

University of Toronto Scarborough
Department of Physical and Environmental Sciences
EESC13H3 F - Environmental Impact Assessment and Auditing
2014 Outline

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Lecture time: Monday 11 am to 1pm
Location: MW140

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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 field exercise and report: value 10%; a summary report on a current or controversial EIA: value 10%; a research paper on EIA methods/approaches: value 30%; hearing exercise: value 10%; a final exam (multiple choice and written answers): value 30%; and class participation: value 10%.

The final exam will be based on all term material (including readings and all lectures).

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 08

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 15

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

September 22

Field Exercise: methane gas audit
We will meet onsite rain or shine
please wear boots or other protective shoes

September 29

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 06

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

Due: Methane Field Audit Report at the start of class

October 13

Thanksgiving Day - University closed

October 20

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

Ch 14 Jamie Herring

History of the CEAAct

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

Due: Research Paper on EIA methods at the start of class

October 27

Guest Lecture: Mr. Todd Hall

Environmental Auditor, Ontario Power Generation

Topic: Environmental Auditing

Readings: TBA

Due: Class Discussion Paper at the start of class

November 03

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

Student Led Class Discussions

November 10

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

Student Led Class Discussions

November 17

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
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

Due: Briefs for the upcoming Hearing at the start of class

November 24

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

Venues and setting

Harmonization

Screening, and that's all?

EIA as a 'green stamp of approval'?

Student Led Class Discussions

December 01

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 17th (two weeks ahead of the hearing), and make a 5-10 minutes presentation at the hearing on December 1st.

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

Field Exercise and Report (10%)

Field Exercise: September 22

Report Due: October 06

You will be working in groups. We will visit the lands adjacent to the Pan Am Athletic centre. You will prepare a brief summary report of your findings and recommendations (maximum two pages, typed, double spaced). Details for this assignment will be posted in Blackboard.

Term Paper (30%)

Critical Review of Canadian EIA Processes

Due: October 20

Prepare a critical paper that describes and critiques the Environmental Impact Assessment systems in one Canadian jurisdiction. You may choose any province (other than our province of Ontario) 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 chosen province.

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 chosen 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 strongly suggested.

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

Group Paper and Class Discussions on recent or controversial EIAs (10%)

Paper Due: October 27

Student Led Class Discussions: November 03, 10, and 24

Mock Hearing Exercise (10%)

Briefs Due: November 17th

Mock hearing: December 01

Details for this exercise will be discussed in class and on Blackboard

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 for the field exercise and the class discussion paper will be graded by Dr. Meriano. Your term paper will be graded by the TA. If you have a question or problem with the grade you receive, consult the professor or the TA. 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.

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.

Late assignments: The late penalty is assessed as follows:

1 day 10%, 2 day 20%, 3 day 30%, 4 day 40%, 5 day 50%, 6 day and after 100%

Please make sure to submit your assignments before the due time to avoid late penalty.

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.

Extensions: Requests for an extension on an assignment 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 the TAs), and may be granted for other significant emergencies.

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/>).

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 endnotes 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.

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