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TERM PAPER GUIDELINES

ECO 2118
INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS

Overview

Each student is required to write an original term paper on any topic within environmental and resource economics or policy. A wide range of subjects are acceptable, but remember that this is an economics course.

This may be the first time that you have been required to submit an extended piece of writing for a non-English university-level course. Writing this type of document is one of the most important skills that students should master before entering the labour market. The term paper is an important component of your grade and the exposition of an extended line of reasoning is a core skill students should acquire in university.

There are two steps involved in writing the term paper: a paper proposal (worth 5% of your final grade) and the final term paper (worth 20% of your final grade).

1-Page Proposal

A 1-page proposal is due **in class October 2, 2013**. The proposal should provide a clear statement of the topic which each student intends to examine. Students are encouraged to consider topics that are related to the subject matter covered throughout the course (such as the potential advantages and disadvantages of prediction markets in policy-making, carbon taxes, etc.); however, the ultimate subject matter of the paper is open provided it covers some aspect of environmental or resource economics or policy.

Final Written Paper

The final term paper is due by **5:00pm on November 15th, 2013**. I strongly prefer a hard copy of the paper which can be delivered in person during class (any time before the deadline), during my office hours on the 15th or to the front office staff in either the Department of Economics or the Institute of the Environment. The paper should not be longer than **2000 words**. It should be double spaced and written using Times New Roman font at either an 11 or 12 pt. A list of works cited should be included at the end of the paper, but these do not count towards the word limit restriction. Plagiarism is a major academic offence so be sure to attribute all ideas appropriately. (See http://www.uottawa.ca/plagiarism.pdf for more information.)

The final written paper should contain the following sections:

I. Introduction
II. Literature Review
III. Discussion and Analysis
IV. Conclusion
V. Works Cited (not included in the word count)

The term paper will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Clarity and originality of topic (5%)
2. Appropriateness and depth of literature review (30%)
3. Quality and level of analysis and conclusions (35%)
4. Writing and style (30%)

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Although not required, students are encouraged to discuss potential topics with the professor or TA in advance of submitting a proposal.

Two sample papers are posted on the Blackboard Learn website.

Potential Topics/Research Questions for the Term Paper:

- Evaluate a Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS). Recent environmentally-related RIASs include:
    - Federal passenger vehicle regulations for greenhouse gas emissions
    - Federal renewable fuels regulations
    - Federal heavy-duty vehicle and engine greenhouse gas regulations
    - Federal coal-fired electricity generation facility regulations
    - Energy efficiency regulations
- Assess the role of the media in shaping environmental preferences and environmental policy.
- What are some political, economic and environmental implications from approving/not approving the Gateway Pipeline (or Keystone Pipeline)?
- Which level of government is best suited to regulate firms and protect the environment? How does the Constitution delineate responsibility?
- Much controversy surrounds the "environmental Kuznets curve". Describe this empirical relationship, the controversy and its repercussions for international environmental agreements.
- Appraise various methodologies that attempt to adjust existing economic statistics to include environmental externality costs.
- Investigate whether government intervention "crowds-out" or hinders voluntary action.
- Overview of policies/economic instruments to reduce firms' toxic substance emissions.
- What impact does political unrest have on environmental outcomes or resource development?
- Review and discuss:
    - Climate change repercussions for Canada – who wins and who loses with climate change? What are the domestic and international implications of the federal government's approach to climate policy?
    - Biofuel policy in Canada and/or the US
    - The equity implications of climate change with respect to developing countries and the international food supply
    - BC's carbon tax, Quebec's cap and trade system or Alberta's SGER
    - South Nation Watershed's water quality trading program
    - Deforestation and REDD+
    - Non-point agricultural run-off and water quality (e.g., phosphate in Lake Winnipeg)
    - The US conservation or wetland reserve programs
    - DUC's reserve auction for wetlands in the Assiniboine watershed
    - The increase in resource extraction activities in the North – what are the implications for aboriginal communities?
    - Canadian water pricing regulations and the impact of water metering on conservation
    - Time of day electricity pricing and household behaviour
    - Existing geo-engineering strategies for climate change adaptation and management
    - The relationship between cities, urban density and environmental outcomes
    - The relationship between oil prices and Canadian economic growth