

ECON 332 - INTRO TO ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS

O'Malley School of Business
Manhattan University
Fall 2025

Instructor:	Dr. Jimena González	Time:	MR 3:00 – 4:15 pm
Email:	jimena.gonzalez@manhattan.edu	Location:	DLS 314
Office:	DLS 413	Modality:	In-Person

1 Course Description

An introductory study of the way economists approach environmental problems. Topics covered include externalities, market failure, public goods, common-pool resources, policy instruments (e.g. taxes, command and control policies, cap and trade, and tradable pollution permits), and cost-benefit analysis. (**Prerequisites:** Econ 203 and Math 154)

2 Learning Goals and Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to

1. gain an understanding of the way economists approach environmental and natural resource problems.
2. be knowledgeable about environmental economics theory and policies, and students will understand the advantages and disadvantages of various environmental policies.
3. learn to apply economic analysis to assess environmental problems.
4. describe the main market failures that relate to the environment
5. explain the difference between private and public goods and how they relate to environmental issues
6. solve algebraically and graphically for the market and socially efficient outcomes in the presence of an externality
7. identify and explain command-and-control and market-based solutions to environmental problems
8. derive the welfare cost of using inefficient environmental policies
9. describe the advantages and disadvantages of various environmental policies
10. derive the efficiency loss associated with a carbon tax and cap and trade program if costs are different than anticipated
11. describe the advantages and disadvantages of different methods to measure demand for environmental quality
12. express a position clearly and argue both sides of a controversial issue

3 Office Hours

My office hours are **in-person** in my office (DLS 413) on **Mondays and Thursdays** from **10:30 - 11:30 am**. If you prefer to meet virtually, please let me know when you make the appointment. You have two options to set an appointment. To schedule an office hours appointment, please follow the instructions below. After the appointment is set up, you will find the appointment in your Google Calendar. Hence, I expect every student to use Google Calendar (See [Google Calendar Video Tutorial](#)).

- **Option 1 (try this first):** Go to [Dr. González' Google Calendar Appointments](#) that have 20-minute office hours time slots. If you decide to stop by my office hours at the last minute (i.e. 5 minutes before they start or while they are happening, check the same link to verify that there is an opening.
- **Option 2:** If the appointment slots don't work, please send me a calendar invitation. Follow these [instructions](#). Through this method, you have to wait until I accept the calendar invitation. Depending on my schedule, these appointments may be virtual.

4 Course Communication

Email or Slack

- The best way to contact me is by email or Slack. I typically respond within 48 hours (excluding weekends), though I will make every effort to reply sooner. If your message is time-sensitive, please include "Urgent issue" in the subject line, and I will do my best to respond promptly.
- Before emailing me with a course-related question, please review the syllabus and Moodle, as most information can be found there.
- **Professional Communication:** When emailing me, please use clear and professional communication, as you would in a professional setting.

5 Course Materials

Required:

1. **Slack** (See Technology Section)
2. **Calculator Policy:** The calculator permitted for closed book tests and exams in the O'Malley School of Business is the **Texas Instrument BA II Plus** or simpler (Engineering students: you may use the non-graphing calculator permitted at your school). Phones, tablets, and smartwatches are never permissible for calculators during an exam. They must be turned off and put away for the duration of the exam.
3. Textbook clarification: while I follow Callan and Thomas (Callan, S. and J. Thomas. 2013. Environmental Economics and Management: Theory, Policy, and Applications. Sixth edition. South-Western Cengage Learning), I do not require students to purchase the textbook. Nonetheless, I placed the textbook on reserve at the library.
4. Assigned journal articles, news articles, podcast episodes, and videos.

Recommended:

I strongly encourage you to read about current events and try to connect and apply the course material to them. Important sources of articles include:

- The New York Times (As an MU student, you can [subscribe](#) for free)
- Environmental Economics Blog: <https://www.env-econ.net/>
- [NPR Planet Money Podcast](#)
- [NPR The Indicator from Planet Money Podcast](#)
- [Freakonomics Podcast](#)
- [RFF's Resource Radio Podcast](#)
- [RFF's Resource Magazine](#)

6 Technology

- **Moodle:** Students are responsible for checking Moodle since information about assignments, readings, and the class plan is posted there. Thus, students are expected to login into Moodle at least 3 times per week.
- **MU Email:** Every student must have a Manhattan email account. Students are responsible for checking their Manhattan University email account on a daily basis. Course announcements will occasionally be sent to your Manhattan email.
- **Slack:** Students need to join a Slack group through an email invitation.
- **Slack App:**
 - Students need to use Slack, which is a communication tool used in the business world. Below are the links to download the free app to your computers and/or phones. See [video tutorial](#). Links to download Slack App:
 - * [Windows](#)
 - * [Mac](#)
 - * [Andriod](#)
 - * [iPhone](#)
 - The main purpose of the app is to communicate. You will be able to post messages for the entire class or send messages to individual students or me. I also send announcements and reminders in Slack.
 - Hence, getting notifications from the app is very important (you are responsible for checking the app → **turn on the notifications**).
 - You will receive an invitation to join Slack. Please join Slack before the first day of classes.
- **Electronic Device with Wireless Capabilities:** For most classes, students should bring a device with wireless capabilities (e.g., ideally: a laptop or tablet, but phone works). Students who can't bring such a device should speak to me, via email, after the first class. These devices will only be used during specific times as instructed by the professor.
- **ITS Personal PC & Technology Recommendations:** These can be found on the ITS website, [here](#).
- **Microsoft Office:** See [instructions](#).

7 Course Structure

1. **Lectures and Handouts** To complement the lecture, I use in-class handouts for students to practice before graded in-class activities (item 2). Students must take advantage of these practice activities as they are meant to prepare students for subsequent graded activities.
2. **In-Class Activities (ICAs)**: Students are given in-class activities that include analytical problems and open-ended questions. These ICAs are meant for students to apply and master course materials. These ICAs are only given during class and must be completed as a team during class time. **There are no makeup in-class activities.** Failure to attend class, without a valid excuse (see #8), will result in zero points for the assignment.
3. **Reading and Podcast Quizzes**: For each discussion, students are expected to listen to a podcast or watch a video before class. Besides these, I will assign podcast episodes, videos, and articles periodically. Before these assignments, students will answer a couple of questions to assess whether they read or listened to the assignment. **There are no make-up quizzes.** (See item #8).
4. **Application Exercises (AEs) and Games/Experiments**: From time to time, there are application exercises (AEs) and games/experiments that are graded based on participation. Some of these activities are based on podcasts. Students get credit for participating in these activities. **There are no makeup in-class activities.** Failure to attend class, without a valid excuse (see #8), will negatively affect your participation grade.
5. **Discussion Topic**: Each student will be asked to cover a podcast or video, approved by Dr. González, related to environmental economics and to lead a 10-minute discussion at the end of a class period based on the article (MBA students will lead a 15-minute discussion). The score of the discussion topic also depends on your attendance and participation during other discussions. Failure to attend a discussion without a valid excuse will result in a **2-percentage point reduction** in your discussion grade. A student who is not paying attention or who is disrespectful during a classmate's discussion will be penalized with a **1-percentage point reduction** for the discussion grade.
6. **Position Papers**: Each student will write two position papers this semester, each about 2 pages long (or 4 pages long for MBA students). In each paper, each student will argue both sides of a controversial environmental issue. More details will be given in class.
7. **Exams**: There are two midterm exams. The first midterm exam is on **Thursday, September 25th** and the second midterm exam is **November - Exact date will be announced soon**. Each exam is closed-book and closed-notes, and it is timed. Texas Instrument BA II Plus calculators are allowed (Note: calculators with wireless capabilities and mobile phones are NOT allowed). For me to assign accurate grades, all students in the class must take the same examination at the same time. Absence from an exam will result in a grade of zero for that exam, except in highly unusual circumstances (travel arrangements are not considered valid excuses for not taking an exam). If you miss an exam and believe unusual circumstances apply in your case, you must explain your excuse in writing and provide convincing documentation, as soon as possible after the time of the exam. **In other words, except for emergencies, all students must take the exams at the scheduled times. Unless there are extenuating and unavoidable circumstances, there is no makeup for exams. The burden of proof for these circumstances is on the student.**
8. **Attendance Policy and Expectations**: Following university policy, I will keep careful attendance records and file a report to the Dean's office when a student has four unexcused absences. Extended absences (unexcused) should be reported to your Academic Advisor who will inform all of your professors. According to [Manhattan University's attendance policy](#), all students are expected to attend all classes. More important than simply attending, however, is being present for the active process of learning that occurs in class. You should expect and be prepared to be called on and to participate in discussions and activities.

9. **Valid Excuses:** If a medical emergency, serious illness, or family emergency causes you to miss class, you must inform me of the emergency before class with an explanation. You shouldn't include any medical or family details. For exams, you will need to provide documentation. For example, you may ask a doctor or nurse to write a note excusing you (without details about the medical condition). To facilitate the communication, use this [Google Form](#) which keeps records of absences and failure to submit assignments due to valid excuses. Students must submit this form on the date of the absence or of the failure to submit the assignment (unless the absence prevents the student from doing so). Late forms are not accepted unless there is a valid reason. The form also allows students to submit documentation. documentation.
10. **Participation:** Active participation and professional behavior are essential to creating a respectful and productive learning environment. Your participation grade reflects both your contributions to class activities and your conduct in the classroom.
- In this course, professionalism includes arriving on time, being prepared, engaging thoughtfully in discussions, listening respectfully to classmates, and using technology appropriately. Behaviors that disrupt the class—such as lateness, misuse of devices, wearing headphones, side conversations, or leaving the classroom unnecessarily—will negatively affect your participation grade (see Class Policies for details).
- Professional behavior is part of your grade in this course. Repeated issues may also result in a meeting with me to discuss further steps.

8 Grading

Grade Breakdown:

Activity	Weight
In-class Activities (ICAs)	20%
Participation	5%
Reading and Podcast/Video quizzes	15%
Discussion Topic	8%
Position Paper 1	10%
Position Paper 2	10%
Exam 1	16%
Exam 2	16%

Grade Guideline:

Range	Grade
93.00% - 100.00%	A
90.00% - 92.99%	A-
87.00% - 89.99%	B+
83.00% - 86.99%	B
80.00% - 82.99%	B-
77.00% - 79.99%	C+
73.00% - 76.99%	C
70.00% - 72.99%	C-
67.00% - 69.99%	D+
60.00% - 66.99%	D
< 60.00%	F

I reserve the right to curve.

If you disagree with any grading of any homework, exam, or activity, you (if individual activity) or your team (if team activity) must submit an appeal. To appeal, you or your team must submit to me the following information **in-writing via email**: which question(s) you are appealing and why. If you can make a logical, well-reasoned, well-written argument for your case, you or your team will be granted the points upon appeal. **Appeals must be made within 1 week after the graded assignment has been returned to you.**

9 Course Outline

This is a tentative schedule for the course and might change during the course. I will inform you about any changes in the outline for the course or the schedule

1. Module 1: Introduction to Environmental Economics and Basics

- 1.1. Introduction to Environmental Economics
- 1.2. Why Environmental Economics?

2. Module 2: Review of Market Theory and Market Failure

- 2.1. Modeling the Market Process
- 2.2. Modeling Market Failure

3. Module 3: Environmental Policies

- 3.1. Command and Control Approaches
Exam 1
- 3.2. The Market Approach

4. Module 4: Environmental Policies towards Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 4.1. Carbon tax vs. Cap-and-Trade

5. Module 5: Analytical Tools for Environmental Planning

- 5.1. Environmental Risk Analysis

Exam 2

6. Module 6: Cost-Benefit Analysis & Environmental Justice

- 6.1. Cost-Benefit Analysis
- 6.2. Environmental Justice

Besides these chapters, some Podcasts and videos are assigned from time to time. Instructions on how to access each podcast will be listed on Moodle. Also, detailed reading and podcast assignments will be listed on Moodle for each class meeting.

Other Important Dates:

- **August 29th**: Late Registration & Add/Drop ends
- **September 1st**: Labor Day - No classes
- **October 13th**: Fall Break - No classes
- **October 14th (Tuesday)**: Monday schedule
- **October 16th**: Midterm grades are due
- **November 14th**: Last day to withdraw
- **November 26th - 28th**: Thanksgiving Break - No classes

10 Class Policies

The expectations described in the Participation and Professional Behavior section guide how we create a respectful and productive classroom environment (See Section 7 - Item #10). The policies below explain in more detail what this looks like in practice and outline the specific consequences for violations. These rules are part of your participation grade and are designed to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn without unnecessary disruptions.

1. **Attendance and Punctuality:** Students are expected to attend and participate in every class session. Arriving late or leaving early disrupts both classmates and the flow of the lesson. Students who arrive late will lose participation points and may also lose time on in-class assessments. Students who leave early without prior approval will lose participation points.
2. **Remaining in Class:** Students are expected to remain in class for the full session. Leaving should occur only in cases of emergency (e.g., bathroom or family emergency). Exiting and re-entering during class without explanation will result in participation point deductions. Students who must leave should speak with me after class.
3. **Headphones and Earbuds:** Headphones and earbuds may not be worn during class. Violations will result in a deduction of participation points.
4. **Preparedness:** Students are expected to come to class prepared, having completed assigned readings and ready to engage in discussion and activities. Coming unprepared will negatively affect your participation grade.
5. **Engagement:** Students are encouraged to ask questions and participate actively. Choosing not to engage (e.g., being distracted or unresponsive during activities) may lower participation points. Moreover, I expect every student to participate in the discussions led by classmates (I keep track of participation tallies and their quality).
6. **Technology Use:** While technology can be a helpful learning tool, misuse is distracting to both you and others. Inappropriate use of technology (e.g., web browsing, texting, social media, unrelated apps, or any unauthorized activity) through laptops, tablets, smartwatches, or phones will not be tolerated. **Each violation will result in a 5% deduction from your participation grade.**
7. **Responsibility for Missed Class:** Students who miss class are responsible for all material covered and for making arrangements to submit assignments on time. Missed participation cannot be made up.
8. **Respectful Conduct:** Side conversations, disruptions, or dismissive behavior toward classmates will not be tolerated. Disrespectful behavior will result in participation point deductions, and repeated issues may result in further action under the university's conduct policies.

9. **AI Tools:** Artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and Copilot can be valuable resources for learning, but their use in this course must support—not replace—your own critical thinking and analysis. The following guidelines clarify when and how AI tools may be used across different assignments and activities.

- **Permitted Uses**

- **Class Discussions:** You are expected to contribute your own ideas. AI tools may be used for background research before class, but not during discussions.
- **Podcasts/Media/Articles:** You are expected to listen/watch/read the podcasts/videos/articles assigned to you. In addition, you may use AI to generate study notes or summaries for personal use, but reflections and discussion responses should be your own. In other words, AI is not allowed to replace your completion of the assignment.
- **Position Papers:** You may use AI to brainstorm topics, outline arguments, identify sources, or check grammar. The writing, analysis, and argumentation must be original and in your own voice. Any AI assistance should be disclosed by submitting an AI transcript.
- **Best Practices:**
 - * Use AI tools as a way to clarify concepts, get examples, or explore multiple perspectives.
 - * Use AI to check for grammar and improve your writing. However, remember to keep your authentic voice.
 - * Critically evaluate AI output. AI can make mistakes or present incomplete information. For example, AI could make up a source or hallucinate information from a source. Students are responsible for checking the quality of the AI output. Any made-up information included in any assignment will be considered a violation of the AI policy.
 - * Keep documentation of your AI usage. I reserve the right to request an AI transcript if AI was used. Failure to save and provide such chat will result in zero for the assignment.

- **Prohibited Uses:**

- Students are **not allowed** to use AI tools or chatbots during quizzes, in-class activities, or exams. For ICAs, students must show their work to get credit for their answers.
- Students are not allowed to copy and paste a question or activity prompt on AI Chats.
- Due to the copyrights on my materials, students are not allowed to upload any assignments to AI chats/tools.

- **IMPORTANT: Academic Integrity:** Misusage of AI and violations to the above rules will result in a zero on the assignment and will be reported as an academic integrity violation.

- **Bottom Line:** AI can be a useful supplement to your learning, but it cannot substitute for your own reasoning and writing. Misuse of AI will be treated as a violation of the university's academic integrity policies.

By following these policies, you help create a classroom environment where everyone can focus, participate fully, and succeed.

11 How to succeed in this course

- Read, listen, or watch the assignments before class
- Attend every class
- Be prepared and have tried to understand concepts before class
- Be willing to contribute to discussions and class
- Be positive, constructive, and respectful of others' opinions
- Do not be overbearing or domineering
- Be willing to be honest and admit when you don't understand a problem
- Be committed to your success
- Work on the assignments carefully
- If you are having trouble, please ask for help. Talk to me after class, send me an email, or come to my office hours. I really want you to learn and master the material!

12 Academic Integrity

Manhattan University has devoted itself to fostering a climate of academic trust and integrity, so that our students master their disciplines through their own hard work and manifest their respect for their own work and the work of others through openness and honesty. Our students accept the Academic Code of Honor and pledge that they will not cheat, lie or steal or tolerate others who do. Academic integrity is at the heart of the Manhattan University learning experience.

Academic integrity means that every member of the academic community accepts the responsibility to be honest, truthful, ethical and accountable for all intellectual efforts, for all access to and presentation of data, facts, information and opinions, and for all access to and use of data or other files (printed, oral, audio, video or digital) related in any way to students, faculty, staff or administration. In addition, every member of the Manhattan University community must understand what can constitute violations of academic integrity, the consequences in terms of penalties, and by what process penalties are imposed.

The university policy on academic integrity will be strictly enforced in this class. A full statement of the policy, including definitions of academic integrity violations, levels of violations, and sanctions, can be found in the [Student Handbook](#).

13 Copyright of Course Materials and Resources

All course materials developed by the faculty for this course and not otherwise copyrighted, such as the textbook, case studies, and published articles, are proprietary to the faculty. Any dissemination or sharing of these materials on websites, social media accounts, via email, in private chats, etc., is not allowed without explicit permission of the faculty. Such posts can be considered a violation of Academic Integrity and will be dealt with accordingly. Related to that, any use of materials you may find, posted online or otherwise made available to you by previous students will be considered plagiarism, which is also a violation of Academic Integrity.

14 Title IX Statement

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational settings that receive federal funds, Manhattan University is committed to providing an environment not impaired by sex and gender-based misconduct. For purposes of Title IX reporting, I am considered a “mandated reporter” at Manhattan University. That means I must share information related to situations involving sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or retaliation with the Title IX Coordinator. Information for resources, policies, and how to file a formal report can be found on the [Title IX/Sexual Harassment webpage of the University website](#).

15 Student Resources and Support

15.1 Student Academic Support Services — Center for Academic Success

The Center for Academic Success (CAS) is committed to providing student-centered and student-led programs and initiatives designed to enhance learning and promote success and persistence for all Manhattan University students. Students work collaboratively with qualified peers and professionals to develop knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to thrive in the classroom and beyond.

The CAS has three locations: the Learning Commons in Thomas Hall 3.11, the Leo Learning Center in Leo 117/118, and Lee Learning Commons 6th Floor. Services include online and in-person tutoring and writing center appointments, Supplemental Instruction, STEM and reading/writing professional Learning Specialist support, and English language support. All services are free of charge and available to all Manhattan University students. Appointments are preferred but walk-ins are welcome when available. To make an appointment, students can log into their [Jasper Connect](#) account or visit the CAS in Thomas Hall, 3.10. Students can also contact success@manhattan.edu with any questions.

15.2 Self-Care

Your academic success in this course and throughout your university career depends heavily on your personal health and well-being. Stress is a common part of the university experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected life changes outside the classroom. The Manhattan University community strongly encourages you to take care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of midterms and finals reach their peak. Please know there are a number of other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you. I strongly encourage you to contact them when needed (refer to the list below for offices and their contact information). If you or someone you know is in emotional distress, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for free, confidential support 24/7.

15.3 Counseling and Psychological Services

The Counseling and Psychological Services office is committed to supporting our students’ mental health, emotional health, and well-being. The Counseling Center provides in-person, individual, and group counseling to all full-time undergraduate students. There is no charge for this service.

Our office is located in Miguel Hall, Room 501, and services are available Monday through Friday from 9 am - 4:30 pm. We also have a walk-in hour Monday through Thursday from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Students can schedule an appointment:

- In person: Our office is located in Miguel Hall, Room 501 (access through northern stairwell)
- By phone: (718) 862-7394
- By email: Julie Egan directly at jegan01@manhattan.edu

In the case of a mental health emergency when the Counseling Center is closed: please contact Public Safety at 718-862-7333; they will provide assistance and contact the counseling staff.

15.4 Students with Disabilities in Need of Accommodation

If you have a documented disability (or disabilities) that require(s) special accommodation(s), please contact the Specialized Resource Center via email at src@manhattan.edu. Use of services is voluntary, strictly confidential, and free of charge. Once you have provided documentation to the SRC, it will be reviewed to determine the appropriateness of accommodations and you will receive a completed form to present to each of your professors.

15.5 Technology Support

Contact the help desk to request assistance with a campus technology issue. Your request will be entered into the ticketing system so that it can be tracked and routed to the appropriate person or division.

- Call: 718-862-7973
- Email: its@manhattan.edu

For a complete list of all Manhattan University Information Technology Services visit the [ITS webpage](#).

15.6 Library Section

The O'Malley Library offers resources and services to support your research in this and all your classes. Librarians are available in person, by email, by chat, and by text to assist with finding appropriate information for all your projects. Subject Research Guides are available to identify the most important resources for each major out of the thousands of books, articles, videos, and other resources available to you. For more information or assistance with research assignments select from the links below or drop by the Information Desk in the O'Malley Library

- [The O'Malley Library](#)
- [Ask Us](#)
- [Subject Research Guides](#)

*****Potential Changes:** All details provided in this syllabus are subject to change at my discretion. All changes will be announced in class. If you have missed a lecture, please email me for any announcements.