

University of Colorado
Department of Economics
ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS--EC3545-001
(for non-economics majors)

Phil Graves
Fall 2015, HLMS 252 2:00-3:15 pm
Course Content

The study of environmental economics is interesting, thought-provoking, and controversial. This is both a strength and a weakness; the strength is that the inherently interesting nature of the subject matter results in greater student interest and involvement than might be the case for many other subjects.

Office: Economics 223 (Northwest corner, 2nd floor of the Economics Bldg)

Hours: TTh 3:30pm-5:00pm (also by appointment at many other hours, if there are schedule conflicts).

Contact: e-mail: philip.graves@colorado.edu or philipegraves@gmail.com (e-mail definitely preferred route of communication--I'm online daily usually 24/7 and at odd hours).

Note: 1) Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from Disability Services (DS) and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of class. DS determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/sacs/disabilityservices). Campus policies (including those involving the new student honor code, plagiarism, classroom behavior policies, and the like) can be viewed at: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/index.html>. Direct any questions you have about these policies to me.

2) Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, it is unlikely that this will be a problem, since I do not take attendance in any event. Should we be voting for a test date that conflicts with religious observances, point this out to me and that date will be eliminated from consideration. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

3) Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at: <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

4) All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

The course will follow the book and class lectures, with tests organized as follows:

Midterm #1 will cover introductory material involving why economists like supply and demand and its extension, benefit-cost analysis in a perfect information world in which externalities can be fully internalized and public goods properly provided. The specific date of the first exam will be voted on in class among a few possible dates, hopefully to get the "socially optimal" test date. The first exam will be, however, approximately mid-way through the semester.

Midterm #2 will cover the (many) flaws in the approaches actually taken to implementing benefit-cost analysis, strongly suggesting that benefit-cost analysis is heavily biased against the environment. The strong perfect information assumptions of the material on the first midterm are clearly non-valid for real-world environmental decision-making. The second exam date will also be voted upon, though it will come quite late in the semester (usually the last "legal" week for exams, which is the second to last week of the semester).

Comprehensive Final Exam, Thursday December 17, 1:30pm-4:00 PM in our regular classroom--Good Luck!