



Environmental Studies (ENVS) 305

Environmental Impact Assessment (Revision 3)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision ❌

Delivery mode: [Individualized study online](#). Delivered via Brightspace.

Credits: 3

Areas of study: Arts or Social Science

Prerequisites: None

Precluded: None

Challenge: ENVS 305 is not available for challenge.

Faculty: [Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

Environmental Studies 305: Environmental Impact Assessment, a three-credit, senior-level course, is designed to introduce you to a systematic process for predicting and evaluating the significant environmental consequences of a proposed action or undertaking. This process—environmental impact assessment—has been applied primarily to new infrastructure projects, such as power plants, highways, pipelines, dams, mines, airports, incinerators, and landfills. Assessment processes have also been used to consider the implications of new technologies, plans, and policies that may result in significant social and biophysical effects. This course focuses on environmental assessment processes—what they are meant to accomplish, and how they are designed or should be designed to be effective, efficient, and fair.

Outline

- Unit 1: History and Key Features of Environmental Assessment
- Unit 2: Setting a Standard for Environmental Assessment in Canada—the Berger Inquiry on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline

- Unit 3: Setting a Standard for Environmental Assessment in Canada—the Ecosystem Approach
- Unit 4: Legislated Environmental Assessment at the Federal Level in Canada
- Unit 5: Legislated Environmental Assessment at the Provincial Level in Canada
- Unit 6: Indigenous Issues and Environmental Assessment in Canada
- Unit 7: The Role of the Public in Environmental Assessment
- Unit 8: Biophysical Impact Assessment and Cumulative Environmental Effects
- Unit 9: Social Impact Assessment
- Unit 10: Case Study—Environmental Assessment of the Red Hill Valley Parkway
- Unit 11: The Prospects for Advancement of Environmental Assessment

Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for ENVS 305, you must complete all assignments and achieve a minimum grade of at least 60 percent on the final examination and a composite course grade of at least **C- (60 percent)** [↗](#)). The weighting of the course grade is as follows:

| Activity | Weight |
|---|--------|
| Assignment 1: Preliminary Submission for the Major Assignment | 5% |
| Assignment 2: Short Essay | 20% |

| Activity | Weight |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Assignment 3: Major Assignment | 35% |
| Final Online Exam | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#) section of the Calendar.

Materials

Physical course materials





The following course materials are included in a course package that will be shipped to your home prior to your course's start date:

Richardson, M., Sherman, J., & Gismondi, M. (1993). *Winning back the words: Confronting experts in an environmental public hearing*. Toronto: Garamond.

Other Materials

All other course materials can be found online

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) 
- › [Program planning](#) 
- › [Request assistance](#) 
- › [Support services at AU](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 3, March 13, 2024

Updated May 4, 2026

View [previous revision](#) 