

ECON 281 SYLLABUS¹

MAS MARINE BIODIVERSITY & CONSERVATION PROGRAM

FALL 2020

Professor: Mark Jacobsen, m3jacobsen@ucsd.edu
Office Hours: Fridays 1:00-2:00 pm
[Mark's Office Hours Link](#) (Meeting ID: 983 2857 1314, Password: 3o095p)

TA: Alison Rowe, arowe@ucsd.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00-2:00 pm or by appointment
[Alison's Office Hours Link](#) (Meeting ID: 931 5366 4820, Password: 6m775n)

Lecture: Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:30-7:50 pm, Zoom
[Lecture Link](#) (Meeting ID: 924 7611 0850, Password: 1t228x)

Discussion and Review Sessions: See Canvas for Zoom links

Week	Session Type	Date	Time	Location
Week 1	Discussion	Wednesday, 10/7	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 2	Review	Monday, 10/12	4:00-5:00 pm	TBD + Zoom
Week 3	Discussion	Wednesday, 10/21	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 4	Discussion	Wednesday, 10/28	12:30-1:30 pm	Zoom Only
Week 5	Review	Monday, 11/2	4:00-5:00 pm	TBD + Zoom
Week 5	Discussion	Wednesday, 11/4	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 6	HOLIDAY	Wednesday, 11/11	No Class	N/A
Week 7	Discussion	Wednesday, 11/18	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 8	Review	Monday, 11/23	4:00-5:00 pm	TBD + Zoom
Week 8	Discussion	Wednesday, 11/25	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 9	Discussion	Wednesday, 12/2	12:30-1:30 pm	Seaside Forum + Zoom
Week 10	Review	Friday, 12/11	11:00 am-12:00 pm	TBD + Zoom

Please speak to Alison if you are unable to attend discussion sessions at the scheduled times.

There will be an additional remote review session on Wednesday, October 14th from 12:30-1:30 pm to answer any questions before the first exam.

ECONOMICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Economics 281 introduces environmental economics: we begin with the theory, including cost-benefit analysis, externalities, and concepts of economic efficiency that combine standard economic consumption with environmental benefits. We then turn to practical applications of the theory to policy, for example in the context of energy use, sustainability, and economic development. The questions will be treated mathematically using formal economic models, while at the same time the field is heavily influenced by the natural sciences and the role of politics.

Required Textbook

Markets and the Environment (Keohane and Olmstead, 2nd ed. 2016)

¹ Thank you to Mark Jacobsen and Bei Luo for sharing syllabi and reading lists.

FORMAT AND PROCEDURES

In addition to attending the Econ 131 course lectures, there will be seven discussion sessions during which we will apply the lecture concepts to marine biodiversity and conservation topics. Discussion session attendance is required and part of your participation grade. You may attend discussion sessions in-person or remotely. *Please speak to Alison if you are unable to attend either the in-person or remote discussion sessions at the scheduled times.*

During discussion sessions, we will spend our time discussing the assigned readings. Students are expected to come prepared with discussion questions and comments based on the readings.

Each student will co-lead the discussion on one of the required readings. The discussion leaders should summarize the main points and conclusions of the paper, explain how/why the authors reached their conclusions, connect the paper to the material discussed in lecture and marine conservation issues, and generate a few thoughtful questions for a lively class discussion.

Review sessions will be held before exams and will cover exam-type questions and lecture topics. You may attend review sessions in-person or remotely. If you would like to review particular topics or problems, please email Alison at least two days before the review session.

Problem sets will be assigned during Econ 131 lectures. However, the problem sets are not graded or required for Econ 281. You are encouraged to try these practice problems. Some of the questions will be similar to exam questions. Solutions will be posted on Canvas.

You are welcome to attend the Econ 131 TA sessions. The 131 TAs will discuss the problem set solutions in more detail as well as common strategies for solving problems. Mark and Alison are also available and happy to help during office hours if you have any questions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams

There will be three midterm exams and a final exam (*date and time TBD*) with questions related to the material covered in Econ 131 lectures, problem sets, and assigned readings from discussion sessions. The exams are cumulative.

All exams are to be taken live. If you have extenuating circumstances or experience technical problems and cannot take the exam at the scheduled time, please contact Mark or Alison as soon as possible. We may offer an oral exam as a substitute.

Exams are open book. However, collaboration with other students is not permitted. It is Economics Department policy to turn over any issues regarding academic integrity to the University.

Exams likely will be proctored using Zoom and LockDown Browser. These programs use video and audio recording or other personal information capture for the purpose of facilitating the course and/or test environment. UC San Diego does not allow vendors to use this information for other purposes. Recordings will be deleted when no longer necessary. However, if cheating is suspected, recordings may become part of the student's administrative disciplinary record. I reserve the right to give an oral exam if I feel it is necessary to uphold academic integrity.

If you are excused in advance from one of the midterms, the weight of the missed exam will be transferred to the other exams. If you were not excused in advance and miss an exam, a grade of 0 will be assigned. The final exam is required to complete the class.

Schedule and Outline

10/1 Costs and benefits (Ch. 1-2)	11/12 Cars and transportation
10/6 Costs and benefits (Ch. 3)	11/17 Sustainability (Ch. 11)
10/8 Externalities (Ch. 4-5)	11/19 Resources and energy (Ch. 6-7)
10/13 Externalities, Policy (Ch. 8)	11/24 Midterm 3 at 6:30 pm
10/15 Midterm 1 at 6:30 pm	11/26 <i>Thanksgiving holiday</i>
10/20 Policy (Ch. 8-9)	12/1 Resources and energy
10/22 Policy, applications (Ch. 9)	12/3 Fisheries (Ch. 7)
10/27 Tradable permits (Ch. 10)	12/4 Final Paper Due
10/29 Climate change	12/8 Fisheries
11/3 Midterm 2 at 6:30 pm	12/10 Concluding examples
11/5 Valuing ecosystems and human risks	
11/10 Cars and transportation	Final Exam – Time & Date TBD

Please check the announcements included at the beginning of each lecture for reading assignments, problem sets, changes, and reminders related to this schedule.

Readings and Presentations

Participation in discussion sessions will account for 15% of your grade. Each student will co-present an assigned reading to the class and co-lead half of one discussion session with a classmate.

During your presentation and discussion, you should address the questions below, if applicable. Please focus on questions six and seven about the connection to lecture topics and the marine biodiversity and conservation implications.

- (1) What are the key research questions?
- (2) Describe the setting the authors investigated.
- (3) What method is used to address the research questions?
- (4) What are the authors' conclusions?
- (5) What (if any) critiques do you have of the paper?
- (6) How is this paper connected to the material discussed in lecture?**
- (7) What are the marine biodiversity and conservation implications?**
- (8) Pose questions designed to generate lively discussion.

Your presentation should be about 10 minutes and the class discussion should be about 15 minutes. Please keep in mind that you and your partner are responsible for leading an engaging discussion with your classmates about the connections between economics and marine biodiversity and conservation. Prepare questions that will encourage class participation.

Please send your presentation saved as a .ppt or .pptx file to Alison via email by 8:00 pm the evening before your presentation. Also, submit your presentation saved as a .pdf file to Canvas before you present. Remote students will be responsible for presenting a reading and leading a class discussion via Zoom.

Your participation score will be based on both your performance as a discussion leader and as a discussion participant. You should demonstrate that you have read the articles and are thinking critically about the material by offering insights and comments during discussions. Your presentation should demonstrate a thorough grasp of your assigned reading and its connection to lecture material and marine conservation.

Students will sign up with a partner for a specific reading and presentation date on Wednesday, October 7th after the first discussion session. Please note, if you are one of the last groups to sign up and you are not interested in the remaining readings, let Alison know and we will find an alternative – you may be responsible for helping find the alternative.

Paper

Your final paper will account for 40% of your course grade. Your paper should demonstrate your understanding of the economic concepts discussed in the course through the lens of a marine biodiversity and conservation issue that interests you.

Your paper should be about 8 pages, double-spaced (about 2,000 words but not more than 2,200 words) and must include citations.

You are required to submit a one-paragraph proposal for your paper by Friday, November 13th at 8:00 pm via Canvas.

Your final paper is due Friday, December 4th by 11:59 pm via Canvas.

A portion of the paper can be preliminary work and background information for your Capstone Project. However, more than half of the paper must develop a well-reasoned economic argument about the marine or coastal issue you choose to discuss.

One option for the paper is to identify a marine or coastal problem, discuss previous scholarly literature on the issue, propose a research question, methodology, and data set (existing or proposed by you) to address the problem, and discuss the economic topics from this course that are relevant to the issue and solution. The goal is to focus on aspects of environmental economics that are important to your marine or coastal topic, which may also be your Capstone topic.

Alternatively, you may choose any course topic that interests you and discuss that topic using marine and coastal examples from scholarly literature. You may use the discussion session articles as a starting point. Either way, your paper must convey that you understand the basic concepts of resource management, optimization, and economic tradeoffs covered in this course.

GRADING

Course Component	Date	Percent of Grade
Midterm 1	10/15 at 6:30 pm	5%
Midterm 2	11/3 at 6:30 pm	10%
Midterm 3	11/24 at 6:30 pm	10%
Final Exam	TBD	20%
Presentation & Participation	Discussion Sessions	15%
Paper	12/4 at 11:59 pm	40%