

T, Th 9:00 – 10:15, LSW 103      webct.okstate.edu  
Dr. Bill Henley, Prof. of Botany, LSE 104, 744-5559, henley@okstate.edu

**Office hours:** Tu/Th 11–12 and M/W 4–5, or by appointment. I urge each of you to visit me individually as it is the best way for me to get to know you and for you to demonstrate your interest. Immediately before class is generally NOT a good time, but after class may be.

**Text:** Miller, G.T. Jr. 2005. *Sustaining the Earth*. (7th Ed.) Wadsworth Publishing Co., Belmont, CA. ([http://www.brookscole.com/cgi-wadsworth/course\\_products\\_wp.pl?fid=M20b&discipline\\_number=22&product\\_isbn\\_issn=0534496725](http://www.brookscole.com/cgi-wadsworth/course_products_wp.pl?fid=M20b&discipline_number=22&product_isbn_issn=0534496725)). Additional required or recommended readings, if any, will be announced.

**Prerequisite:** Introductory Biology (BIOL 1114 or equivalent); a modest level of science literacy is assumed.

**Objectives:** This course is designed primarily for non-science majors, as an introduction to basic physical, chemical and ecological principles with which you can make a reasoned, objective assessment of local, regional and global environmental issues. This is a science rather than a policy course, so the emphasis will be on scientific concepts and the strengths and limitations of the scientific method in helping to shape policy decisions. The course should improve your scientific literacy and consequently enable you to be more informed, concerned and involved citizens.

**Class format:** A large breadth of topics (see course WebCT for topics and approximate schedule) will be covered in a combination of discussion and lectures (this year I plan to place more emphasis on discussion, so come prepared). Unless I announce otherwise, **you are responsible for all material in the WebCT “Lectures Notes” module** (excluding e.g. links to online news stories and external web sites), whether or not I formally present it in class. The discussion and learning process concerning complex environmental issues will benefit greatly if everyone reads in advance about the subject in the textbook, news sources, internet, etc. I will direct you as much as possible concerning what pages to read and which concepts/details are and are not essential. The pre-class assignments (see below) are designed to encourage you to prepare in advance for discussions. Courtesy while others are speaking and respect for others' opinions is mandatory, but this should not preclude lively debate! Although there are few absolute "correct" answers or solutions to complex environmental problems (despite what zealots of either extreme may claim), there are many scientific "facts" and concepts that you should learn through this process.

On occasion we also may have local experts as guest lecturers. I encourage each of you to bring up for discussion your personal experiences with environmental issues, as well as any relevant local, national or international news item. Preferably this would be at an appropriate point in the semester.

**WebCT (webct.okstate.edu):** You should be able to access WebCT from any computer with internet access, although it may be slow on a dialup connection. From the WebCT entry page, click on *Check Browser* (upper right) for critical information about which internet browsers are compatible with WebCT (IE 5.0, 5.5, 6.0; NS 6.2, 7.0, 7.1), and how to configure them as well as third-party programs such as firewalls and pop-up blockers so WebCT works properly. All of you (except late adds) will be automatically subscribed to WebCT, accessible using your O-KEY (<http://okey.okstate.edu/>) user name and your PR&SM default password (unless you previously changed your WebCT password to something else from within WebCT). If you added late, let me know your userid and I can add you to the class WebCT manually. **If you do not know your userid and/or password**, click on *Forgot your Password?* on the WebCT entry page, or as a last resort contact the IT Helpdesk (<http://help.okstate.edu/>).

I will use WebCT to post **pre-class assignments** that you must complete within a specified time frame, lecture notes, study guides, announcements (e.g. extra credit opportunities), reading assignments, essential information, etc. WebCT also has a calendar and its own email system; to avoid missing anything, **CHECK BOTH FREQUENTLY**, say 2–3 times weekly. I also encourage you to use the discussion link to ask questions and discuss issues among yourselves – don't be shy as others probably have similar questions and could benefit from your intellectual prowess.

**Testing:** Two full period exams (plus a comprehensive final) will combine multiple choice, short answer and short essay (1 - 2 paragraphs) questions. The latter will focus on issues such as those that we discuss in class, and you should include particular scientific principles in your answer, i.e. I am not simply asking for your opinion. Consult the old exams on the web page for examples of what to expect. Example good/bad essay answers and an excellent actual

student answer also are on the web. I plan to give the same style of exams as in the past, but **the information content of the exams will be modified according to this year's coverage**. I will indicate on returned exams if I think you need extra help with a particular aspect, but it is YOUR responsibility to visit me or seek outside help (e.g. the university writing center).

**Academic honesty:** All forms of cheating or plagiarism (including signing in classmates who are absent) are strictly forbidden, and will result in a 0 score for the relevant item (exam, etc.) and possible disciplinary action as per university policy. **Hats will not be worn, and backpacks, etc. must be placed out of reach during any exam.**

**Exam Schedule:**

Th 9 February	EXAM 1 (in class – 103 LSW)
(subject to change) Th 23 March	EXAM 2 (in class – 103 LSW)
with advanced notice) Tu 2 May 8:00 – 9:50 am	FINAL EXAM (CUMULATIVE) in 103 LSW

**Drop dates:**

Last day to drop/withdraw* with no grade and full refund:	Tues, 17 January
Last day to drop/withdraw* with automatic grade of "W":	Friday, 7 April
Last day to withdraw* with assigned grade of "W" or "F":	Friday, 21 April

\* Withdrawal is from ALL courses; drop means one course only.

**Grading:** Letter grades will be based on the following percentages out of the 478 point total:

A = 90-100%	B = 80-89%	C = 70-79%	D = 60-69%	F = 0-59%
2 unit exams @ 100 points each				200
Comprehensive final exam				150
Online pre-class assignments (10 @ 10 points; up to 15 offered)				100
<u>Participation (1 point/day excluding exams)</u>				<u>28</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>478</b>

Regular attendance is expected and will be recorded via a sign-in sheet, and rewarded with participation points. A missed assignment or exam will result in a grade of zero, except for an officially excused absence (e.g. illness with doctor's note) as per university policy, in which case the assignment or exam will not be counted toward your course grade. The remaining exams will then be weighted accordingly so that they total 350 points. Makeup exams will be given only in extraordinary circumstances on a case-by-case basis, and at my convenience.

Requests for correction of errors in scoring an exam must be made by the end of the next class meeting following return of the exam.

**Extra credit:** You may earn **up to 20** points (4.2% of total) extra credit by two methods: (1) any pre-class assignment points in excess of 100 (but <120) will be automatically counted as extra credit; and (2) attending and submitting a brief typed report (typically 2-3 points each) on environmental seminars on campus (I will try to keep you informed of these). The report should give the full name of the presenter and the seminar title, date, time and location; it should be turned in no more than one week after the seminar. A full 20 points could raise your course average from, for example, 75.8% to 80%, thus from "C" to "B".

**Computer labs:** You can use any of several public access computer labs to access WebCT, email, the internet, word processing, etc. For locations and hours of operation, go to <http://it.okstate.edu/students> and click on *Computer Lab Locations & Hours*, then scroll down and click on *More information on lab schedules, hours, etc.*

★ In the spirit of this course, handouts/tests will usually be printed on partially recycled paper. I will try to minimize paper handouts, instead sending messages by WebCT email. However, my purpose is negated if you print everything!