



First Year Environmental Science

EVS 1010 Class# 24071 (1 credit hour) – Fall 2025
W period 5 (11:45 pm – 12:35 pm)
Classroom: CSE Room E220

Instructor: Dr. Danny Coenen, Instructional Associate Professor & Undergraduate Coordinator

Email: dcoenen@ufl.edu

Office Location: McCarty Hall D, Room 2047

Drop-in help hours: W 1:00 – 3:00, or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Jack Harling, Interdisciplinary Ecology PhD candidate

Email: jharling1@ufl.edu

Office Location: McCarty D, Room 2053

Drop-in office hours: T 1:00 – 2:00, R 2:00 – 3:00, or by appointment

We are here for you! Please don't hesitate to ask for assistance!

Course Description

Onboarding course for first year freshmen and HSAA students pursuing a B.S. or B.A. in Environmental Science. Sets up students for success in the Environmental Science major by guiding students through degree requirements, exploring departmental, college, and university resources, and discussing a variety of current environmental issues.

Prerequisites

First Year Environmental Science majors only (EVS_BA or EVS_BS).

Place in Curriculum

Being an environmental science student at Florida's preeminent public university involves many opportunities and challenges. Lectures, facility visits, guest presentations, and activities will give students the opportunity to connect to current School of Natural Resources and Environment (SNRE) students, staff, faculty, and organizations, as well as resources available to them through the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) and the University as a whole. Throughout, topics students are likely to explore through their core and elective coursework are introduced. This course is required for all freshman students (including HSAA) admitted into the Environmental Science B.A. or B.S. degree programs. Students who change their major to Environmental Science after their freshman year are not required to take this course. Transfer students should take ALS4932: Connecting with CALS as an alternative onboarding course. Note: The topics covered in this course are similar to SLS1102 Enhancing the Freshman Experience but tailored specifically for environmental science students. We generally don't recommend enrolling in SLS1102 for this reason.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- 1) recall selected environmental issues affecting social-ecological systems at different scales.
- 2) locate and use SNRE, CALS, and university resources for academic success and personal wellbeing.
- 3) create a four-year plan of study based on the catalog, schedule of courses, and degree audit.

- 4) locate, identify, and cite scholarly sources of different types.
- 5) describe the process of scientific inquiry and apply scientific principles to design and execute a basic research project.

Textbooks and Readings

None. Readings will be made available on the course Canvas site. Optionally, you may want to consider purchasing the following book for general consultation as you progress through your degree program:

Pontius, J. & McIntosh, A. (2020). *Critical skills for environmental professionals: Putting knowledge into practice*. Springer Nature Switzerland. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28542-5>

Grading

Grading is based on how well you apply the learned material as outlined by assignment-specific rubrics provided on Canvas and the student learning outcomes listed in the syllabus. Your grades rate the *quality* of the work submitted and are not an assessment of the quantity of effort invested.

To avoid losing points, you must verify that all assignments are successfully uploaded to Canvas by the deadline. Missing, corrupt, or incompatible files may result in grade penalties up to a score of zero for the assignment. You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course until the end of the semester.

In case of a grading dispute, you must notify me by email within one week of the date the grade is posted to Canvas. Please include an explanation of what aspect of your grade you disagree with. End-of-semester requests for grade bumps, assignment do-overs, additional extra credit, etc. will be denied. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to discuss problems with the course material or your performance in class. Your wellbeing and success are important to me, SNRE, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, and the University of Florida, so please contact me to discuss any concerns as soon as they arise.

Grading scale

| Grade | Points | Percent | Grade | Points | Percent |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------|-------------|------------|
| A: | 930.0-1000 | 93.0-100.0% | C: | 730.0-769.9 | 73.0-76.9% |
| A-: | 900.0-929.9 | 90.0-92.9% | C-: | 700.0-729.9 | 70.0-72.9% |
| B+: | 870.0-899.9 | 87.0-89.9% | D+: | 670.0-699.9 | 67.0-69.9% |
| B: | 830.0-869.9 | 83.0-86.9% | D: | 630.0-669.9 | 63.0-66.9% |
| B-: | 800.0-829.9 | 80.0-82.9% | D-: | 600.0-629.9 | 60.0-62.9% |
| C+: | 770.0-799.9 | 77.0-79.9% | E: | 0.0-599.9 | 0.0-59.9% |

The final grade for this course is based on a 1000-point scale and will be weighted as follows:

| Grade Component | Points | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Class orientation assignments | 50 | 5.0% |
| Attendance | 250 | 25.0% |
| Engagement | 250 | 25.0% |
| Homework assignments | 250 | 25.0% |
| End-of-term project | 200 | 20.0% |
| Total | 1000 | 100% |

Class Orientation Assignments: During the first week of the semester, you will complete a survey and take a quiz to ensure that you understand important rules specified in this syllabus. This quiz will be on Canvas and may be retaken an unlimited number of times up to the deadline until you are satisfied with your score.

Attendance: Attending class regularly is foundational to learning. Your attendance grade is based on the number of class sessions you are present for. Please arrive on time and be prepared to learn. You are permitted to miss one class period without impact to your attendance grade, although any missed engagement activities will incur a score of zero. Additional unexcused absences and inappropriate or disruptive classroom behavior will result in a reduction of your attendance grade.

Absences will be excused:

- in case of illness or injury, upon receipt of a doctor's note or equivalent, or by following the procedure outlined here: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications>.
- in case of family emergencies, deaths, or other extenuating circumstances, by following the procedure outlined here: <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications>.
- in case of religious holidays, by informing me via email ahead of time.
- in case of military duty, jury duty, participation in academic conferences, or participation in official university or UAA events, by providing appropriate evidence ahead of time.
- in all other cases, or if you are unsure, please email me as soon as feasible. Absences are generally not excused for personal non-emergency travel and vehicle problems.

If absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates via the course e-learning site.

Engagement: Learning is an active process facilitated by reflecting on, critically thinking about, and applying readings, lecture material, and out-of-class experiences. Your engagement grade is based on the quantity and quality of your contributions to formal and informal in-class discussions and activities. You are strongly encouraged to participate during each class meeting by asking relevant questions, engaging in discussion, or sharing personal experiences on the topic. The precise number of engagement opportunities will vary depending on the needs and interests of this semester's cohort of students. Your engagement grade is aligned with learning outcomes 1 and 2.

Homework assignments: Most weeks, students will complete an assignment related to a current or upcoming course topic. Your homework assignment grade is aligned with learning outcomes 1, and 3 through 5. Specific assignments may include:

- Practicing library skills
- Creating your academic four-year plan
- Creating an academic CV
- Creating a professional email template, including signature
- Preparing questions for guest presenters
- Writing reflections on learned material
- Hypothesis and research plan formulation
- Critiques of reading materials
- Field observations

End-of-term project: You will propose, plan, and execute a basic observational or experimental study of environmental interest, and submit a research report. Your end-of-term project grade is aligned with learning outcomes 1, 4 and 5.

University of Florida Academic Policies

Please visit <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/> for the latest academic policies.

Course Policies

First and foremost, we want you to be successful in this class and in your degree program. We expect you to assign EVS1010 its due priority. **However, if at any point you experience extenuating circumstances that prevent you from performing to your full academic potential, please reach out to me for help!**

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

Non-Discrimination Policy

I support University of Florida regulation [1.006](#) on non-discrimination and Board of Governors regulation [2.003](#) on equal access and opportunity. This classroom is a place where you are valued and will be treated with respect. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful and welcoming environment for every other member of the class. This does not mean that you are not allowed to disagree with others, but that such differences should be explored without *ad hominem* judgment. Considering different perspectives enriches our understanding of the variety of human-nature interactions and is imperative to developing just solutions to complex environmental problems.

Your instructor may utilize teaching tools such as “playing devil’s advocate” or “putting yourself in the shoes of others” from time to time. Pursuant Florida Statute 760.10(8)(b), such pedagogical strategies should not be misconstrued as an *endorsement* of any position in conflict with Florida Statute 760.10(8)(a). Should I inadvertently make a statement offensive to you, please let me know so that I may learn and grow from the incident.

Make-up Policy

To maintain fairness, only work missed due to excused absences can be made up. For absences excused ahead of time, I will develop a make-up plan and schedule. In case of documented illnesses or emergencies, arrangements for completing make-up exams or assignments should be made upon your return to class. If experiencing truly extenuating circumstances resulting in longer absences, you should notify me as soon as possible to develop a plan to make up missed work. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept assignment do-overs (resubmissions for a higher score) in this class. Missed extra credit opportunities cannot be made up.

Late Work

You are responsible for turning assignments in on time unless an extension has been requested by email prior to the deadline. In case of true documented emergencies, I may waive this requirement. Technical difficulties are not generally an excuse for missing an assessment or assignment; you should have contingency plans in case any such issues arise. I recommend storing your documents on a cloud service that can be accessed from any device ([OneDrive](#) is free for UF students), and having a plan for internet outages (such as identifying a source for public Wi-Fi near you or using your cell phone as a Wi-Fi hotspot). Try not to wait until the last minute to submit assignments!

Assignments submitted between one and four days late will incur a penalty of 10% of the possible points per day. Work submitted more than four days late will be assigned a score of zero.

I highly recommend starting on assignments early to preclude unexpected emergencies or late-semester stress that could compromise your grade. Deadline extensions may be available on certain assignments if requested at least 24 hours ahead of the deadline via email. If extended deadlines are not met, late penalties will be assessed based on the original, not the revised due date!

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

This course follows the university's honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc.

Many students are unaware of the seriousness of violating academic ethics. **PLAGIARISM, WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL, IS A SERIOUS AND POTENTIALLY CAREER-ENDING FORM OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT. Copying and pasting from external sources without attribution is never okay in academia.** Direct quotes are not commonly used in science writing; paraphrases accompanied by a proper in-text citation should be used instead. Inappropriate use of direct quotes in this class will result in a loss of credit.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Statement

Artificial Intelligence is an amazing new technology that is revolutionizing the way we access and process information, just like computers, the internet, and mobile phones did in prior decades. AI can be a useful tool to aid (but NOT replace) writers when brainstorming, spellchecking, and editing. **However, all work submitted for credit in this class must be your own. Using AI to generate *content* for you, including but not limited to copying & pasting AI output in whole or part into work submitted for this class (even if you subsequently edit or paraphrase the AI output), constitutes academic dishonesty unless explicitly permitted by the instructor as part of the written assignment instructions.**

If you use any AI application for any part of an assignment (including brainstorming ideas or editing), you must state so as part of your submission and include the entire prompt(s) that you used with the AI tool(s) as part of your submission (below your list of references); **failure to do so will be considered academic dishonesty.**

Students should be cognizant that large language models (LLMs) and similar AI applications are not credible sources and should not be used as such. They are also ill-suited for finding scholarly sources. Further, many web sites, online services, and software packages (e.g. Grammarly, Canva, many word processors) now feature AI integrations. These policies apply to these services the same way that they do for LLMs. It is your responsibility to determine if any tools you use contain AI components, and if so, disclose use of that AI. AI-generated images may not be used unless expressly approved in writing by your instructor for a specific assignment.

Paper Guidelines

All writing assignments will be submitted to Canvas and must be in **.docx** format, with the proper file extension. Other file formats will not be accepted. All assignments must include citations and references in APA 7th edition formatting. You do not need cover pages, running headers, etc.

If you experience difficulties in the writing process are encouraged to contact your TA or me for advice or visit the UF Writing Studio (see *Campus Helping Resources* below).

I strongly recommend watching the following video on academic honesty, citing sources, and proper paraphrasing by the end of the drop-add period: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g81hPRKWsdM>

Office Hours

Please take advantage of office hours to discuss any questions or concerns. Contact your teaching assistant for basic questions, help with assignments, and clarifications regarding grades and feedback. Contact me

regarding absences, grading disputes, concerns about other students, and any other issues. If you cannot be present for the regularly scheduled help hours, we will attempt to accommodate you at an alternate time.

Course Communication

The preferred way to get ahold of me or your TA outside of drop-in office hours is via Canvas message or direct email from your official UF email account. You can expect a response within 24-48 hours on weekdays in most cases. Emails from outside providers, like Gmail, are not considered secure and will be deleted to protect student privacy. Note that it is against FERPA best practices for me to discuss grades through email.

All students are expected to check the course web site on Canvas (<https://elearning.ufl.edu>) each weekday. In addition, we may send specific communications directly to your UF email, which you should check daily as well. You should enable Canvas notifications for this class, so that you are notified immediately about grading, assignment feedback, due date changes, announcements, etc.

External Communication

You may use GroupMe or similar tools to communicate with other students about the class and environmental science-related topics. **You may not, however, discuss quiz and exam questions/answers with others, including quizzes and exams from prior semesters, or collaborate on any assignments intended to be worked on individually. Doing so constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Canvas Display Name Change

Canvas uses the "Display Name" as set in myUFL. The Display Name is what you want people to see in the UF Directory, such as "Ally" instead of "Allison." To update your display name, go to one.ufl.edu, click on the dropdown at the top right, and select "Directory Profile." Click "Edit" on the right of the name panel, uncheck "Use my legal name" under "Display Name," update how you wish your name to be displayed, and click "Submit" at the bottom. This change may take up to 24 hours to appear in Canvas. This does not change your legal name for official UF records.

Technical Difficulties

For help with technical issues or difficulties with Canvas, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu>.
352-392-HELP (4357)
Walk-in: HUB 132

While technical difficulties are not generally an acceptable excuse, any requests for make-ups (assignments, exams, etc.) due to technical issues should be accompanied by the ticket number received from the UF Computing Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You should email me within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Zoom Conference Privacy

Should it become necessary or convenient to hold classes virtually using zoom, those class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to

consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated. As in all courses, unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Software Use

All UF faculty, staff and students are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources

Your wellbeing is important to me and the University of Florida community. If you experience a crisis or personal problem that interferes with your wellbeing, please utilize the university's counseling resources. You are, of course, always welcome and encouraged to talk to me about any issues that interfere with your academic performance and wellbeing.

Please visit <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/> for the latest information on academic and health & wellness resources, including the Whole Gator app.

Course Outline

(subject to change – please check the Canvas calendar for the latest information)

Critical Dates

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Syllabus Quiz | Friday, August 30 |
| End-of-Term Project | Friday, November 22 |

Preliminary Class Schedule – to be added once our schedule is finalized. Stay tuned to Canvas for updates!

Course Alterations

Due to unforeseen circumstances or to enhance class learning opportunities, it may be necessary to alter the information given in this syllabus during the semester. Such changes are not unusual and should be expected. All changes to the syllabus will be posted to Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with any syllabus changes.