

Term Paper: Taking Position on Environmental Issues

(Total: 102.5 Marks)

Worth:	Total: 25% of your final grade; the weight of the components varies (see below)
Date Assigned:	Week of September 18 th , 2017
Date Due:	Wednesday, November 1 st , 4:30 p.m., in the Term Paper Dropbox for your tutorial section, in the course shell for Earth Sc 2EI3, on Avenue to Learn

Introduction

One of the most important skills to learn while at university is to think critically. A second important skill is to be able to communicate your thoughts and ideas effectively in a written format. The objective of this assignment is to help you develop these skills further.

When studying environmental issues there is often not a single interpretation or opinion about an issue. You are continually exposed to different facts and ideas and you must, given your current paradigm, critically analyze these ideas and facts, integrate them and ultimately be able to develop a position on a pressing issue. In this assignment, you will take position either on a major global environmental issue, or on a major Canadian environmental issue and discuss it by using relevant and informed, **factual** arguments.

Assignment

You will need to take position (i.e. do you agree or disagree) on **ONE** of the statements listed below, and to provide arguments to support your viewpoint:

- 1) Our current economic system, based on the consumption of goods and services, cannot be replaced by one that is less wasteful.
- 2) Countries in the developing world should be allowed to dispose, for profit, of toxic wastes shipped to them from developed countries.
- 3) In the face of climate change, countries which are large emitters of greenhouse gases should be legally bound to reduce their emissions by mid-century.
- 4) Canada is an international leader in the development of sustainable fisheries.
- 5) The economic benefits from the development of pipelines carrying oil from the Alberta Oil Sands to the East and West coasts outweigh the environmental concerns.

6) In order to protect its biodiversity, Canada should forbid entirely public access to its National Parks.

Your paper will be 5 - 6 pages in length (including in-text citations) and must contain an introduction and a conclusion. The use of subheadings is encouraged, to clarify the structure of your text and to guide the reader. Your paper should have the following format: Times News Roman, 12 pt font, double-spaced, 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins. **Do not add empty lines for spacing/aesthetic purposes; this is unnecessary and will be penalized.**

You must fully reference within the text all information presented using the author, date referencing system (i.e. APA). You must use a minimum of **ten sources** of information. The quality of your sources will impact the content of your paper. While the use of non-scholarly sources and websites (e.g. Wikipedia) is not usually recommended, the exclusive use of peer-reviewed sources is not always possible when taking position on environmental problems; many valid and legitimate viewpoints on these issues fall outside the realm of academic research. You will include a list of reference list at the end of your paper, following the guidelines in the Handbook for the Earth and Environmental Sciences Student. **You cannot use your lecture notes as a source of information; make use of your textbook instead!** The list of references **does not** count towards the page count, and can be single-spaced (Times News Roman, 12 pt font, with normal margins: 2.54 cm). **Your paper can only contain one direct quote from one of your sources.**

You are not required to include figures or tables to support your arguments; however, you should consider that factual information can only strengthen the points you are trying to get across. **If included,** figures should be numbered consecutively (e.g. Figure 1) and captions should be placed **beneath** each figure. All tables should be numbered consecutively (e.g. Table 1) and captions should be placed **above** each table. The caption should cite the source of the table/figure. Figures and tables do not count towards the page count, and should be included at the end of your paper.

Your spelling and grammar impact the effective conveying of your information and will be marked as part of this paper. Make sure to spell check your paper before submitting it.

For additional guidelines, you must refer to the Tutorial Slides accompanying and to any clarification made by the teaching staff (i.e. instructor, teaching assistants) on the Discussion board, on A2L.

Hints to writing an effective paper:

- First start with an outline, then write a full draft (it doesn't have to be perfect!). Have one of your friends/colleagues read it and critique it, and use their comments to improve the paper.
- Do not write in the first person. This means that you do not use "I".
- While this is a position paper, your argumentation **should be primarily based on facts,** or concrete ideas; **not solely on rhetoric (i.e. purely argumentative, and lacking meaningful support).** You may cite the viewpoints developed by others, but these perspectives should themselves ideally be grounded in a recognized field of science, humanities (e.g. philosophy), or social science (e.g. politics).

- **Stick to the page limit! Pages beyond the page limit will not be read.**
- Begin your paper with an introduction (first paragraph) that states the importance of the problem, the position (thesis) you will defend, and that will introduce your arguments.
- Subsequent paragraphs will provide an opportunity to discuss each of your arguments and the facts/ideas behind them. Discuss 4 major arguments to support your position on the question.
 - Each paragraph should include an introductory sentence to clearly identify the argument.
 - Subsequent sentences develop this idea, and cite the appropriate information/support for it. The last sentence re-emphasizes the main point of the paragraph.
 - **Make sure that your arguments actually support your thesis!**
 - **Express your ideas clearly: make every word count and eliminate all unnecessary words from your writing. Keep to the essentials.**
 - **Make sure that the statements you use are your own. Simply using slightly modified key passages from your sources is not acceptable.**
 - **If you are going to include figures and tables, only do so if they are relevant and if you are actually going to discuss them in your text. Otherwise your paper will lose marks for its poor focus and for a weak argumentation.**
- Ensure that you have a conclusion, that the conclusion does not introduce new ideas and that it directly relates to your introduction.
- ***The marking scheme that will be used is attached. Refer to it as you are writing your paper.***

Write Up Process

A. Term Paper Outline (1.25% of your grade): you will submit to a peer the thesis statement and outline of the key points of your paper. You will have to submit a **typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font** outline indicating:

- which one of the available topics you have selected
- why you have selected the topic (do not simply state that you thought it would be interesting. You must state *why* you thought the topic would be interesting)
- the thesis (i.e. **position**) of your paper
- the key arguments/points (at least 10) you plan to stress in your paper. These can be in point form.
- list **at minimum** 5 sources you plan to use for your report.

Your outline will be due in tutorial, **during the week of September 25th, 2017**, and will be reviewed by one of your peers using a review grid that will be posted on Avenue to Learn. You will be responsible to print and bring to your tutorial a copy of this grid.

You MUST show your peer-reviewed outline with the completed review grid by the end of the tutorial. The task will be recorded as only if you show both pieces.

B. Annotated Bibliography (1.25% of your grade): you will submit an annotated bibliography of 5 sources you intend to use for your paper. In an annotated bibliography, each source is followed by a brief description and evaluation. The purpose is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. You will have to submit a **typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font** report which should, for each source:

- provide a summary of the information presented on the related topic
- the author/authority of the source
- note the intended audience
- comment on the quality of the information presented
- explain the relevance of this work to your topic

Your annotated bibliography will be due in tutorial, **during the week of October 2nd, 2017**, and will be reviewed by one of your peers using a review grid that will be posted on Avenue to Learn. You will be responsible to print and bring to your tutorial a copy of this grid.

You MUST show your annotated bibliography with the completed review grid by the end of the tutorial. The task will be recorded as only if you show both pieces.

C. DRAFT TERM PAPER (1.25% of your grade): you will need to submit a **full draft** (*including figures, table, and a list of sources*) for review during the designated lab. You will exchange drafts with a peer who will annotate your draft and provide comments using a review grid (Posted on Avenue to Learn; you will be responsible to print and bring to your tutorial a copy of this grid). You will then have the opportunity to discuss with your peer the review of your draft. The annotations and comments provided, and the completion of the review grid, will be a clear sign that your draft was carefully reviewed.

Your draft will be due in tutorial, **during the week of October 16th, 2017**, and will be reviewed by one of your peers using a review grid that will be posted on Avenue to Learn. You will be responsible to print and bring to class a copy of this grid.

Your draft will have to be submitted with the following format: **typed, double spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font.**

You MUST show your draft with the completed review grid by the end of the tutorial. The task will be recorded as only if you show both pieces.

D. PARTICIPATION MARKS (1.25% of your grade): your participation to the review process will be recorded. **The completed review grids will be used as an indication of your participation.**

E. FINAL PAPER SUBMISSION (20% of your grade): using your peer's comments, you will make one last series of improvements to your paper and finally submit it. Your final paper must meet all the requirements listed: **Your assignment will be graded as indicated in the attached marking scheme.**

Your final paper will be due on **Wednesday November 1st, 2017, no later than 4:30 p.m.**, in the designated Assignments Drop Box on Avenue to Learn.

Please note: MSAFs will not be accepted for any step of the review process; i.e. steps A, B, C, D.

Earth Sc/Envir Sc/Geog 2EI3 – Term Paper – Marking Scheme

INTRODUCTION						
Clear statement of position						
No statement	Very Unclear	Poor, lacks clarity	Good; still lacks clarity	Minor changes required	Clear statement	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Significance of problem is clear						
Not approached	Significance too broad	Poor, lacks focus/scope	Good, still lacks focus/scope	Minor changes required	Excellent scope/focus	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Introduces the reader to the outline of the paper						
No outline	Does not reflect content	Poor (e.g. too brief)	Good, but needs more detail	Minor changes required	Excellent outline	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
BODY OF PAPER						
Logical flow of ideas and information						
Ideas are unrelated	Contradictions between ideas	Poor transition between ideas	Poor links within paragraphs	Minor flaws in linkages	Logical flow of ideas	/5
0	1	2	3	4	5	
No unnecessary repetition of information						
Single idea repeated throughout paper	Many repetitions	Many needless minor points	Some repetition	Minor repetitions	No repetition	/5
0	1	2	3	4	5	
Writing is clear and concise						
Often, more than 1 idea/sentence	Ideas are not clearly stated	No breaks in text	Too much unnecessary jargon	Minor changes required	Clear and concise	/5
0	1	2	3	4	5	
Information comes from reliable sources						
No reliable sources	1 or 2 reliable sources	Mostly unreliable sources	1/2 of sources are reliable	Mostly reliable	Only reliable sources used	/5
0	1	2	3	4	5	
Sufficient Number of arguments						
No argument; nearly only quotes	1 – 2 clearly identified arguments	3 arguments but not (all) clearly identified	3 clearly identified arguments	4 arguments but not (all) clearly identified	4 clearly identified arguments	/10
0	2	4	6	8	10	
Discussion is related to the global context, or Canadian context (if the topic selected is specific to Canada)						
Global context not discussed	Vaguely related	Moderately related	Good, but big picture is still missing	Minor changes	Thorough discussion	/10
0	2	4	6	8	10	
Arguments supports the thesis statement						
Contradicts thesis	Rhetorical Discussion	Poorly supports thesis	Many arguments without support	Minor changes	Thesis entirely supported	/10
0	2	4	6	8	10	
Information presented is focused						
Info. does not apply to thesis	Mostly sweeping statements	Some info. does not apply	Info. broadly applies	Minor changes	Information is clear and to the point	/5
0	1	2	3	4	5	
Subtotal (1)						/62.5

CONCLUSION						
Restates position						
Does not restate position	Inaccurate restatement	Implicit restatement	Good; but still too vague	Minor change required	Clearly restate	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Links to the introduction						
Does not link to intro. at all	No linkage to most of intro.	Poor, link is vague	Good, but still does not link fully	Minor change required	Excellent linkage	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Introduces no new information						
Only new information	Largely new information	Mostly new information	Good, but some new information	Minor change required	No new information	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Pulls the paper together: synthesis of paper						
No synthesis of ideas	Little synthesis	Vague synthesis	Good, but incomplete	Minor change required	Excellent synthesis	/2.5
0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	
Style/Format/Spelling/Grammar: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Minus 2 marks for each grammar/spelling mistakeminus 10 marks for format mistake						/10
Citation/Reference(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none">minus 2 marks for each in-text referencing mistake, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">author, date citation format not used in body of textnot all material that required referencing is actually referencedlist of references is not in alphabetical orderExcessive use of quotes instead of paraphrase: minus 10 marksminus 1 mark for each mistake with tables/figures, if used, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">not numbered sequentiallydoes not have a meaningful captioncaption is not properly located						/10
List of References <ul style="list-style-type: none">minus 6 marks if less than 10 sources were usedminus 2 mark/error if elements below are missing<ul style="list-style-type: none">listed in alphabetical ordercomplete bibliographic information						/10
Subtotal (2)						/40
Total						/102.5
Additional Comments:						