**Course Syllabus**

**PH 3301: Environmental Health (Hybrid Format)**

**Fall 2021 (Mondays, 5:00 pm – 6:20 pm)/Jowers 207A**

Instructor: Dr. Celeste Monforton, Dr.PH, MPH (she/her)

Email: c\_m551@txstate.edu

Office: My office hours are immediately after our class sessions. I am also available to meet students on weekdays for an in-person, phone, Zoom meeting. Students should send me an email to schedule an appointment (at least 24 hours in advance.) I will do my best to accommodate a student's schedule.

**Electronic Communication and Response Time:** Generally, I review my e-mail communications from students once per day. I will try my best to respond to an e-mail within 24 hours, except on weekends. In order to flag your email for my attention, please send e-mails in the following format:

To: c\_m551@txstate.edu

Subject: PH 3301 and the topic of your message

**Course Description:** This course provides students the opportunity to develop knowledge on the relationship between the environment and human health. This course will explore contemporary sociopolitical decisions on the environment and the resulting effect on public health. Students will be guided to research, discuss, and interpret evidence-informed writing and data about environmental health issues facing local, state, national, and/or global communities.

**Prerequisites:** PH 1320 (Introduction to Public Health) and PH 2340 (Community Health) both with grades of "C" or better. If a student does not meet these prerequisites they must inform the instructor. This will help the instructor determine whether the student will be able to succeed in the class.

**Format:** This course follows the hybrid design which is defined by Texas State University as at least 50% conducted on-line, and at least 15% in the classroom. In Fall 2021, PH3301 will have seven sessions in the classroom and seven sessions on-line. The on-line sessions will require students to log-in during the scheduled class time, unless otherwise notified by the instructor.

**Instructional Objectives:** To provide students with the basic knowledge and understanding of environmental health issues from a public health perspective. Students will:

a) Explore current and historic environmental determinants of human health;

b) Examine the routes of exposure and health effects of toxic substances and other hazards that are relevant to environmental health;

c) Examine the impact of economic, social, and political decisions on environmental health protection, including on disproportionately affected populations;

d) Assess current sociopolitical events concerning the intersection of human health and the environment;

e) Evaluate personal decisions that influence environmental health protections; and

f) Demonstrate through writing assignments a mastery of fundamental concepts of environmental health from a public health perspective

**Required Textbook**

A. Nadakavukaren and J. Caravanos. (2020). *Our Global Environment: A Health Perspective* (8th ed.). Waveland Press, Inc.

**Required Subscription to Environmental Health News (free)**

Students must sign up for the free, on-line subscription to Environmental Health News (EHN). Students will observe reporting by news outlets about current environmental health topics. Students will also have two writing assignments that are informed by stories that appear on EHN.

Sign up for EHN’s "Above the Fold" no later than Tuesday, August 24 at 11:59 pm. Go here to sign-up: <https://www.ehn.org/st/Newsletter_Signup>

**Other Required Readings**

Journal articles, government reports, media accounts and other required readings will be posted on Canvas or URLs will be provided.

**Technical Requirements**

• We will be using Canvas as our learning management system. For assistance using Canvas see: <https://doit.txstate.edu/services/canvas.html>

• You must have access to Microsoft Word or be able to convert documents to MS-Word

• You must have a reliable and secure broadband connection. (FYI: The computer labs on the Texas State University campus provides access to reliable, secure broadband

connections.) Technological problem not associated with Canvas or the university servers are not the responsibility of the instructor.

**Announcements:** I will use the Announcement feature in Canvas to provide updates and/or changes to assignments, quizzes, or other matters about the course. You must adjust your settings in Canvas for PH3301 in order to receive notifications about Announcements. Canvas does not send Announcements to your email.

**Modules:** The class is organized into weekly modules. Each module has specific learning objectives and the activities assigned to achieve those objectives. The activities will include readings, lectures, videos, writing assignments, in-class activities, and quizzes.

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

A student's final grade is based on a scale of 1,000 possible points using the following assessment methods:

**(1) Quizzes (6 X 25 points = 150 points)** There will be six quizzes administered on Canvas. The quizzes are designed to assess your comprehension of key concepts from the textbook, readings, lectures, assignments, in-class activities, and videos. Each quiz will include 15-20 questions which will primarily be multiple choice or short answer. The quizzes will be timed.

Students will be permitted to use their textbook, readings, and notes. Students are NOT permitted, however, to use email, send/receive texts, or use the Internet (i.e., "googling") while taking the quizzes. Doing so constitutes a violation of the Texas State University Academic Honesty Policy.

**(2) Final Exam (250 points)**: The final assessment of learning will be a cumulative exam on Monday, December 6 from 5:00 – 7:30 pm. The final exam will be short answer and short essay.

**(2) Writing Assignments (560 points)** There will be six writing assignment during the semester. They range in value from 30 points to 160 points, and they comprise 56 percent of your grade.

a) One of the assignments will be a reflection on a writing workshop that will be held in class session #2 on August 30 (30 points).

b) Two of the writing assignments (100 points and 130 points) are related to articles you will be reading through your subscription to Environmental Health News.

c) One of your assignments will be writing a letter to one of your members of Congress (100 points).

d) Two of the writing assignments are related to an in-class Role Play activity (40 points.) One of these assignments is a Stakeholder Analysis (160 points) and the other is a recap of the Role Play activity (40 points).

With respect to writing assignments, you are expected to be able to:

a) Follow instructions for assignments (or ask for clarification at least 72 hours in advance of the due date);

b) Submit work that is legible and professionally formatted (e.g., using the same font throughout the document, using paragraph breaks);

c) Write in complete sentences and use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling;

d) Proofread your work; and

e) Take advantage of the University Writing Center to get expert assistance.

The grading rubrics for the writing assignments reflect these expectations.

**University Writing Center**: If you have not had much writing experience at the university level, are not confident in your writing ability, or would like some writing tips, I encourage you to take advantage of the University Writing Center. They offer their coaching on-line and in-person, and it is very easy to schedule an appointment. <https://www.writingcenter.txstate.edu/>

The best writers, from students and professors to Pulitzer Prize winners, approach writing the same way as athletes and musicians: practice, practice, and more practice. The more writing—and proofreading and editing—you do, the better your writing will be.

**Late assignments:** Late assignments will not be accepted unless the instructor gives permission in advance to a student. The score earned for a pre-approved late assignment will be reduced for each 24-hour period it is late by the number of point equivalent to one grade.

**Scoring/Grading:** The score/grade you receive is the one that you earn. Students are urged to bring concerns about their grades to the instructor early in the semester. It will be difficult to develop and implement a plan to improve your performance if the instructor is not alerted to your concerns by October 25, 2021.

A student is expected to consult the scoring rubric for assignments to understand how grades will be earned.

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| **Letter Grade** | **Definition** | **Points**  (out of 1,000) | **Scale** |
| F | Does not meet expectations | <590 | <59% |
| D | Needs improvement | 600 - 690 | 60 - 69% |
| C | Meets expectations for the course | 700-790 | 70 - 79% |
| B | Exceeds expectations for the course | 80-890 | 80 - 89% |
| A | **Exemplary** throughout the course | 900-1,000 | 90 - 100% |

**COVID-19 Precautions**

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is the gravest infectious disease public health situation since 1918. If you have not had the opportunity to be vaccinated to be protected from COVID-19, the Texas State University Student Health Center [is administering vaccines](https://www.healthcenter.txstate.edu/covid-19/vaccination.html). A COVID-19 vaccine is the most effective way to protect against getting the disease and/or suffering severe health effects from it.

An [Executive Order](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.texas.gov%2Fuploads%2Ffiles%2Fpress%2FEO-GA-36_prohibition_on_mandating_face_coverings_response_to_COVID-19_disaster_IMAGE_05-18-2021.pdf&data=04%7C01%7Cc_m551%40txstate.edu%7C4a01dd6663dd453a80b008d9528fdcf0%7Cb19c134a14c94d4caf65c420f94c8cbb%7C0%7C0%7C637631600277439657%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=6IdkrZQ%2Fxs0xjHC9o6khOT2l4QkUgfaDOEPGUrUDt14%3D&reserved=0) issued in May 2021 by Texas Governor Greg Abbott, prohibits public educational institutions from requiring face coverings. The university’s [12 Health and Safety Guidelines](https://www.txstate.edu/coronavirus/road-map/health-and-safety-measures.html) recommend, however, vaccinated and unvaccinated people who are indoors on campus wear face coverings. Requirements and guidance about COVID-19 precautions may change during the semester.

**Classroom Civility**

"Civility in the classroom is very important for the educational process and it is everyone’s responsibility. If you have questions about appropriate behavior in a particular class, please address them with your instructor first. Disciplinary procedures may be implemented for refusing to follow an instructor’s directive, refusing to leave the classroom, not following the university’s requirement to wear a cloth face covering, not complying with social distancing or sneeze and cough etiquette, and refusing to implement other health and safety measures as required by the university. Additionally, the instructor, in consultation with the department chair/school director, may refer the student to the Dean of Students Office for further disciplinary review. Such reviews may result in consequences ranging from warnings to sanctions from the university." (From: Texas State University, Policy and Procedure Statement. Section 03: Courteous and Civil Learning Environment in [AA/PPS No. 02.03.02 (4.02)](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-03-02.html)  and [Codes of Student Conduct](file:///C:\Users\Celeste\Documents\&TEXAS%20State%20University\ENV%20Health%20Classes\ENV%20Health%202021\Code%20of%20Student%20Conduct,%20number%20II,).)

**Students with Disabilities**:If you are a student with a disability who will require an accommodation to succeed in this course, please contact me within the first two weeks of the semester. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. Failure to contact me in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For more information, refer to the Office of Disability Service’s Website: [www.ods.txstate.edu](http://www.ods.txstate.edu).

**Emergency Management and TXState Alert:** In the event of an emergency, students, faculty, and staff should monitor <http://safety.txstate.edu> for all safety and emergency communications. This page is updated with the latest information available to the university, in addition to providing links to information concerning safety resources and emergency procedures. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to sign up for the TXState Alert system.

**Texas State’s Academic Honesty Policy**

From the Department of Health and Human Performance: "We expect students to do their own work on all graded material submitted for all departmental course requirements. The Department’s policy states that students guilty of knowingly using, or attempting to use, another person’s work as though that work were their own, and students guilty of knowingly permitting, or attempting to permit, another student to use their work, may receive a grade of “F” for the course. Students who are unfamiliar with the University’s policy on plagiarism should consult the most recent edition of the *Texas State Student Handbook* <http://www.mrp.txstate.edu/studenthandbook/>.

Students who are uncertain regarding what actions constitute plagiarism should consult the instructor."

Please do not violate the Academic Honesty Policy because you are falling behind with your school work. If you are having difficulty completing an assignment, including understanding the instructions or meeting the deadline, you should discuss it with the instructor before it is too late to rectify the situation.

*1. Academic work* means the preparation of an essay, thesis, report, problem assignment, exam, or other project submitted for purposes of grade determination.

*2. Cheating* means:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report or computer files, data listings, and/or programs;
2. Using materials during a test unauthorized by person giving test;
3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work;
4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting copying, or possessing, in whole or part, the content of an un-administered test;
5. Substituting for another student, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself, in taking an exam or preparing academic work;
6. Bribing another person to obtain an un-administered test or information about an un-administered test.
7. *Plagiarism* means the appropriation of another's work (or ideas) and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit.

NOTE: Cutting and pasting from an on-line article or website and failing to use quotations marks and an APA citation for the information are forms of plagiarism. Cutting and pasting from an on-line article/website and then changing a few words to pretend it is your own work (without providing an APA citation) is plagiarism.

NOTE: I regret to report that every semester I have taught at Texas State University, I have identified at least one student who has plagiarized. In every case, I have written up the offense on the University’s Honor Code Review Form and met with the student to confront the dishonesty. I submit all Honor Code Review Forms to the University’s Honor Code Council. If I have evidence of a student’s violation of Texas State University's Academic Honesty Policy, I will not hesitate to give the student an F in the course. I have had students repeat my course because they plagiarized the first time they took my course.

1. *Collusion* means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
2. *Abuse of resource material* means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft, or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.

**Sexual Assault Resources and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX):** Anyone, of any sex, race, ability, gender, gender identity, and gender expression can experience sexual assault. Resources available to Texas State students who experience sexual assault are available at <http://www.healthcenter.txstate.edu/AFTER-HOURS/sexualassault-resources.html>.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits sexual

discrimination in federally funded educational programs or activities. Under Title IX

individuals are protected against discrimination based on sex. Individuals can file a report of sexual misconduct. Faculty who receive a report of sexual misconduct are required to report the incident to the Title IX Officer. The following types of incidents are included: Sexual Assault; Dating Violence; Stalking; Sexual Harassment; Domestic Violence; Sexual

Exploitation; Sexual Intimidation (Cyber-stalking, Indecent Exposure, etc.).

For more information and/or to report sexual misconduct, visit http://www.txstate.edu/oea/Sexual-Misconduct--Title-IX-.html

Effective January 2, 2020, state law (SB 212) requires all university employees, acting in the course and scope of employment, who witness or receive information concerning an

incident of sexual misconduct involving an enrolled student or employee to report all

relevant information known about the incident to the university's Title IX Coordinator or

Deputy Title IX coordinator. According to SB 212, employees who knowingly fail to report

or knowingly file a false report shall be terminated in accordance with university policy and the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations.

**FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION**

**Non-Attendance and Financial Aid:** If you are a Pell Grant, Iraq-Afghanistan Service Grant (IASG) or TEACH Grant recipient, federal regulations require you to have begun attending the courses for which you are enrolled and receiving these grants. If on the census date roster (e.g., 12th day of each fall and spring semester) you are reflected as not attending a course, you are assumed (for financial aid purposes) not to have begun attendance for that course. Your grant will then be adjusted or cancelled based on the courses you have actually begun attending.

**Unofficial Withdraws and Financial Aid:** If you fail to earn a passing grade in at least one of your courses (i.e., all U’s, all I's or a combination of all U's, W's or I's) during a semester, you are considered to have, for purposes of federal Title IV funds, unofficially withdrawn from the university. As a result, a federal withdrawal calculation must be performed to determine the amount of Title IV funds that you must repay. Once the amount you must repay is determined, Financial Aid and Scholarships will mail you a letter with the repayment details.

Note: A grade of U (Unearned Failing) is awarded to students who do not officially withdraw from but fail to complete a course (i.e., did not take a final exam, stopped attending, etc.) and failed to achieve the course objectives.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and Financial Aid:** Federal regulations require you to meet certain minimum academic standards in order to remain eligible for financial assistance. The requirements are that you: 1) maintain a minimum cumulative Texas State GPA; 2) complete at least 70% of all your coursework; and 3) not exceed a maximum limit of attempted hours toward your degree or certificate program.

Additional program-specific requirements also exist (e.g., TEXAS Grant). You can view these SAP criteria in more detail at www.finaid.txstate.edu by selecting Undergraduate Aid or Graduate Aid from the dropdown menu and then Maintain My Eligibility.