17
Exam 2	1 - 4	October 15
Exam 3	1 - 6	November 5
Exam 4	1 - 8	December 10

COMMUNICATION AND GETTING COURSE SUPPORT

Weekly Announcements

I will send a weekly announcement every Monday by 5pm at the latest. The Weekly announcement will have, at the minimum, the following:

- Short introduction to the material I included in the weekly lectures
- Reminders of what is due that week (if anything is due).
- Answers to some common questions I see in the Q and A Forum

Students can always read all Weekly Announcements in the course by visiting the *Announcements* forum located at the top of the page.

Discussion Forum

This will be the most effective way to get quick answers to your questions, since my teaching staff and I will monitor the Forum regularly and post answers to most questions within a 24hr period. So I encourage you to visit the Forum regularly, and participate, even answering the questions posted by your fellow students.

Office Hours

My Office Hours are Monday, Wednesday and Fridays from 8:30 - 9:30 am in my [Virtual Zoom Office](#).

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

E-mail: vazquezj@illinois.edu
[Virtual Office Hours](#)

Who I am?

I teach economics at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), where I teach one of the largest face to face sections of Microeconomics in the nation; 950 students. I am also the Coordinator of e-Learning for the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS), as well as the

Director of LAS Teaching Academy. During my tenure at Illinois I have received several teaching awards, including The Outstanding Teacher of Freshmen Award , a campus-wide award given every year by the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society. I have also been included in the List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent for several consecutive years. Before returning to Illinois, I was the Associate Director of the Teaching and Learning and Center at the University of Texas at San Antonio. I specialize in developing technologies that can be used in large enrollment courses, particularly classroom simulation games and web-based assessments/activities. I have published this work in several academic journals including the International Journal of Economic Education, and has presented at numerous academic conferences. I have a new Principles of Economics textbook, co-authored with Eric Chiang of Florida Atlantic University, that will be published by Worth Publishers in 2015.