

ENS 300-01 SPECIAL TOPICS: HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

MWF 10:00 - 10:50 am
203 Jacobs Science Building

Dr. J. Anthony Stallins - 869 Patterson Office Tower

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Office hours: 12:00 - 2:00 Tuesday and Thursday or by appointment

Home page: Access through Canvas or <http://www.uky.edu/~jast239/courses/health/300.html>

Class communication: UK Email only – do not post messages in Canvas

Course description

This course provides students with a basic understanding of how environmental factors impact the health of people and their community, and of the efforts made to prevent or lessen the effects of these negative impacts. Unique to this course offering is its emphasis on how human health is intimately related to the structure and functioning of the environment and to the social and economic processes that have restructured these environments. With this view of the environment as a coupled socioecological system, we examine how disease, concepts of health, and practices of medicine reflect their embeddedness in unique and contingently assembled ecological, political, economic, and social environments across the globe. Rather than inventory all possible environment-health permutations, we focus on a subset of current issues. Through these specific topics we cover traditional fundamentals of how health correlates with the quality of air, water, and food and how policy frameworks have emerged and evolved to govern the environments that shape health.

Required materials

Students are required to obtain a radon test kit from the Fayette County Public Health Department. All readings are available online from the class home page. Students are expected to rent several online documentaries available through major online video outlets.

COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

Describe how environmental health reflects dynamic social, economic, and ecological phenomena

Describe policy frameworks and agencies that define and administer environmental health issues

Discuss the different ways vulnerability to environmental health hazards can be defined

Explain how environmental health issues and their regulation reflect processes operating at multiple scales

Describe how the body reacts to specific environmental agents

Identify and define the steps in the risk assessment

Discuss the nature of uncertainty in the risk assessment process.

Grading

Final letter grade is based upon the percentage of points you earn out of a possible 500 points.

Exams (2 at 100 points each)	200 points	40%	A (100 - 90%) B (80 - 89%) C (70 - 79%) D (60 - 69%) E (<59%)
Annotated bibliographies	100	20%	
Radon mapping	100	20%	
In class activities, homework assignments, attendance and participation checks	100	20%	
Total points	500	100%	

Exams. Tests are not cumulative and cover only the material since the last test. Format is multiple choice, definition, short answer, and essay. A set of terms for students to define based on in class discussions as well as on their own will be provided for each test.

Annotated bibliographies

Each student will collect and summarize in paragraph form **ten** articles that illuminate a specific environmental health issue not examined as part of the formal class curriculum. These topics should be neither too broad nor too narrow and the instructor will work with students on an individual basis to select their topic. At the end of the semester, students will make a **five-minute** presentation on their topic to the class. These presentations are to be built around no more than five of your articles. Each presentation should cover 1) the content of each of the five papers while 2) providing basic information about the environmental hazard, including its location, health outcomes, modes of exposure, vulnerable populations, where regulatory authority for it resides, potential for racial/social injustice, control strategies, and ramifications of these control strategies for different parties. Annotated bibliographies and the presentation are to be uploaded into Canvas as a single electronic Powerpoint file at the end of the semester. Articles are to be taken from the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives* or from the journal *Environmental Health*. More detailed formatting instructions will be provided in class.

Radon mapping

Each student will be required to test the radon in their home. These tests are available for free from the Fayette County Public Health Department. At the end of the semester, the students will compile statistical information on their data and examine the relationships among type of house, location, and radon levels.

In-class activities, homework assignments, attendance and participation checks. These will not be announced ahead of time and will require your presence in class for credit.

COURSE TOPICS

Theorizing the idea of environment
Heavy metals and hazardous waste
Economic disparity and environmental health
Ecosystems, biodiversity and human health
Political destabilization and environmental health
Antibiotic resistance in medicine and food production
Pesticides: a history of their development and regulation
Climate change: heat stress and uninhabitable landscapes
Solid waste: sewage, radioactive waste, and e-waste
Environmental health at home: endocrine disruptors, radon, food and consumer safety

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom behavior policies. A seating chart will be utilized during the semester. Smartphones are to be put away at the start of class. Taking notes on your phone or following along with the slides on your phone are not acceptable class behaviors.

Attendance: Attendance, as a basic form of participation, will be taken during class meetings. This may be as simple as taking roll. In other cases, students will be asked to complete a short activity in class or to bring in an assignment completed at home. An absence on a day we have an in-class activity or an absence that results in a missed assignment will also be counted as part of your overall attendance record. **No makeups will be given unless absence is announced ahead of time and it meets formal university criteria as an excused absence.**

If a student has excused absences in excess of one-fifth of the class contact hours for the course, the student shall have the right to receive a withdrawal (W), or the instructor may award an incomplete (I) for the course grade if the student declines to receive a W. Unexcused absence can also impact your final grade. **Four unexcused absences can result in the reduction of your final grade by one letter (from an A to a B, a B to C...).**

Communication: Communications in the classroom will be prioritized over electronic media. You will receive emails from the instructor on a regular basis. Please check your UK email regularly. **All email sent to me (ja.stallins@uky.edu) must be sent outside of the Canvas system. Do not post messages to me in Canvas.**

Excused Absences. The university defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: a) illness, b) illness or death of family member, c) University-related trips, d) major religious holidays, and e) other circumstances found to fit “reasonable cause for nonattendance” by the professor. Job fairs, standardized test administrations, family reunions, weddings, possession of airline tickets, spring break plans, basketball games, and Greek events do not qualify as excused absences. Students with chronic medical conditions that jeopardize attendance must go through UK Disability Services to have these absences investigated and documented.

Verification of Absences. Students should notify the professor of absences **prior** to class. The instructor has the right to request appropriate verification to document the status of an absence as excused or unexcused. **Written notification or verification must be provided within one week of the absence.** Appropriate written notification of absences due to university-related trips will consist of a formal letter or email sent by the faculty in charge of your travel before the trip occurs.

Students must contact the instructor the night before the administration of a test if they become ill and expect to be absent the next day. Students who contact me just before or after a test has been administered or who are absent unexcused on the day of the test will receive an automatic zero. No tests will be administered once the first test has been completed. The instructor reserves the right to withhold makeup tests until a later date in the semester in order to gauge a student’s attendance performance in light of the overall trustworthiness of the excuse provided for missed test day.

University Health Services (UHS) recognizes the important public health and policy reasons why a sufficiently ill student ought to be absent from class and also **not** make a visit to UHS. UHS provides in this circumstance an “Explanatory Statement of Absence from Class” that students may complete and submit to the Instructor to document an excused absence from class. This is a UHS “Tier 1” document. Faculty will decide whether this Tier 1 document is acceptable as “appropriate verification” of the student’s illness. Tier 1 excuses are not automatically excused absences. Whether a Tier 1 excuse will attain the status as a formally-approved excused absence will be decided in each individual circumstance of their occurrence, with the final decision contingent upon overall grade and/or attendance record for the semester.

The UHS Tier 2 document is an email sent to the student, at the student’s request. The email confirms that the student made a medical visit to UHS. In order to provide the Instructor with verification of an illness, the student will forward the email from UHS to the Instructor of Record. The forwarded Tier 2 email informs the faculty member that she or he may confirm the UHS visit by emailing the identified sender of the confirming email and request that the sender verify the authenticity of the Tier 2 email sent to the student. Tier 2 excuses are not automatically excused absences. Whether a Tier 2 excuse will attain the status as a formally-approved excused absence will be decided in each individual circumstance of their occurrence, with the final decision contingent upon overall grade and/or attendance record for the semester.

The Tier 3 document emailed to students “states any applicable restrictions [on the student] based on illness or injury.” Such a restriction may be that the student must be absent from class for a defined number of days. Tier 3 excuses are not automatically excused absences. Whether a Tier 3 excuse will attain the status as a formally-approved excused absence will be decided in each individual circumstance of their occurrence, with the final decision contingent upon overall grade and/or attendance record for the semester.

Whether outside doctor or hospital notes are acceptable will be decided in each individual circumstance by the instructor, with the final decision contingent upon overall attendance and/or grade record for the semester.

Academic Integrity. Per university policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the university may be imposed. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities (<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) states that all academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about the question of plagiarism involving their own work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission. When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else’s work, whether it be a published article, chapter of a book, a paper from a friend or some file, or something similar to this. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be.

Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone. When a student’s assignment involves research in outside sources of information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain (Section 6.3.1). Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

Accommodations due to disability. Students with a documented disability and requesting academic accommodations must provide the instructor with a Letter of Accommodation from the UK Disability Resource Center (DRC). If the student is not registered with the DRC, she or he may contact David T. Beach (dtbeac1@uky.edu). The DRC is located in Suite 407 of the Multidisciplinary Science Building, 725 Rose Street, 0082. To contact the DRC by phone, please call V/TDD (859) 257-2754.

Spring 2017 ENS 300 - Health and Environment University of Kentucky - Dept of Geography				Dr. J. Anthony Stallins Syllabus and office hours Current grades
Jan	10	W	Theorizing environment	
	12	F		Radiolab: The Cell That Started a Pandemic
	17	W		A Civil Action
	19	F	Economic disparity	How a Healthy Economy Can Shorten Life Spans
	22	M		The Rich Live Longer Everywhere
	24	W		
	26	F	Heavy metals	The Minamata Convention
	29	M		Toxic City
Feb	2	F	Political destabilization and disease	Taming Rabies
	5	M		Every Last Child
	7	W		
	9	F	Biodiversity and human health	Fear of Ebola Breeds a Terror of Physicians
	12	M		American Experience: Influenza 1918
	14	W		
	16	F		
	19	M	EXAM 1	
	21	W	Antimicrobial resistance	CDC Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the US
	23	F		WHO: Antimicrobial Resistance
Mar	2	F	Pesticides	Pesticides and the Paradox of the Anthropocene
	5	M		Growing Up With Pesticides
	7	W		
	9	F		
	19	M	Aerosol air pollution	Holding Your Breath In India
	21	W		Pollution Killed 7 Million People Worldwide in 2012
	23	F		
	26	M		
	28	W	Climate change and heat stress	Climate Change is Now Workplace Hazard
30	F		The Silent Killer	
Apr	2	M		
	4	W		
	6	F	Solid waste	The Ghost of Old Computers
	9	M		The Magic Mountain
	11	W		
	13	F	Environmental health at home	The Burger That Shattered Her Life
	16	M		A Trail of Poisoned Medicine
	18	W		
	20	F	EXAM 2	
	23	M	Radon mapping	
25	W			
27	F	Oral presentations		