
College of the Holy Cross

Fall 2026

Economics 224: Environmental Economics

Section 01

Professor: Jeremy Garrison

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Class Time and Place

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 - 10:45 AM, Stein 314

Office Hours

Office hours will be in person in my office, Stein 415, and occasionally (as announced on Canvas) on Zoom at [this link](#).

- Monday: 1:00 - 3:00 PM
- Tuesday: 2:00 - 3:30 PM
- Wednesday: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- Thursday: 2:00 - 3:30 PM
- Additional office hours can be made by appointment.

Resources

- [Canvas course webpage](#): this is where you'll find course details, assignments, and posted grades as well as occasional announcements.
- **Textbook** (required): Tom Tietenberg and Lynne Lewis, *Environmental Economics: The Essentials*, 2nd Ed., Routledge, 2025
- Additional readings are accessible as links or pdfs on Canvas.

Course Description and Objectives

This course explores our relationship with the environment from an economic perspective. The course begins with a review of microeconomic principles (students are required to have taken Economics 110) then presents the basic concepts, models, and frameworks of environmental economics, exploring various applications along the way. Students will learn about externalities, benefit-cost analysis, static and dynamic efficiency, sustainability, valuation techniques, ecosystem services, the commons, pollution, climate change, and environmental justice. They will then apply the analytical methods of environmental economics to describe and explain an environmental issue of their choice and to develop a potential solution.

Academic Dishonesty

The work in this class is expected to be your own and meet the standards of academic honesty laid out in the College Catalog. Ignorance of these standards is not a valid excuse. Failure to comply with these standards will result in a zero for the assignment and notification of the Dean's Office of the violation. If you are ever in doubt of whether your actions are in violation of the code, please confer with me before submitting the assignment or exam. Please also familiarize yourself with the [College's Academic Integrity Policy](#).

(In the spirit of academic honesty: while preparing this syllabus, I have benefited from reading the syllabi of Professors Schwab and Congdon-Hohman.)

Technology Policy

No phones, laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices may be used during class. *Students using their devices during class time will be marked as absent.* If this policy significantly hinders your capacity to learn and understand the material or if you are a primary caretaker who must occasionally check your device, please talk to me after class or reach out by email. No generative artificial intelligence (AI) models (e.g. ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, etc.) may be used for this course.

Grading

Grading components: Your final grade will be calculated from your assignment grades as follows (the number of assignments in each category is in parentheses):

Class participation	(27)	27 pts	13.5%
Reading notes	(10)	30 pts	15%
Collaborative exercises	(~10)	50 pts	25%
Quizzes	(~10)	50 pts	25%
Presentation & essay	(1)	43 pts	21.5%
- Idea proposal		2 pts	1%
- Presentation		16 pts	8%
- Essay		20 pts	10%
- Questions		5 pts	2.5%
Total		200 pts	100%

All but the essay and presentations will occur weekly. You can find descriptions of each in Assignments, and you can find their due dates in the schedule here and on Canvas.

Grading scale: Letter grades are determined based on percentage grades as follows: A = 93-100%; A- = 90-92.9%; B+ = 87-89.9%; B = 83-86.9%; B- = 80-82.9%; C+ = 77-79.9%; C = 73-76.9%; C- = 70-72.9%; D+ = 67-69.9%; D = 60-66.9%; F < 60%. No extra credit will be offered in this course.

Assignments

Class attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend all classes they can. If you are unable to attend class (e.g. due to sickness or an athletic event), please send me an email before class, and please obtain lecture notes from other students after class. If you will miss a test or in-class activity, I will let you know how you can make it up (likely during my office hours). Attendance alone is insufficient to earn the participation points. For full participation credit, you must actively engage in activities and discussions, and you may not use electronic devices. See also General Expectations in this syllabus and the [College's Class Attendance Policy](#).

Handwritten reading notes / reflections: Each week, students are expected to handwrite 1-2 pages of notes based on the assigned readings found in the schedule and on Canvas. I will grade them as incomplete (0), partial (1.5), or complete (3). You will turn in these notes in class on the day the readings are due (usually Tuesdays). I will accept a range of styles of notes. You can write a journal-like reflection on the readings as a whole, or you can turn in a list of annotations with page numbers. You are welcome to engage with the text by summarizing, synthesizing, critiquing, analyzing, pondering, arguing with, or asking questions about the content. You may bring your own

lived experience and knowledge from other courses and sources to bear on the concepts presented in the readings. You are welcome to agree or disagree with any or all of the readings. I am looking primarily for honest engagement.

Quizzes and in-class exercises: We will spend the second half of class each Thursday on in-class exercises. These will include games, discussions, math problems, and quizzes. The graded component will be a short set of questions concerning the concepts and theory from that week. Half of these questions you are encouraged to work together on (though each of you will still turn in your own responses). The other half will be completed individually as a quiz. You are allowed to use your handwritten lecture and reading notes during all of these exercises. Half of your final grade will be based on these assignments, but they will occur weekly, so any given exercise/quiz is worth only 5 points. Additionally, if you score poorly on these weekly assignments, you may bring it to my office hours the following week and revise your answers there. No more than 4 weeks of these assignments may be made up throughout the semester. Only tests revised in my office will be accepted for credit.

Essay and presentation: In place of a final exam, every student must complete a final project applying the tools of environmental economics to an issue of their choice. The project (43 points) is comprised of four components: the idea proposal (2 points), the presentation (16 points), questions in response to others' presentations (5 points), and the essay (20 points). The first part of the project is for you to propose the idea to me in my office hours at least two weeks before your presentation. This is not a formal proposal; I just want you to drop by my office and chat with me about your ideas. You should choose an environmental issue you care about. The presentation will be 10 to 15 minutes long. I will hand out a sign-up sheet in class for you to choose when to present. The presentation times can be found in the schedule. The last presentations will occur during the final exam period allotted to this course. For both the presentation and the essay, you must apply concepts, frameworks, and models that we've covered throughout the course to (1) describe the issue (What is happening?), (2) explain the outcome (Why is it happening?), (3) describe the desired state (What would we like to happen?), and (4) propose a solution (How can we get to the desired state?). During other students' presentations, you must write down at least one question for each presentation, which I will collect and post to Canvas. The essay should be 1,500 – 2,000 words, written for a general social sciences audience (write for an academic audience but define economics terms and concepts), and cite at least 5 reputable sources using the APA format. It must be submitted in person at 3pm on December 10th.

Late and missed assignments: Reading notes submitted one class late will be marked down by 1.5 points (to either partial—1.5—or incomplete—0). Late essays will not be accepted. See Class Attendance and Participation for missed in-class exercises.

Accommodation and Accessibility Resources

If you have been granted accommodations from the Office of Student Accessibility Services, please let me know, and I will do everything I can to help. I do ask that you provide as much advance notification as possible. Additionally, if you have not been given accommodations but believe that they may be appropriate for you, please contact the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#).

General expectations

- Attend class, participate in discussions and activities, and refrain from using your electronic devices
- Take space, make space: if you are taking up a lot of space in discussions, please step back and invite others into the conversation; if you are not contributing to a discussion, please do your best to step up and share your valuable perspective.
- Ask questions! (And don't shame people for not knowing something.)
- Respect each other (even if you have radically different perspectives)
- Practice active listening (start with the goal of trying to understand a perspective before deciding whether you agree with it)
- Communicate with me: if you are struggling, confused, sick, or are experiencing other circumstances that are making it difficult for you to keep on top of your academic responsibilities, please let me know. I want to give each and every one of you the best chance to succeed in this class.

Additional information and resources

Diversity and inclusivity

Holy Cross is a community of people from many cultures and social backgrounds. We collaborate in our courses to create an inclusive environment in which all feel welcome and supported. We are committed – as individuals and as a community – to respect and foster diversity, which is a powerful force for positive change in our community and beyond.

Recording of classes: PLEASE NOTE that, consistent with applicable federal and state law, this course may be video/audio recorded as an accommodation only with permission from the Office of Accessibility Services. Students are not permitted to record the contents of this class under any other circumstances.

Confidentiality and mandatory reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as your professor. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep the information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, any information that you disclose that addresses sexual misconduct or relates to a prior suicide attempt or an intention to attempt suicide requires my sharing that information with those on campus who are able to provide you with necessary resources. Following the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy, I will share information about sexual misconduct with the College's Office of Title IX Initiatives. If you would like to talk to Title IX directly, they can be reached at 508-793-3336 or [email](#). For more information, please visit the [Sexual Respect and Title IX website](#). If you would like to discuss the matter confidentially, the following confidential resources are available to you: [Counseling Center](#), 508-793-3363; [Health Services](#), 508-793-2276; [Chaplains' Office](#), 508-793-2448. Following the College's Suicide Protocol, if you disclose a prior suicide attempt or an intention or plan to attempt suicide, I will share that information with the Chair of our [Student CARE Team](#), who will engage in appropriate outreach.

Holy Cross academic resources:

- [Academic Services and Learning Resources](#)
- [Center for Writing](#)
- [Writers' Workshop](#)
- [Class Deans](#)
- [Holy Cross Libraries](#)

Holy Cross student support resources:

- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Office of the College Chaplains](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Office of Justice, Equity, Belonging, & Identity](#)
- [Office of Title IX and Equal Opportunity](#)

Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings (* = link / pdf on Canvas)	Assignments
8/25 8/27	Introduction and review	Optional: *CORE <i>Microeconomics</i> Units 4, 7, 8	
9/1 9/3	Property rights, externalities, and market failure	*CORE <i>The Economy 1.0</i> 12.0-12.5	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
9/8 9/10	Benefit-cost analysis	Tietenberg & Lewis, Chapter 3	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
9/15 9/17	Dynamic efficiency and Sustainability	*"Dynamic Efficiency and Sustainable Development" (Tietenberg & Lewis, 2024)	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
9/22 9/24	Valuation	Tietenberg & Lewis, Chapter 4	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
9/29 10/1	Ecosystem services	*"Ecosystem Services" (Tietenberg & Lewis, 2024)	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
10/6 10/8	The commons	*"Common-Pool Resources" (Tietenberg & Lewis, 2024) *"The Struggle to Govern the Commons" (Dietz, Ostrom, & Stern, 2003)	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
10/13 10/15	Break		
10/20 10/22	Pollution	Tietenberg & Lewis, Chapter 5	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
10/27 10/29	Climate Change	Tietenberg & Lewis, Chapters 7, 8	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
11/3 11/5	Environmental justice	*"Environmental Justice" (Banzhaf, Ma, & Timmins, 2019)	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
11/10 11/12	Beyond conventional environmental economics	*Excerpts from <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> (Kimmerer, 2013) *"The Land Ethic" (Leopold, 1949) *"How to End Poverty and Protect Earth" (Lenharo, 2026)	Reading notes In-class exercise / quiz
11/17 11/19	(buffer period) Presentations		Presentation questions
11/24 11/26	Presentations Break		Presentation questions
12/1 12/3	Presentations		Presentation questions Presentation questions
12/10	3-5:30pm Presentations		Essay due at 3pm, Presentation questions