

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences  
EESC13H3 F - Environmental Impact Assessment and Auditing  
2012 Outline

Professor: Mandy Meriano  
Office: SW627C Telephone: 416-208-2775  
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Lecture time: Monday 11 am to 1pm  
Location: HW215

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**Required textbook:** Hanna, Kevin S. (Ed.) 2009. Environmental Impact Assessment: Practice and Participation. Oxford University Press, Toronto.

The course textbook is available from the UTSC Bookstore.

**Objectives:** Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has emerged as both an instrument of evaluation and as an important decision-making system. EIA is an integral part of environmental management in environmental policy at regional, national and international levels. While EIA ideally incorporates environmental consideration into planning and development processes, it is very much embedded within the growth ethic—it is not about preventing development. Ideally, EIA helps development occur within an environmentally responsive context. It informs decision-makers about the consequences of development decisions and identifies the likely or known impacts of development. However, even undertaking an EIA cannot guarantee that bad development decisions will *not* be made, that projects will perform as anticipated, or that impact mitigation will be done and will be effective.

This course examines EIA from a critical perspective as a strategic, comprehensive, and pro-active process employed to integrate the ecological and social aspects of development into planning and environmental/resource management processes.

The course objectives are meant to provide a critical overview of EIA processes, a guide to normative and applied EIA practice, and to impart a

fundamental understanding of how EIA works (or, sometimes, does not work) in the Canadian context.

EIA methods, approaches, regulation, and legislation are also discussed. Case studies from jurisdictions in Canada are used to illustrate themes and issues, along with an ongoing reference to practice in our province and at the federal level.

**Learning Objectives:** By the end of the course students will have developed an understanding of EIA processes and stages, EIA terminology, Canadian EIA practice and policy, and will have developed specific knowledge of the Canadian Federal and Ontario EIA systems. Students should be able to critique and analyse the relative performance and influence of different EIA systems, and understand the role of EIA in planning and environment/resource management.

**Evaluation:** A major research paper on comparative EIA methods/approaches: value 30%; a midterm exam: value 20% (short answer and multiple choice); a final exam (short answer, multiple choice, and essay): value 35%; hearing exercise: value 5%; and class participation: value 10%.

The midterm is based on material covered in lectures, guest lectures and readings up to and including the class before the midterm exam. The midterm will include multiple choice and short answer.

The final exam will be based on all term material (including readings and all lectures). The final exam will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

**Tentative Lectures and Readings:** Readings are from your course textbook: Hanna (2009). There will be additional assigned readings that will be distributed or put on reserve at the library as they become available.

*Students should note that topics may span more than one lecture period.*

## **September 10**

An overview of the course, expectations, and objectives

A quick look at the textbook

Introduction to EIA

The importance of EIA in Canadian environment and resource management

Key themes and definitions

EIA as a planning tool

Ch. 1 Kevin Hanna

The ideal influence and attributes of EIA

Rational planning and EIA

## **September 17**

Guest Lecture: Professor Thembela Kepe  
UTSC - Geography, Department of Social Sciences

Topic: "Where land issues meet EIAs"

### Readings:

Wynberg, R.P. and Sowman, M. 2007. Environmental Sustainability and land reform in South Africa: A neglected dimension, *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 50 (6), 783-802.

Dorries, H. 2007. "Critical incidents" or business as usual? Planning and aboriginal protest in Ontario, *Progressive Planning*, 173, 27-29.

## **September 24**

History and background of impact assessment in Canada  
Ch. 2 Robert Gibson and Kevin Hanna

Formative events in Canadian EIA  
Sustainability  
Efficacy  
The state of EIA influence

## **October 01**

Typical (ideal) stages in the EIA process, what happens at each stage?  
Ch 1. Kevin Hanna

Key terms  
What happens at each stage in the EIA process?  
How does the generic model compare to our provincial and federal processes?  
Different types of impact assessment (strategic, cumulative, social and economic)

Measuring and identifying impacts, techniques, and methods  
Ch. 3 Douglas Baker and Eric Rapaport

Baseline conditions, environmental attributes  
How do we identify impacts?  
Significance  
Strengths and weaknesses to techniques and tools

## **October 08**

Thanksgiving Day - University closed

**October 15**

Guest Lecture: Mr. Todd Hall  
Environmental Auditor, Ontario Power Generation

Topic: Environmental Auditing

Readings: TBA

**October 22**

Midterm Test (11am-1pm in class)

**October 29**

The challenge of strategic assessment  
Ch. 6 Bram Noble and Jill Harriman-Gunn

How do we evaluate plans and policies?  
Method challenges  
Techniques of strategic assessment  
The state of strategic assessment in Canada

**November 05**

The Canadian federal EIA process: What the Canadian Environmental  
Assessment Act covers and how it works  
Ch 14 Jamie Herring

History of the CEAA Act  
Recent changes and infrastructure spending, weakness, or needed streamlining  
An overview of the federal process  
When is an assessment mandatory?  
Types of assessment, screening and beyond

**November 12**

Assessing social impacts, basic themes, and methods: a case study of practice in  
Canada  
Ch. 7. Ron Pushchak and Ann Marie Farrugia-Uhalde

What are social impacts?  
How do we measure and value them?  
Case study and examples

Assessing cumulative impacts: A case study from Western Canada  
Ch. 8 Roger Creasey and William Ross

Defining cumulative impacts  
Understanding the estimation and measurement of cumulative  
Cumulative EIA example

## **November 19**

Guest Lecture: Mr. Graham Rempe  
Solicitor, City of Toronto Legal Services

Topic: Environmental Assessment Law (Ontario)

### Readings:

Lindgren, R.D. Burgandy, D. 2010. Environmental Assessment in Ontario: Rhetoric vs. Reality, *Journal of Environmental Law and Practice*, 21, 279-303 (<http://s.cela.ca/files/766.LindgrenDunnFinal.pdf>)

A link to the act itself can be found at:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90e18\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90e18_e.htm)  
Although this is not essential for the lecture you may want to have a quick scan, especially sections 2, 5-7 and 13-14. Also not essential.

The link to the Ministry of the Environment page on environmental assessment for general reference:

[http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/industry/assessment\\_and\\_approvals/environmental\\_assessments/index.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/industry/assessment_and_approvals/environmental_assessments/index.htm)

Public participation, a key part of successful and meaningful EIA

Ch. 4 A. John Sinclair and Alan Diduck

The importance of participation

How should participation affect EIA?

Participation techniques and examples

What is a Hearing? Assessment boards and hearing process

Ch.5 Len Gertler

How a hearing works (provincial and federal examples)

The power and function of boards and tribunals

## **November 26**

EIA as resource planning. How EIA can function as a central planning tool: The example of Nunavut.

Ch. 13. J.J. Rusk, S.G.R. Granchincho, and R.W. Barry

EIA as the resource planning mechanism

A unique EIA system

The role of First Nations and traditional knowledge

### DISCUSSION TOPIC:

Impact Assessment and the 2010 Winter Olympics: what do the Winter Games tell us about EIA in Canada

Ch. 10 Dan Kellar and Kevin Hanna

Venues and setting

Harmonization

Screening, and that's all?  
EIA as a 'green stamp of approval'?

**December 03**

Hearing Exercise

Topic: TBA

Counsel: Mr. Graham Rempe

Students will be divided into three groups (one proponent and two opponent groups). Each group will have to prepare a one to two page summary available to everyone by November 26th (one week ahead of the hearing), and make a 5-10 minutes presentation at the hearing on December 3rd.

Each group will have to discuss and defend their arguments during questioning from Counsel, Tribunal (me), and public (the class).

**Major Assignment:**

***Critical Comparative Review of Canadian EIA Processes (Value 30 marks)***

**Due: November 05**

Prepare a critical paper that describes, compares, and critiques the Environmental Impact Assessment systems in two Canadian jurisdictions. You may choose any province(s) or the Canadian federal EIA legislation. Refer to your course readings and other general and theoretical materials to develop a critique of the EIA approach used in your case study areas.

Consider elements such as the scope of EIA application, adherence to the ideal of effective EIA as indicated in the literature (and your course lectures), the methods used, and the regulatory framework (legislation or legal context) used to implement EIA. Does EIA apply to both private and public sector undertakings? Is policy and program development subject to EIA? What do you think is successful or positive about the jurisdiction's approach to EIA, and what is not? Your paper must include a critical/analytical component as well as descriptive elements.

You must demonstrate that you are familiar with the current state of EIA in your case study jurisdictions; for example, are there any proposals to amend the EA legislation or local/regional debates about aspects of the EA process? Are there any particularly important EA reviews underway or recently completed?

Your paper should be no longer than 12 pages, double spaced, single sided excluding title page, reference list, and any figures or tables you wish to include.

Do not use plastic covers or any form of binder.

Do not use a paper clip; just staple your paper.

Use the APA reference format.

There must be a minimum of 8 references used.

Present your paper in a research paper format.

The use of section headings is suggested.

The use of internet material may be important to your work; however, such sources must be properly referenced.

### **General Information about Presenting Your Assignment**

**Grading:** Evaluation of assignments takes into account organization and structure, style and presentation, as well as research and content. Writing quality and content are both considered in grading. Your work will be graded by Dr. Meriano. If you have a question or problem with the grade you receive, consult the professor. Your grade may be revised up or down based on the review.

Your assignments must have a plain title page with the title of your assignment, your name, course number, the date, your student number, and the instructor's name. Staple your assignment in the upper left corner; do not use folders, cover slips, or binders.

**Late assignments:** A late penalty of 1.0 mark is assessed for each late week day. For example, if the assignment is handed in one day late and the original grade is 28.0/30 then the grade would be lowered by 1.0 to 27.0/30. Assignments are not accepted later than 2 weeks after the due date.

**Plagiarism:** Assignments are checked for plagiarism. Please consult the University Calendar for a discussion and outline of the policy on plagiarism and academic integrity (also see proceeding section below). The sanctions can be severe. If, after reviewing the University policy, you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, talk to your course instructor.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>).

**Extensions:** Requests for an extension must be tendered in writing in advance of the due date. In instances of illness, a supporting medical certificate must be completed by a physician at the University Student Health Centre. Other notes are not acceptable. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the Professor, and may be granted for other significant emergencies.

**Handing In Assignments:** You are responsible for making sure that your Professor receives your work. Students who mail assignments in, place work on the floor outside an office, or slip assignments under a door, do so at their own risk.

**Lost or misplaced assignments:** It is your responsibility to keep a photocopy of your work, and to make more than one electronic copy of your work. Excuses are not accepted in the case of lost or misplaced work.

**References:** You are required to use the APA style for referencing. The use of footnotes and end notes for referencing is not acceptable. If a point is worth making, incorporate it into the text; if you believe a point should be explored outside the main text, use a footnote—do not use endnotes.



Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.

Please consult the University Calendar for information about grade distribution and academic conduct.

**Accessibility:**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the *AccessAbility* Services Office as soon as possible. I will work with you and *AccessAbility* Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. The UTSC *AccessAbility* Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or [ability@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:ability@utsc.utoronto.ca).

Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.