

ENVS 200: ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

CUESTA COLLEGE | ENVS 200
SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Welcome to ENVS 200!

If you've ever wondered about the workings of Earth's water, air, energy, or ecosystems, this is a great course for you. Over the course of the semester we will investigate the scientific principles, concepts, and methods necessary for examining humanity's impact upon the geological, biological, and physical systems present in the Earth's natural environment.

In this class you will explore the role of science in identifying and finding sustainable solutions to environmental changes resulting from natural causes and human activity. Students will discover ecological principles, biodiversity, climate change, sustainability, energy use, water resources, air and water pollution, and waste management. The goal of this course is for students to learn the many ways that Earth's systems interact with each other and with societies around the world.

This course is designed for students who are interested in any aspect of environmental or Earth science. This class has transferability to both UC and CSU institutions. ENVS 200 satisfies a general education physical science requirement.



INSTRUCTOR INFO

Instructor: Emily Kane

Please call me: Dr. Kane or Professor Kane (she/her)

Ask me about: Anything related to this class, becoming a science major, getting involved in research, college, graduate school, other science-based careers, climate change, Greenland, glaciers.

Email: emily_kane@cuesta.edu

Office location: 2322, Office phone: (805) 592-9136

Office hours: TBD

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Canvas. The canvas course space will be used weekly to distribute reading material, homework, feedback from the instructor, and keep track of course grades. Cuesta College has created a great guide to online courses and canvas sites, please review [the information and helpful resources provided](#).
- We will be using a free open source textbook on LibreText.com called *Oceanography 101*. The link to this book can be [found here](#) and linked on our canvas course page. Each week the associated suggested reading/additional text resources will be listed on canvas along with the other instructional material.



COURSE FORMAT AND ORGANIZATION

In-class activities

In-class activities are designed for students to practice applying the course information they have learned in lecture. These assignments will be completed during class either individually or in small groups. There are no makeup assignments, attendance in class is required to complete each of these short assignments. The lowest 2 activity scores will be dropped.

Homework

Homework assignments will be posted as quizzes on canvas and completed each week. These homework assignments will be due each Sunday at 10pm. Each assignment is untimed and will allow for two submissions. There are no make-up assignments. The lowest two homework grades will be dropped.

Group project

There will be one assignment to be completed in a small group in the last third of the semester. Each student will be assigned to a small group and will be expected to complete their fair share of the assignment. More information about this assignment will come as the assignment approaches.

Tests

There will be four tests during class time in week 5, week 9, week 13, and during finals week. Tests will consist of a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions and will be completed in class during scheduled class hours. The final exam is the 4th test and will be taken on 5/17 at 9:45am. For more information about Cuesta College's Spring 2023 final exam schedule, please [see this link](#).

No early exams will be given. If you miss a test, a make-up exam will only be permitted a) within 1 week following that exam AND b) if you first provide authentic documentation of a genuine emergency excusing you from the exam AND c) you personally request an appointment with the instructor. If you miss one test, a make-up test will not be permitted for any other test.

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS

A successful student in this course will be engaged with the course materials multiple times per week. They will actively participate in this class by asking further questions when needed, working diligently on application of material, and thoughtfully completing homework quizzes to demonstrate what they have learned. Through thorough involvement with these course aspects, they will prepare themselves for excellence on the class exams – and an outstanding grade in this course.

Active participation is critical for success in this course. This will be assessed by turning in work on time and participating in all group activities while in class. Two “absences” are allowed with no excuse or warning needed (because the lowest 2 in-class assignments and homework assignments are dropped). Any additional absences or lack of submissions will start to affect your grade.



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

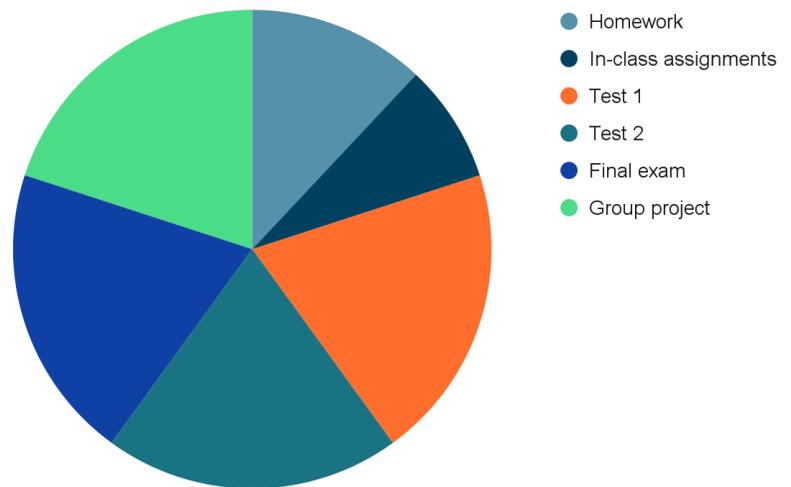
WHAT WILL YOU ACCOMPLISH IN THIS CLASS?

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the scientific basis of major environmental issues and identify or evaluate the effectiveness of potential solutions.
2. Describe how the scientific method is used to address the core physical, biological, geological and sustainability issues of environmental science.
3. Analyze how personal or societal decisions affect the environment and resource use.
4. Analyze and interpret quantitative data and visual representations of information.
5. Discuss the impacts of environmental issues on human populations.

ASSESSMENT

In-class assignments	10%
Homework assignments	14%
Group project	20%
Test 1	18%
Test 2	18%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%



Percent will be converted to letter grade as follows:

>93	92-90	89-87	86-83	82-80	79-76	75-70	69-67	63-66	62-60	<60
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D+	D	D-	F

HOW TO CONTACT ME

I am always available via email (emily_kane@cuesta.edu) and happy to answer questions. If you have questions that you would like answered, please allow 24 hours for a response. (For example, if you email with questions 30 minutes before the homework is due, I likely will not have time to get back to you before the deadline!). Please be sure to include “OCEN 210” in the subject line of any emails.

I will hold [weekly office hours on zoom](#) where students can come with no appointment necessary to ask any questions they may have as they work through the weekly module. Please join any of my office hours (Mon 11a-12p, Tues 2-3p, Wed 10:30-11:30a, Thurs 2-3p) or email me to make an appointment to meet at another time.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Students are required to follow the current district policies regarding personal protective equipment, sanitization, distancing, and other related measures to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

Students who do not comply will not be permitted in the laboratory and will be referred to the Vice President of Student Services for non-compliance with the Student Code of Conduct.

The COVID-19 situation and Cuesta College's response is constantly evolving; the policies in this syllabus are subject to change based on the current situation on campus, in our county, or in the state. You will be alerted to these changes. For the most up to date information on Cuesta College's Covid-19 protocols please visit [this link here](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES

Cheating and disruptive behavior in any form are never allowed. Guidelines established by Cuesta College will be followed if a student is caught cheating or disrupting the educational process. These policies are available online and highlighted below. You have a responsibility to refrain from any form of academic dishonesty and to treat your fellow students, teaching assistants, and instructors with courtesy, civility, and respect. I encourage you to become familiar with [Cuesta College's Standard of Student Conduct](#) in the Student Handbook.

Each student must submit their own version of each course assignment. I encourage you to study together, discuss methods, and check your answers against each other but you must do the work yourself and write your answers in your own words. It is your responsibility to make it clear to the instructor that you worked through the entire problem yourself. Plagiarism (e.g., copying another student's answer, submitting others' work without attribution) results in an automatic score of zero on the assignment/exam and possible additional penalties, beginning with loss of whole grades and reporting to the Dean. Ask the instructor if you have any questions about what this means. One way to be safe is to never share your written work with others. Focus instead on discussing the correct methods or principles.

IMPORTANT STATEMENTS

At Cuesta we celebrate a diversity of perspectives and experiences. As your instructor, I strive to create a learning environment that honors your identity (including race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) and values your unique perspective. Along these lines:

- If you have a preferred name and/or set of pronouns, please feel comfortable enough to let me know.
- If you feel that your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please come and see me, as I would like to be a resource for you.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in my class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it.



Campus Anti-Discrimination Statement: The San Luis Obispo County Community College District is committed to providing an academic and work environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Federal and state laws and District policies afford students and employees the right to work or learn in an environment free from discriminatory intimidation, ridicule and insult.

Discrimination and/or harassment based on race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, ethnic group identification, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, military service, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, or any legally protected characteristic, or the perception that a person has one or more of these characteristics is illegal and violates District policy.

Any hostile or offensive conduct based on gender can constitute prohibited harassment. Harassment comes in many forms, including but not limited to the following conduct: verbal, visual or written, environmental, physical. Please find more information [here](#).

Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS): Accommodations for students eligible for disability services will be coordinated through the Cuesta College DSPS. Please make appropriate arrangements through DSPS within the first week of course. Information on the DSPS can be found at their [website](#).

CAMPUS RESOURCES

The following useful campus resources are open in some capacity throughout the campus closure and remote instruction. Click the links here for more information.

[Student Health Center](#) – offering in person and remote appointments for both medical and mental health needs

[Counseling Center](#) – offering online counseling and workshops every weekday

[Food Pantry](#) – food available to students on both campuses Monday- Friday

[Tutoring Center](#) – offering fully remote tutoring of all courses

[Veterans Services Program](#) – open for counseling and meetings by phone/video or email

[Transfer Center](#) – assistance preparing for transfer to another campus or to transfer into the workforce offered remotely

ON BASIC NEEDS

If you are in need of a laptop to complete the work required by this class, please make use of the available Chromebooks on campus. There are Chromebooks with all required software ready for students to borrow for free for the entire semester. For more information please see their [website](#).

If you find yourself in need of basic needs such as food, groceries, or shelter please make use of the resources Cuesta College offers, and feel comfortable reaching out to me for more information. Please know that I am here for you inside and outside of this course. I care about your physical and mental well-being and want to see you succeed. For food or housing insecurities please see more information and resources on [this page](#).



COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic(s)	Assignments
1	Introduction to Earth and the scientific method of thinking	Week 1 classwork and homework
2	Earth's environments	Week 2 classwork and homework
3	Ecology	Week 3 classwork and homework
4	Earth's ecosystems and biodiversity	Week 4 classwork and homework
5	Biogeochemical cycles	Week 5 classwork and homework
6	Water on Earth and the hydrologic cycle	Test #1 Week 6 classwork and homework
7	Water resources	Week 7 classwork and homework
8	Water treatment and management	Week 8 classwork and homework
9	Earth's atmosphere	Week 9 classwork and homework
10	Air quality and pollution	Week 10 classwork and homework
11	Earth's energy budget	Week 11 classwork and homework
12	Energy types	Test #2 Week 12 classwork and homework
13	Fossil fuels	Week 13 classwork and homework
14	Renewable energy	Week 14 classwork and homework
15	Environmental legislation	Week 15 classwork and homework <i>Group project due</i>
16	Waste management	Week 16 classwork and homework
17	Final exam	Test #3

this schedule is subject to changes that will be announced via email and canvas