
Syllabus



- Summary -

Course Title	Environment in the Headlines
Course No.	(EVSC 01 115)
CRN	
Section	
Start/End Dates	Thursday 2- 2:50



- Course Description -

Every day we read alarming headlines about environmental threats. In this course, students will focus on a few of the environmental issues making the news. Students will delve into the science behind the issues, and investigate possible solutions to the issues. They will also explore how issues are presented, and learn to separate scientific fact from fantasy.



- Instructor -

Name	Dr. Beth Christensen
Email	christensenb@rowan.edu

Phone	856- 256- 5251
Office Hours	1:30 - 2:00; 2:50 - 3:30* Thursdays

*Please note that due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, office hours will be held virtually. Dr. Christensen will be available her personal Webex room for meetings with students during office hours (<https://rowan.webex.com/meet/christensenb> or by appointment)

Contacting the Instructor: I am available online for office hours and by email. I will generally respond within 24 hours, unless it is a weekend or holiday. Please follow professional protocols for e-mail (<https://writingcommons.org/article/e-mail-guidelines-for-students/>)

- Objectives -

- Students will gain insight into a few current environmental issues.
- In this course, students will learn the methods and approach to scientific investigation through a popular gateway (the media).
- Majors will develop a strong cohort of environmental science peers
- Address Environmental Science Student Outcome 4.1.1: *Students will learn how to review pertinent literature, identify frontiers of knowledge, and design studies in these frontiers.*



- Texts and Materials -

- There is no textbook for this course.



- Schedule -



Date	Room	Topic	Assignment	Due
1/28	online	Introduction		
2/4	online	Assessing Information	Evaluate one topic	Choose 3 topics
2/11	online	Assessing information (2)		Eval of 1 topic*
2/18	TBD	Plastics in the environment		
2/25	TBD	Plastics in the media	Plastics evaluation*	
3/4	TBD	Discussion on Plastics		Plastics eval*
3/11	TBD	Climate science	Climate evaluation*	
3/18	TBD	Climate in the media	Organize SC groups	Climate eval*
3/25	TBD	Students Choice 1	Evaluation* in groups	
4/1	TBD	Group reports on SC 1		SC 1 eval*
4/8	TBD	Group reports on SC 1		
4/15	TBD	Students Choice 2	Evaluation* in groups	
4/22	TBD	Group reports on SC 2		SC 2 eval*
4/29	TBD	Group reports on SC 2		
5/3**	TBD	<i>Final- Monitor blackboard- date may change- 2:45-4:45</i>		



Note: syllabus and assignment/ dates are subject to change. Monitor Blackboard for updates including weather impacts.

- Assignments -

1. 3 topics of interest to you- 2 point
2. Evaluation of one of your 3 topics- 8 points
3. Evaluation of Plastics in the Media-10 points
4. Evaluation of Climate in the Media- 10 points
5. Group evaluation (SC 1)- 10 points
6. Group evaluation (SC 2)- 10 points



- Presentations -

1. Group presentation (SC 1)- 10 points
2. Group presentation (SC2)- 10 points

- Grading -

Assignments	50%
Presentations	20%
Participation	20%
Final Exam	10%

Grades will be determined by your performance on assignments, a final exam, presentations, and participation. Late assignments will automatically lose 15%. No assignment will be accepted more than one day late. Spelling, punctuation, and grammar will form a part of your grade.

Rubric for Grading

Grade	Letter
	Grade

90 -100	A- to A+	Superior mastery of facts and principles; clear evidence that stated course objectives and requirements were met. Excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.
80-89	B- to B+	Above average mastery of facts and principles; evidence that stated course objectives and requirements were met. Appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
70-79	C- to C+	Average mastery of facts and principles; some evidence that requirements were met. Some spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes.
60-69	D- to D+	Little mastery of facts and principles; acceptable evidence that stated course objectives and requirements were met. Abundant spelling, punctuation and grammar mistakes.
<60	F	No mastery of facts and principles; little evidence that stated course objectives and requirements were met. Inappropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- *Media Evaluation Criteria -

The media portrays environmental issues from a variety of perspectives. Sometimes the science is accurate, other times not. Usually the human or economic impact is presented, but often the environmental impact is not as clearly defined. To evaluate the way the media presents an issue, assess your chosen article as follows. Use the skills you learned in the library lecture to evaluate the five elements. Be sure to summarize how you evaluated the information presented in the article.

Define the following, and rank the element as presented in the article under evaluation on a scale of 1 to 3, with 3 being highest:

- Basic science/ process
- Policy or solution linked to (or resulting from) the issue
- Human impact

- Environmental impact
- Economic impact

Which of the 5 is emphasized the most?

- My Policies -

Student Responsibilities:

- Safety is paramount. Wear a mask at all times and maintain social distance (6').
- Come to class prepared and on time. If the class is held online, please keep your camera on to facilitate conversation and connection. This cannot be required but it will make your experience much more pleasant.
- Accept responsibility for your success in this class. This includes making use of the many support systems, including the Writing Center. Success and failure are both decisions.
- Adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy. Academic honesty is the root of academic success, and violations will be punished to the full extent of university policy, up to expulsion from the university.
- Do not participate in disruptive behavior in class, including talking, text messaging and ringing cell phones, and arriving late to class. (Repeat offenders will be asked to leave the classroom).
- Review University- wide policies including classroom behavior, academic integrity, attendance, laptop use, and student accommodation, posted on Student Information Guide (available on this module and also at <https://www.rowan.edu/infoguide/>)

Attendance: Come to every class. If you are not here, you cannot learn effectively. There are no make-ups without a valid excuse for missing class (documented illness, death in the family) and you will earn a zero. Do NOT make routine appointments for class time. If you have a conflict (excused or unexcused), notify me a week in advance. Come to class prepared and on time. If the class is held online, you must keep your camera on to receive credit for attendance, unless you have discussed it with me in advance.

When class is held online: Get to class on time and mute your microphone. Keep your camera on the entire time and please remember that you are visible by the entire class. Be respectful to one another at all times: address one another by name; raise your hand to speak; allow others to finish their thoughts; try not to make weird faces when others are speaking; do not eat on camera; dress appropriately.

If there is a technical difficulty connecting within Canvas, please monitor your email account and I will send a solution. Generally, if class has not begun 15 minutes after the

account and I will send a solution. Generally, if class has not begun 15 minutes after the start time, we will join in my personal chat room on Webex, but check your email!

Email and Canvas: You are responsible for checking both platforms regularly. When emailing, please construct a formal email with a greeting and subject line. Only use your Rowan email account for communication.

Assignments: Turn assignments in on time, and using proper grammar and spelling. Many students find it easier to type into MS Word and run spell check before uploading assignments. Also include your name in the title of the file and again in the body of the document itself.

Success: Talk to me! I'm really very nice, and quite helpful! I hold office hours for drop-in discussions, and am available by appointment at other times. I can also respond via email, but please realize a response may take 24 hours or more (I try to untether from the internet after work!) I will do everything I can to help you succeed in this class but please do not wait until the 11th hour to email questions, or to begin the reading.

Writing Center: Please take full advantage of the writing center. It is an important resource!
<http://www.rowanwritingcenter.com>

Electronic Device Policy: Use your laptop solely for class purposes during class time. Cell phones or other mobile devices must be turned off or to "silence all" (not vibrate) for the duration of the class. If you have a special need that requires your phone to be on at all times, please see me in advance of class. Disruptive behavior includes use of cell phones/ texting during class and will count against participation. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave the classroom, including the online environment.

Rowan Success Network: The Rowan Success Network powered by Starfish® is designed to make it easier for you to connect with the resources you need to be successful at Rowan. Throughout the term, you may receive email from the Rowan Success Network team (Starfish®) regarding your academic performance. Please pay attention to these emails and consider taking the recommended actions. Utilize the scheduling tools available through RSN to make appointments (tutoring, advising, etc.) at your convenience. Appointments for my office hours can be made through RSN(www.rowan.edu/rsn).

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856-256-4234. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations. We look forward to working with you to meet your learning goals.

University-wide Policies: Students are expected to be aware of and follow university-wide policies, including the Classroom Behavior Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Student Accommodation Policy, and University Attendance Policy. For more information, please refer to the Student Information Guide (<https://www.rowan.edu/infoguide/>) (<https://www.rowan.edu/infoguide/>).

Rowan University's Statement on Diversity: Rowan University promotes a diverse community that begins with students, faculty, staff and administration who respect each other and value each other's dignity. By identifying and removing barriers and fostering individual potential, Rowan will cultivate a community where all members can learn and grow. The Rowan University community is committed to a safe environment that encourages intellectual, academic, and social interaction and engagement across multiple intersections of identities. At Rowan University, creating and maintaining a caring community that embraces diversity in its broadest sense is among the highest priorities.

Rowan University Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Reporting, and Title IX: Rowan University and its faculty and staff are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. Title IX makes it clear that sexual misconduct and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against protected categories such as race, national origin, etc.

University faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct or harassment, to the University's Title IX Coordinator so that the appropriate resources and support options are provided. Please report any incidents of sexual misconduct and harassment by clicking [HERE](#). What this means is that as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct and harassment that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware. See Rowan's policy, Student Sexual Misconduct and Harassment.

Rowan University Discrimination and Harassment Reporting, and Title VI: Rowan University prohibits discrimination, whether verbal, written, physical or psychological under the University's Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace and Educational Environment. Please report any incidents of discrimination and harassment. In addition, as your professor, I am required to report any incidents of discrimination and harassment that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware. Please see below available resources:

Confidential Resources:

The Wellness Center, Winans Hall, 856-256-4333, www.rowan.edu/wellness (<http://www.rowan.edu/wellness>)

Non-Confidential Resources:

Non-Confidential Resources:

Office of Student Equity and Compliance (OSEC), Savitz Hall 203, 856-256-5830

Public Safety, Bole Annex, 856-256-4911

To learn more about Title IX go to: www.go.rowan.edu/titleix [_ \(http://www.go.rowan.edu/titleix\)](http://www.go.rowan.edu/titleix)

To learn more about Title VI go to: www.go.rowan.edu/titlevi [_ \(http://www.go.rowan.edu/titlevi\)](http://www.go.rowan.edu/titlevi)