

Faculty of Science Course Syllabus
Environmental Science Program
ENVS 2000: Urban Field School
Summer 2024

Instructor: Dr. James Steenberg
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Website: [Brightspace](#)

Class Hours:

Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (approximate)
DUNN 304, (computer lab DUNN 301B)
May 13 to May 24, 2024

Labs/Tutorials:

Integrated with class time

Course Description:

This field course offers an introduction to urban environmental science by examining the role of humans in ecosystems and how humans change ecosystem processes and functions within urban areas. Areas of focus will include forests, soils, watersheds, parks and protected areas, green infrastructure, and the built environment. Students gain hands-on experience in environmental science techniques during excursions to different settings within Halifax Regional Municipality.

Course Objectives:

Students can expect to gain:

- An understanding of urban environments and the human processes that shape them.
 - An understanding of the challenges facing the sustainability of urban environments.
 - Applied knowledge and hands-on skill development of environmental field methods, data collection and analysis, and communication.
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Course Material:

- There is no required textbook for this course, but readings will be posted to Brightspace.
- A field notebook is required and available for purchase at the Dalhousie Bookstores.
- There will be a daily lunch break, but it is recommended that students also bring snacks and fluids for our time in the field.
- A substantial portion of this course will be spent in the field and we will be outdoors **rain or shine**. It is critical that you dress appropriately for the weather and for visiting field sites, including (but not limited to) appropriate footwear, layered clothing, and rain gear.
- Communication will be done through Brightspace and Dal email. Because this is an intensive two-week course, it will be important to frequently check Brightspace and email for updates.

Student Evaluation:

Type	Evaluation	Weight	Due Date
Individual	Participation in class activities and discussion	10%	On-going
Individual	Lab 1: Location and GPS	10%	May 14 (Day 2)
Individual	Lab 2: Sampling and Data Collection	10%	May 15 (Day 3)
Individual	Lab 3: Urban forests	10%	May 17 (Day 5)
Individual	Lab 4: Data analysis	10%	May 22 (Day 8)
Individual	Field notes (two spot checks)	5%	May 17 & 24 (Day 5 & 10)
Group	Final report – environmental project proposal	20%	May 24 *11:59 PM* (Day 10)
Group	Presentation	20%	May 24 (Day 10)
Group	Peer review	5%	May 24 (Day 10)

All assignments must be submitted via the Dropbox on Brightspace by **9:00 AM on the date the assignment is due**. Assignments that are late, without prior late-submission approval from the instructor or supported with a doctor's note, will be deducted 10% for each day past the due date.

Grading System:

Conversion of numerical grades to Final Letter Grades follows the Dalhousie Common Grade Scale:

A+	(90-100)	B+	(77-79)	C+	(65-69)	D	(50-54)
A	(85-89)	B	(73-76)	C	(60-64)	F	(<50)
A-	(80-84)	B-	(70-72)	C-	(55-59)		

Course Schedule:

We will meet every morning in the classroom before going to any field or lab sessions. Please note: The list and schedule of topics and field trips are subject to change. The uncertainties of visiting field sites the busy schedule of our gracious hosts practitioners may translate to unexpected changes.

Class	Lecture Topics	Location
Day 1: May 13	AM: Welcome, course overview, safety training PM: Location and GPS	AM: Class PM: Field
Day 2: May 14	AM: Sampling and Data Collection PM: Sampling and Data Collection	AM: Field PM: Computer lab
Day 3: May 15	AM: Bird survey in Point Pleasant Park PM: Case study – Overview of urban forest ecosystems	AM: Field PM: Class/field
Day 4: May 16	AM: Case study – Sampling protocols and field measurements for urban forest ecosystems PM: Case study – Data management and analysis for urban forest ecosystems	AM: Field PM: Computer lab
Day 5: May 17	AM: Green infrastructure and urban resilience PM: Environmental projects proposal development	AM: Field PM: Class
Day 6: May 20	AM: Facilitated work session PM: Neighbourhoods and the built environment	AM: Class PM: Field

Class	Lecture Topics	Location
Day 7: May 21	AM: Data analysis PM: Naturalization of under-utilized urban green spaces	AM: Computer lab PM: Field
Day 8: May 22	AM: Development, nature conflicts, and the urban-wilderness interface PM: Qualitative field methods	AM: Field PM: Field
Day 9: May 23	AM: Environment and civic engagement with technology PM: Facilitated work session	AM: Field PM: Class
Day 10: May 24	AM: Facilitated work session PM: Presentations and course wrap-up	AM: Class PM: Class

Course Policies

Attendance:

Attendance and thoughtful participation is a key component of this course and will be worth **10% of your final grade**. Participation helps to better absorb class concepts and apply them in later assignments. Participation includes attendance, full participation in field activities, and engaging in class discussion. Because this is a two-week intensive course, full attendance is critical. Missed classes without appropriate approved accommodation will be reflected in your participation grade.

Some of the course time slots are designated as facilitated work sessions, which are meant to be used by students for the preparation of group work. These can be done in the classroom where the instructor and TAs will be available or can be done independently elsewhere.

Ground Rules:

We view teaching as a collaboration between Instructors, TAs, and students. Our collective goal is for each of us to increase our knowledge base and hone our research, analytical, and writing skills within the intersections of environment, sustainability, and cities. Each of us has responsibilities to ensure the success of this relationship. As Instructors and TAs, we commit to:

- Ensuring that course materials are instructive and engaging
- Communicating expectations clearly to students
- Responding to and integrating student feedback into the course
- Provoking questions, curiosity, and constructive feedback from students
- Providing grades that are transparent and consistent among all students

In joining this class, students commit to:

- Attending and engaging in all course components
- Respecting alternative viewpoints that might not coincide with their own
- Completing and reflecting on the related readings
- Arriving on time to all elements of the course
- Remaining curious about and critical of the material covered

Accommodation Policy for Students

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian Human Rights legislation. The full text of Dalhousie's Student Accommodation Policy can be accessed here:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/student-accommodation-policy-wef-sep--1--2014.html

Students who require accommodation for classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Centre (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. More information and the Request for Accommodation form are available at www.dal.ca/access

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity, with its embodied values, is seen as a foundation of Dalhousie University. It is the responsibility of all students to be familiar with behaviours and practices associated with academic integrity. Instructors are required to forward any suspected cases of plagiarism or other forms of academic cheating to the Academic Integrity Officer for their Faculty.

The Academic Integrity website (academicintegrity.dal.ca) provides students and faculty with information on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, and has resources to help

students succeed honestly. The full text of Dalhousie's Policy on Intellectual Honesty and Faculty Discipline Procedures is available here:

www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/academic-policies.html

Please note that Dalhousie subscribes to plagiarism detection software that checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a very serious academic offence that may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie, there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course; students should read the Policy on Intellectual Dishonesty contained in the Calendar.

Furthermore, the University's Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student assignments be submitted in both written and computer readable format, e.g.: a text file or as an email attachment, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by the plagiarism detection software. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Use of third-party originality checking software does not preclude instructor use of alternate means to identify lapses in originality and attribution. The result of such assessment may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action taken by the Senate.

Student Code of Conduct

Dalhousie University has a student code of conduct, and it is expected that students will adhere to the code during their participation in lectures and other activities associated with this course. In general:

“The University treats students as adults free to organize their own personal lives, behaviour and associations subject only to the law, and to University regulations that are necessary to protect

- the integrity and proper functioning of the academic and non – academic programs and activities of the University or its faculties, schools or departments,
- the peaceful and safe enjoyment of University facilities by other members of the University and the public,
- the freedom of members of the University to participate reasonably in the programs of the University and in activities on the University's premises, and
- the property of the University or its members.”

The full text of the code can be found here:

www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Services Available to Students

The following campus services are available to help students develop skills in library research, scientific writing, and effective study habits. The services are available to all Dalhousie students and, unless noted otherwise, are free.

Service	Support Provided	Location	Contact
General Academic Advising	Help with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - understanding degree requirements and academic regulations - choosing your major - achieving your educational or career goals - dealing with academic or other difficulties 	Killam Library Ground floor Rm G28 Bissett Student Success Centre	In person: Killam Library Rm G28 By appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e-mail: advising@dal.ca - Phone: (902) 494-3077 - Book online through MyDal
Dalhousie Libraries	Help to find books and articles for assignments Help with citing sources in the text of your paper and preparation of bibliography	Killam Library Ground floor Librarian offices	In person: Service Point (Ground floor) By appointment: Identify your subject librarian (URL below) and contact by email or phone to arrange a time: https://libraries.dal.ca/research/subject-liaisons/directory.html
Studying for Success (SFS)	Help to develop essential study skills through small group workshops or one-on-one coaching sessions Match to a tutor for help in course-specific content (for a reasonable fee)	Killam Library 3rd floor Coordinator Rm 3104 Study Coaches Rm 3103	To make an appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit main office (Killam Library main floor, Rm G28) - Call (902) 494-3077 - email Coordinator at: sfs@dal.ca or - Simply drop in to see us during posted office hours All information can be found on our website: www.dal.ca/sfs
Writing Centre	Meet with coach/tutor to discuss writing assignments (e.g., lab report, research paper, thesis, poster) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn to integrate source material into your own work appropriately - Learn about disciplinary writing from a peer or staff member in your field 	Killam Library Ground floor Learning Commons & Rm G25	To make an appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit the Centre (Rm G25) and book an appointment - Call (902) 494-1963 - email writingc@dal.ca - Book online through MyDal We are open six days a week See our website: writingcentre.dal.ca