

**SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Economics and International Business**  
**Energy & Environmental Economics**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Vance Ginn  
**Place and Time:** TBA  
**Office:** SHB 237L  
**Office Hours:** TBA  
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**Course Description**

We will examine energy markets; the macroeconomic effects of these markets; how human values, activities, and institutions affect the environment; and how the use of economic tools can evaluate public policy alternatives designed to improve the quality of the environment.

**Course Objectives**

The first order objective of this course is to teach you economic concepts and tools necessary to "think like an economist" in a world of scarce energy resources and externalities. Second order objectives include: (i) Gaining factual knowledge about energy markets and energy-related public policy; (ii) Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories; and (iii) Improving critical thinking and problem solving by applying the course material.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain the history of energy and how public policy impacted the sources of energy
- Understand the market processes that determines energy prices
- Distinguish the macroeconomic effects of energy price shocks
- Determine the effects of negative externalities and explain policy implications
- Compare the costs and benefits of a different approaches (i.e. free market, government intervention) in dealing with environmental concerns (i.e. global warming, pollution)

**Reading Material** - I strongly recommend you compare book prices at [www.addall.com/](http://www.addall.com/).

- (1) *Energy: The Master Resource* by Robert L. Bradley, Kendall/Hunt Publishing. (*required*)  
<http://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/2008/07/18/energy-the-master-resource/>
- (2) *Environmental & Natural Resource Economics* by Tom Tietenberg & Lynne Lewis, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson Education publisher—on reserve at Library desk. (*optional*)
- (3) Chapter notes & supplemental readings on Blackboard, my website, hardcopy reserve at the Library, or on e-reserve: <http://eres.shsu.edu/eres/default.aspx> (You can find the course material by searching ECON3353. I will give you the access password in class.)
- (4) *Wall Street Journal*. I will use *WSJ* articles to illustrate concepts and how they relate to the 'real world'. You may purchase a discounted 10-week subscription for \$19.95 at this [link](#). (*optional*)

**Tutoring**

For basic economic questions, tutors are available in SHB 140 from 1-4:30 PM Monday-Thursday.

**Prerequisites:** ECON 2301 or 2302 or 2300

## Course Evaluation Process

Your course grade will consist of three multiple-choice/fill in the blank/short answer exams (80%) and online quizzes (20%). You will need an 882-E scantron, pencil, and a 4-function calculator while taking exams.

### *Exams*

There will be 2 midterms (40 questions) and a "*comprehensive*" final exam (50 questions). Your two highest exam scores, including the final exam, will each count 30% towards your course grade. The lowest exam grade will count as 20%. Thus, the three exams are 80% of your course grade. Your notes, readings, current event information, and quizzes should help you prepare for exams.

### *Examination Calendar*

First Exam: TBA  
Second Exam: TBA  
Final: **TBA**

Make-Up Exams: I will give makeup exams, *except* for the final exam, after the exam date and *only* in cases where you can provide documentation of a university excused absence. *Missed exams will be assigned a late penalty of 10 points (an exam is considered "missed" if it is not completed by the end of the exam period).* All late exams must be completed within one week of the scheduled exam date.

### *Online Quizzes*

Quizzes will be 20% of your course grade and will consist of chapter and current event material. All quizzes will be on Blackboard and I will let you know when they are available and due. I will not extend the due date and will not accept late assignments for any reason (i.e. doctor's note, dog's funeral, etc.). I will drop your two lowest quiz grades.

### *Grading Scale*

I will award grades on a strict percentage scale (*no curves*): A (90% and above), B (80-89%), and so on. Periodically, I will give out bonus points for answering questions in class and add these points to your next exam grade. You can view your calculated course grade on Blackboard.

### *In summary:*

Three exams (including final):	80%
Online Quiz Average (without lowest two grades):	<u>20%</u>
Course Grade:	100%

## Important Dates to Remember

- ❑ Labor Day: 9/3 (Monday), holiday for students and faculty.
- ❑ Last day to drop a course without a "Q" and receive full refund, 9/14 (Friday)
- ❑ Thanksgiving holidays for students and faculty: 11/21-11/23 (Wednesday-Friday)
- ❑ *Last day of class and Last day to drop and resign course: 12/7 (Friday)*
- ❑ Final Exams: 12/10-12/13
- ❑ For more important dates, go to: [http://www.shsu.edu/~reg\\_www/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/academic_calendar/)

**List of Chapters:** We will cover these topics this semester. Here is the tentative schedule:

What is Energy? (1-1, 2, 3)	
Energy Markets—Types, Spot and Futures (1-2, 2-7)	
Government Policies & Renewables (3)	
<i>Exam 1</i>	
Energy and Macroeconomy (3)	
Forecasting Energy Prices (3)	
Will We Run Out of Energy? (1-4, 2-7)	
Environmental Economics (2-2)	
<i>Exam 3</i>	
Externalities (3)	
Evaluating Tradeoffs (2-3)	
Pollution (1-5, 2-14)	
Climate Change (1-6, 2-16)	
<i>Final Exam</i>	

**Notes**

1. Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have an opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from using cellular phones or beepers, eating or drinking in class, making offensive remarks, using laptops for nonrelated class activities, reading newspapers, sleeping or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a request to leave class.
2. **Attendance:** It is your responsibility to be *punctual* to class and attend *regularly*. A seating chart will be made early in the course to take daily attendance. If you miss numerous classes, you will be a burden on other students and me. *To discourage excessive absences and promote professionalism, I will deduct 5 points off your course grade for each absence after your sixth absence —no matter the reasons.* Other than this requirement, your absences will not directly affect your grade; however, the opportunity cost of missing class will be reflected on your exam grades. Professionalism is expected of you; therefore, being late to class or leaving class early without a university excuse will result in an absence.
3. **Students with Disabilities:** It is a policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and the Director of the Counseling Center. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. Please note that no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: [http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf\\_www/aps/documents/811006.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/811006.pdf).

4. **Student Absence for Observation of Religious Holy Days:** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: [http://www.shsu.edu/%7Evaf\\_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf](http://www.shsu.edu/%7Evaf_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf)
  
5. **Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work that is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>