



WACO, TEXAS

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**COURSE SYLLABUS  
AND  
INSTRUCTOR PLAN**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE I (LECTURE)**

**ENVR 1301.06**

**MICHAELA R. MCCOWN, M.S.**

**NOTE: This is a Blended/Hybrid course.**

**NOTE: This is a 16-week course.**

**COVID 19 Notice:**

McLennan Community College is committed to providing you with every resource you need to reach your academic goals. We are also concerned for your safety. We are working through COVID-19 guidelines to make sure we offer a safe environment for you and our faculty. This will include smaller class sizes to manage social distancing and proper cleaning techniques. You will have the advantage of a physical classroom experience but may also need to work part of the time online as we adjust to limited classroom capacity. This will also allow us the flexibility to move online if so directed by federal, state and/or local COVID 19 guidelines. Faculty and staff are preparing now to ensure that you have the best experience in the midst of these uncertain times.

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## **Course Description:**

A survey of the forces, including humans, that shape our physical and biologic environment, and how they affect life on Earth. Introduction to the science and policy of global and regional environmental issues, including pollution, climate change, and sustainability of land, water, and energy resources. May or may not include a laboratory. Semester Hours 3 (3 lec).

## **Prerequisites and/or Corequisites:**

None

## **Course Notes and Instructor Recommendations:**

Must be able to view Brightspace on a regular basis and open either PPTX and DOCS files or PDF files without problem. Should also check email on a regular basis for updates on the course. Will need to be able to access Brightspace to watch videos when not in class and to complete online assignments. Students will need a webcam for Zoom discussions and for test proctoring via Zoom.

## **Instructor Information:**

Instructor Name: Michaela R. McCown

MCC E-mail: mmccown@mclennan.edu

Office Number: 254-299-8846

Office Location: Faculty Office Building 211 (due to COVID, do not come without an appointment)

Office/Teacher Conference Hours (Virtual only via Zoom): Tuesdays 1 – 5 pm or by appointment

Other Instruction Information: Email or contacting via text is preferable.

\*\*\*Please refrain from using the Brightspace Instant Messaging system, because it is unreliable and sometimes difficult for me access when I'm not on my laptop\*\*

## **Required Text & Materials:**

Wallace-Wells, David. *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*. 1st ed., Tim Duggan Books, 2019.

ASIN: B07GVPFH5V

**MCC Bookstore Website:** <http://www.mclennan.edu/bookstore/>

## **Methods of Teaching and Learning:**

Lectures, objective quizzes and exams, class discussions, written reports, alternative assignments.

## **Course Objectives and/or Competencies:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Recognize, describe, and quantitatively evaluate earth systems, including the land, water, sea, and atmosphere, and how these function as interconnected ecological systems.

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2. Assess environmental challenges facing humans caused by their interaction with the physical and biological environment (e.g., population growth, energy resources, food production, pollution, water and resource use).
3. Acquire a scientific vocabulary and critical thinking skills related to environmental science.
4. Assess the effectiveness and feasibility of environmental policy and its impact.

### **Other specific Student Learning Outcomes and Core Objectives include:**

- A. Critical thinking assignments that focus on scientific knowledge related to problems involving energy and the environment;
- B. Assessing communication skills through quizzes and assignments that are largely written, while lectures gravitate toward visual components, and class discussions guarantee students' oral interactions when introducing the physical sciences at a collegiate level;
- C. Empirical/quantitative assessments through lectures that allow students to see examples of specific case studies, research, and current events that pertain to data collection, analysis, and the scientific method as they pertain to energy problems and solutions; among other environmental topics like sustainability and resource management.

### **Course Location and Class Meeting Times:**

This course is offered in a blended/hybrid format meaning that between 50% to 85% of the course is offered online and 15% to 50% offered in-person. To promote a safe learning environment for students, there will be approximately 30% of the course offered as in-person meetings and the remainder of the course will be conducted online. A student's attendance is measured by the class attendance, completion and submission of the weekly lecture quiz, zoom discussions, and/or exams in Brightspace. If a student has reservations about coming to the in-person meetings due to COVID-19, she/he should consider instead registering for an online section of the course or should notify the instructors by email and attend the instructors' next scheduled virtual office hour to discuss their situation.

**COVID-19 Specific Guidelines:** Students will adhere to the MCC COVID Response Plan. Students are required to read and understand the guidelines and requirements set forth in this document, which include social distancing and wearing masks at all times when on campus and in the classroom. Students are also responsible for wiping down their table and seat upon arrival and prior to departure in class with a disinfectant wipe when attending face to face sessions.

<https://www.mclennan.edu/crisis-management/coronavirus-updates/docs/MCC%20COVID%20Response.pdf>

A student shall not come to the classroom if any of these situations occur: 1) she/he exhibits any symptoms of COVID-19; 2) she/he has come in contact with a COVID-positive person within the

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last 14 days; 3) she/he tests positive for the virus; or 4) other specific circumstances outlined in the MCC COVID Response Plan. If a student begins to show symptoms during class, she/he will need to leave the classroom. All students need to be aware that the class could be quarantined if one person comes to the room who has the virus. Let us work together to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

If any of these circumstances arise, the student will inform the instructor that they need to complete their classwork online in addition to self-reporting to MCC utilizing the following website: [https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9FiKfG5D85livQN](https://mclennan.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9FiKfG5D85livQN)

**Instructions for the First Class Day – Tuesday, August 25<sup>th</sup>:** Students will not attend class in person the first day of class – students will instead attend a Zoom session during the designated class time on the first day of class. The instructor will send an email to registered students prior to the first day of class with a link for the first Zoom session. Students will be assigned to a designated cohort on the first day of class – these cohorts will determine in-person attendance days for the rest of the semester.

## **Course Zoom Information:**

Several classes will be held online via Zoom, all exams will be proctored via Zoom, and instructor office hours will be held via Zoom. To access the course Zoom, use the login information provided in Brightspace.

## **Course Outline or Schedule:**

This is the general class schedule for the semester. The class week starts on Monday at 12:01 am and ends on Saturday at 11:55 pm CST starting on Monday, 8/24 and concluding on Monday, 12/7. All assignments other than exams will be due at the end of the class week. Note that each student is assigned to a cohort, which will determine if they attend the first or second class day each week. Note for exam days, no students will attend in person - all will attend the proctored online exam via Zoom. In addition, no in-person instruction will occur after Thanksgiving, however students will be expected to attend online Zoom sessions during some class days during that time. If COVID-19 restrictions are implemented by the College, the student will assume all course work online starting the day the restrictions are put in place. The daily class schedule and designated cohorts are located in Brightspace. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class and posted on Brightspace.

	<b>Topics Covered</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
1	Introduction, Lecture One (State of the Planet), Quiz 01	N/A
2	Lectures Two (Biomes I), Quiz 02, Lectures Three (Ecology and Ecosystems)	1, 2, 3, 4
3	Lecture Four (Surviving, Adapting, and Evolving), Quiz 03	1, 2, 3, 4
4	Exam One, Lecture Five (Populations), Quiz 04	1, 2, 3, 4

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5	Lectures Six (Urbanization) and Seven (Environmental Laws and Agencies), Quiz 05	1, 2, 3, 4
6	Lecture Eight (Stormwater), Lecture Nine (Wastewater, Water Pollution, PWS), Quiz 06	1, 2, 3, 4
7	Exam 2, Lecture Ten (Waste & PWS)	1, 2, 3, 4
8	Lecture Eleven (Extreme Weather /Tornadoes), Lecture Twelve (Volcanoes, Dust/Sandstorms/Wildfires), Quiz 07	1, 2, 3, 4
9	Lecture Thirteen (Blizzards/Tropical Cyclones), Lecture Fourteen (Tectonics, Earthquakes, Tsunamis), Quiz 08	1, 2, 3, 4
10	Exam Three, Lecture Fifteen (Invasive Species)	1, 2, 3, 4
11	Lecture Sixteen (Endangered Species), Lecture Seventeen (Extinction), Quiz 09	1, 2, 3, 4
12	Lecture Eighteen (Climate Change I), Quiz 10	1, 2, 3, 4
13	Lecture Nineteen (Climate Change II)	1, 2, 3, 4
14	Special Lecture; Thanksgiving Holiday, Quiz 11	1, 2, 3, 4
15	Exam Four; Sustainability Survey	1, 2, 3, 4
16	Grades finalized and submitted	N/A

## Course Grading Information:

Exams: 40% (four unit exams each worth 10%)

Quizzes: 50% (11 quizzes, lowest grade dropped)

Other assignments: 10% (may include discussions, participation, or other various assignments)

The grade scale used in this course is: A = 90 – 100%; B = 80 – 89%; C = 70 – 79%; D = 60 – 69%; F = ≤59%. Grades are kept on Brightspace under Grades tool, on the main menu.

**Quizzes:** There will be a total of 11 quizzes during this session, the lowest of which will be dropped at the end of the semester. There are no time limits on quizzes; but, be sure that they are completed by 11:55pm on the specified nights when they are due. In the event of essay and short-answer questions, simply repeating two or three words from the notes will not suffice—I want to know that you grasp the concepts we discuss in my class. You are permitted to use your notes on all assignments in this course; in fact, I highly recommend that you use your notes and book on the assignments in this course. I allow you the opportunity to attempt each quiz twice (or retake each quiz once; however, you prefer to phrase it). Once finished, the quiz will not show you the correct answers; instead, you must reevaluate and find the correct answers on your own before you retaking the quiz again. The objective of these quizzes is to encourage critical thinking and provide students with the opportunity to take the material to heart—not simply memorize it for a few hours. Again, make sure that your quizzes are completed by 11:55p on their required nights. If you retest and score lower on your second attempt, the higher of the two grades will be the grade automatically recorded and used by Brightspace. I believe that two opportunities to take a quiz (with your notes) should

provide anyone (who does the required work) with the means to ace every quiz in the course. However, because of the fact you can use your notes and may retake a quiz:

## **THERE ARE NO RESETS FOR QUIZZES-- - FOR ANY REASON--- EVER.**

Typically, when students used to ask me to reset a quiz, it was because of a computer error. Because of this fact, I feel it necessary to alert you to a few things:

1. If the computer freezes on your first quiz attempt, you need to change computers before beginning your second attempt. I understand that technology does not always work properly but you should have a backup plan for when/if that technology fails you for the second attempt.
2. I highly recommend using the MCC library computers for quizzes, because they often prove the most dependable in an online testing environment. If you only have access to one computer, you need to designate an alternative computer, as soon as possible, to use as a backup before beginning to take quizzes in this course.
3. You will receive a zero when you do not record a quiz grade by the specified time.
4. A quiz listed as "In Progress" at/after the deadline will result in a grade of zero for that quiz.
5. With regards to last-minute assignments please remember the old adage: Failure to plan on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part.
6. If/When Brightspace goes down during a crucial time, issues will be dealt with when Brightspace comes back online. Due dates may be adjusted to reflect any changes.

**Exams:** Exams represent a total of 40% of the final course grade for ENVR 1301. The class includes four unit exams, all which will be administered online and proctored via Zoom. This will require the use of a computer with a webcam and a microphone. No exam may be re-taken for a higher grade. You can use the notes you have taken over lectures on exams.

### **Late Work, Attendance, and Make Up Work Policies:**

I do not accept late work because students will have plenty of time to properly complete the various required assignments and all assignments will be completed online. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

If a student becomes incapacitated during the course of the semester and is unable to complete their work, please communicate with me so we can make alternative arrangements.

### **MCC Attendance Policy:**

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students, and the instructor will maintain a complete record of attendance for the entire length of each course, including online and hybrid courses. Students will be counted absent from class meetings missed, beginning with the first official day of classes. **Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held accountable for such materials** in the determination of course grades. Any student caught sleeping during lecture may be marked absent or dismissed from class.

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In the case of online and hybrid courses, attendance will be determined in terms of participation, as described in the course syllabus. In this course, a student is marked absent when she/he fails to complete that section's assignment. Absence from 25 percent of scheduled lecture and/or laboratory meetings will be taken as evidence that a student does not intend to complete the course, and the student will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. The instructor may reinstate the student if satisfied that the student will resume regular attendance and will complete the course. If the student's 25 percent absences are reached after the official drop date, the instructor may assign a W, if the student is passing and requests to be withdrawn. However, if a student who is not passing reaches the 25 percent point after the official drop date, the student will receive an F. In extenuating circumstances, the instructor may assign a W to a student who is not passing. Each absence will count toward attendance requirements in each course. Students will be permitted to make up class work and assignments missed due to absences caused by (1) authorized participation in official College functions, (2) personal illness, (3) an illness or a death in the immediate family or (4) the observance of a religious holy day. Also, the instructor has the prerogative of determining whether a student may make up work missed due to absences for other reasons. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of the reason for an absence and to do so in a timely fashion. McLennan Community College shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities including examinations for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students are required to file a written request with each instructor for an excused absence. A student whose absence is excused for this observance may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

Any student who does not drop him/herself before October 26, and exceeds four absences, will stay enrolled in the course and receive the grade she/he earns.

**\* [Click Here for the MCC Attendance/Absences Policy](https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html)**

**(<https://www.mclennan.edu/highlander-guide/policies.html>)**

Click on the link above for the college policies on attendance and absences. Your instructor may have guidelines specific to this course.

### **Student Behavioral Expectations or Conduct Policy:**

Students are expected to maintain classroom decorum that includes respect for other students and the instructor, prompt and regular attendance, and an attitude that seeks to take full advantage of the educational opportunity. You may not record class lectures without instructor consent.

I try to remove the need for you to cheat, by letting you use your notes/book, take quizzes multiple times, and complete a majority of the course wherever you physically feel the most comfortable. But, any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, or collusion on any problem on an assignment, quiz, test, (etc.) will receive an F for his/her semester grade, be reported to the office of Student Development, and could even be recommended for suspension from the McLennan Community College District. The weight of the compromised assignment is irrelevant—the punishment of failing semester grade will be the same. Plagiarism may include the use of ideas, research, or sentence structure without giving proper credit to the creator.

## **I POSSESS ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CHEATING, COLLUSION, AND/OR PLAGIARISM.**

Often, in particular on short-answer or essay quizzes, I do not mind when students seek outside, scholastic material to locate additional information on various topics. However, be sure that you realize that you cannot simply copy something and pass it off as your answer. Every semester, I will find examples of when students, in a panic, copy-paste materials off of the Internet as their answers. If you do this, you will fail the semester and be reported—so do the right thing. Anyone caught (or even highly suspected of) cheating or plagiarizing on an assignment will have grounds to fail the course for the semester and be reported to the disciplinary council. If a student is unsure as to what constitutes cheating/plagiarism, he/she needs to ask for clarification before submitting an assignment. When applicable, it is a student's obligation to verify the authenticity of his/her work through proper citations. Even "accidental" cheating can result in a failing grade for the semester and a report to the disciplinary council.

On occasion, two students in this course may share a common bond (married, friends, siblings, etc...) and if you fit into that category, you must notify me within the first two sections of class. This is because students with a common bond occasionally experience issues that should be addressed before completing much of the course. We can talk about these various issues, once they arise. Failure to notify the instructor about a common bond may result in strict consequences, as determined by the instructor.

**\* [Click Here for the MCC Academic Integrity Statement](#)**

**([www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity](http://www.mclennan.edu/academic-integrity))**

The link above will provide you with information about academic integrity, dishonesty, and cheating.

### **Student Support/Resources:**

MCC provides a variety of services to support student success in the classroom and in your academic pursuits to include counseling, tutors, technology help desk, advising, financial aid, etc. A listing of these and the many other services available to our students is available at

<http://www.mclennan.edu/campus-resource-guide/>

College personnel recognize that food, housing, and transportation are essential for student success. If you are having trouble securing these resources, we encourage you to contact a success coach by calling (254) 299-8226. Students can visit the Completion Center Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. to meet with a success coach and receive additional resources and support to help reach academic and personal goals. Paulanne's Pantry (MCC's food pantry) is open 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, without an appointment. The Completion Center and pantry are located on the Second Floor of the Student Services Center (SSC).



**MCC Foundation Emergency Grant Fund:**

Unanticipated expenses, such as car repairs, medical bills, housing, or job loss can affect us all. Should an unexpected expense arise, the MCC Foundation has an emergency grant fund that may be able to assist you. Please go to <https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/scholarships-and-resources/emergencygrant.html> to find out more about the emergency grant. The application can be found [here](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf) ([https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency\\_Grant\\_Application.pdf](https://www.mclennan.edu/foundation/docs/Emergency_Grant_Application.pdf)).

**Minimum Technical Skills:**

Students should have basic computer skills, knowledge of word processing software, and a basic understanding of how to use search engines and common web browsers.

**Backup Plan for Technology:**

In the event MCC's technology systems are down, you will be contacted/notified through your MCC student email address. Please note that all assignments and activities will be due on the date specified in the Instructor Plan, unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

\* [Click Here for the Minimum System Requirements to Utilize MCC's D2L|Brightspace](https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html)  
(<https://www.mclennan.edu/center-for-teaching-and-learning/Faculty%20and%20Staff%20Commons/requirements.html>)

Click on the link above for information on the minimum system requirements needed to reliably access your courses in MCC's D2L|Brightspace learning management system.

**Email Policy:**

McLennan Community College would like to remind you of the policy (<http://www.mclennan.edu/employees/policy-manual/docs/E-XXXI-B.pdf>) regarding college email. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to use their McLennan email addresses when conducting college business.

A student's McLennan email address is the preferred email address that college employees should use for official college information or business. Students are expected to read and, if needed, respond in a timely manner to college emails. The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails.

**Instructional Uses of Email:**

Faculty members can determine classroom use of email or electronic communications. Faculty should expect and encourage students to check the college email on a regular basis. Faculty should inform students in the course syllabus if another communication method is to be used and of any special or unusual expectations for electronic communications.

If a faculty member prefers not to communicate by email with her/his students, it should be reflected in the course syllabus and information should be provided for the preferred form of communication.

**Email on Mobile Devices:**

The College recommends that you set up your mobile device to receive McLennan emails.

**Forwarding Emails:**

You may forward the emails that come to your McLennan address to alternate email addresses; however, the College will not be held responsible for emails forwarded to an alternate address that may become lost or placed in junk or spam filters.

**Accommodations/ADA Statement**

Any student who is a qualified individual with a disability may request reasonable accommodations to assist with providing equal access to educational opportunities. Students should contact the Accommodations Coordinator as soon as possible to provide documentation and make necessary arrangements. Once that process is completed, appropriate verification will be provided to the student and instructor. Please note that instructors are not required to provide classroom accommodations to students until appropriate verification has been provided by the Accommodations Coordinator. Instructors should not provide accommodations unless approved by the Accommodations Coordinator. For additional information, please visit [mclennan.edu/disability](http://mclennan.edu/disability).

Students with questions or who require assistance with disabilities involving physical, classroom, or testing accommodations should contact:

[disabilities@mclennan.edu](mailto:disabilities@mclennan.edu)

254-299-8122

Room 319, Student Services Center

**\* [Click Here for more information about Title IX](#)**

**([www.mclennan.edu/titleix](http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix))**

We care about your safety, and value an environment where students and instructors can successfully teach and learn together. If you or someone you know experiences unwelcomed behavior, we are here to help. Individuals who would like to report an incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@mclennan.edu](mailto:titleix@mclennan.edu) or by calling Dr. Drew Canham (Vice President for Student Success) at 299-8645. Individuals also may contact the MCC Police Department at 299-8911 or the MCC Student Counseling Center at MCC by calling 299-8210. The MCC Student Counseling Center is a confidential resource for students. Any student or employee may report sexual harassment anonymously by visiting the following website: <http://www.lighthouse-services.com/mclennan/>.

McLennan's Title IX webpage (<http://www.mclennan.edu/titleix/>) contains more information about definitions, reporting, confidentiality, resources, and what to do if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct, gender-based violence or the crimes of rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence or domestic violence.

*\* You will need to access each link separately through your Web browser (for example: Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Chrome, or Safari) to print each link's information.*

**Other Important Information:**

1. If you are having trouble accessing the lectures or with Brightspace in general, call the MCC Help Desk at 254-299-8077 or email them at [helpdesk@mclennan.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mclennan.edu)
2. The technological requirements for this course and program links are posted toward the bottom of the Syllabus/Schedule tab.
3. The instructor has the power to provide additional credit for assessing a student's knowledge, skills, and abilities, as pertaining to the course and course material, on a case-by-case basis (both individually or collectively).
4. The instructor has the power to make adjustments to testing locations and questions, as he deems fit.
5. This syllabus is a living document and, at any time, the instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus for the benefit of the class to counter unforeseen issues.
6. Times are enforced in Central Standard Time.