

ENVR 3900 (A01) 1.5 Cr.Hrs.
Environmental Science Professional Development 2
Fall 2019/Winter 2020

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Course Description

One of the many challenges you face after graduation is the task of obtaining that first 'real' career position. To achieve this end goal you will very likely need to learn the art of networking, participate in interviews and market yourself to highlight your skills relevant to the demands of the occupation. *ENVR 3900 Professional Development in the Environmental Sectors 2 (1.5)* is designed to be a continuation of professional development and further advance your emerging skills by:

- providing practical hands-on experiences relating to your professional interests;
- increasing your exposure by networking in the professional community;
- enhancing your interview skills through mock interview with experts and by evaluating junior students marketing abilities; and
- assisting you in identifying the most relevant skills demanded in your chosen profession through review of professional certification standards and national occupational competencies.

In this course, students complete several components over the year that forms the foundation of their professional portfolio and how to effectively brand yourself within the professional sector of interest. Students learn specifics about their profession through investigations of certification options, and through this process, will be able to detail and communicate their competencies to prospective employers.

Course Deliverables:

- I. Professional (Electronic) Career Portfolio (30%)**
Revisions to Resume – Due October 30, 2019
Draft Portfolio – Due January 12, 2020
Final Portfolio – Due April 3, 2020

- II. Project and Course Participation Summary (40%)**
Contained within the Electronic Career Portfolio (Due April 3, 2020)
Various events described in hand-out; further details throughout the year.

- III. Professional Mock Interview (0%) – Schedule interview on Doodle Survey (Fall, 2019)**
Interviews in October/November, 2019

- IV. Professional Informational Interview (10%)**
Interview Summaries due April 3, 2019
Minimum 1 professional not related to past experiences whether in Coop placement or UofM

- V. Employer Elevator Pitch Evaluation (10%)**
Evaluate ENVR 2900 elevator pitches and provide mentorship – Winter 2020

VI. National Occupation Standard Evaluation/Certification (10%) (Winter 2020)

Wildlife Professional Certification Workshop

Environmental Professional Certification Workshop

Note: The University of Manitoba has enforced an Electronic Communications with Students policy. Please ensure that you use your university email account to correspond with staff in the Cooperative Education Office.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students should acquaint themselves with the University's policy on plagiarism and cheating (see University of Manitoba General Calendar). Copying another student's assignment and submission of the same material for two or more courses is plagiarism. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are prohibited. The full definition of plagiarism and the possible penalties associated with it are outlined in the General Calendar. If your submitted assignment contains material you have copied from another source (e.g. from a textbook, web page, or from the published literature) you must give proper credit to that source.

Last day for Voluntary Withdrawal is January 17, 2020. *Note that this is much earlier than the Winter term VW deadline.*

Cooperative Education UM Learn Site (www.umanitoba.ca/umlearn)

This course relies heavily on the Cooperative Education Option UM Learn site. At this site you will find a folder under the "Content" tab specific to the ENVR 3900 course. This includes support documentation to assignments, links to professional organizations and events, as well as drop boxes where assignments are to be submitted. Ensure that you have access to the site and that you are frequenting the site often to keep abreast of current opportunities.

I. Professional (Electronic) Career Portfolio – Developing Your Brand

By the completion of this course, you will have developed a LinkedIn website as well as a career portfolio using one of several free websites available. These websites are a showcase of your **reflection** of skills, knowledge and abilities that you have acquired as they relate to your career path. It is a way to brand yourself and market you and your organization(s) to others.

There is no one right way to create your marketing materials. When designing the portfolio it should be well organized so that your audience (employers) can easily find relevant information that highlight your competencies. For example, your resume should be easily accessible and visually appealing to review, you should have pages that describe professional experiences in greater detail (workshops and events you have participated in and what you have acquired in skills by attending these, professional training and certificates, examples of technical reports and research papers you have undertaken throughout your years of study, personal activities and interests, your Coop experience and technical report, etc.) In short an employer should find the evidence that makes you stand out as an expert and worthy of reaching out to you to connect and learn more.

You will be developing this portfolio with: LinkedIn (<https://ca.linkedin.com/>) an essential in developing your professional connection and/or another free website development tool (search free website development and you'll find lots of available websites to build your portfolio!)

By the completion of ENVR 3900, you are required to submit your portfolio and LinkedIn page that contains:

- a homepage with your professional profile that summarizes skills, knowledge and abilities that relate to the National Occupational Standards and your area of specialization;
- viewable (and downloadable) resume;
- your course/professional activities throughout the year and possibly over the past several years.
- excerpts of representative works – examples of term and research papers, laboratory exercises, personal accomplishments, profiles of activities worthy of discussion; and

The portfolio becomes a significant component of your development as you move into Coop and add to your experiences. The goal is that you can promote the portfolio to employers by the following year and that it will encapsulate all of the relevant experiences associated with your professional interests.

During the upcoming academic year, you will gain further experiences that you need to showcase in your skills assessment. In addition, you will make improvements to your resume, your cover letter, and you will have developed technical reports that pertain to your Coop placement. You are required to organize these materials in your professional portfolio. The portfolio is intended to assist you with your career exploration efforts, to strengthen your applications to employers and to assist you in conceptualizing your strengths and achievements. It not only showcases your achievements during your university career but will further provide evidence of your major skill areas and competencies building toward professional certification.

You will be evaluated during the course through your progress in developing and improving your career portfolio platforms. Students should submit their URL for their career portfolio periodically throughout the course, and especially by the following dates:

LinkedIn (by October 15, 2019) – invite Leslie Goodman

Portfolio (by November 15, 2019) – send URL to Leslie Goodman; include revised resume and one skill page

Key components of the grade for the Career Portfolio are:

Professional Bio (Homepage) that describes your most relevant achievements and skills concisely and also encourages the reader to explore your webpage.

Resume – your resume must reflect your most recent experiences and knowledge and relate to everything you have learned about skills and competencies required in your profession. Remember, it should reflect the competencies and skill themes that you identify as most relevant to your future interests.

Individual Pages (critical to the course) – you should develop pages related to professional activities in which you are involved. For example, you might be completing an Honours thesis whereby you can describe the research, relevant links to government agencies or researchers on campus, your proposal, progress report and final thesis report/presentation. You might have been involved in a substantial project in your Coop workterm or work with a unique organization. Alternatively, you might describe your advanced knowledge in field training by describing all of your experiences in one page. The reader should gain a sense of major areas of competence by the way you organize your webpage (e.g., field readiness, analytical and laboratory proficiencies, quantitative and computer applications such as GIS, statistical software, regulations and legislation analysis, environmental assessment, etc.). If you want to impress the reader with a particular area of knowledge or skill, then it deserves a page in your portfolio. Build your themes of relevant skills from your knowledge of the certification research such as ECO Canada's National Occupational Standards or The Wildlife Society's Certification application, for example.

Creativity and Organization – the website should be well-organized and easy to follow. You should use images and links to add depth and interest to the site. This is a significant component of the final grade. Links must work!

II. Project and Course Participation Summary

Networking forms a skill in of itself for pending graduates. This can often be a daunting process as students may not have experienced effective networking during their undergraduate degrees.

In this course, you are encouraged and rewarded to “get out there” and make connections. This can be done through any one of a number of opportunities: participating in field studies, attending conferences, workshops, seminars where guest speakers provide their insight on their area of expertise; informational interviews where students contact practitioners and obtain face-to-face feedback about their career interests, training requirements and so on.

Events and activities are emailed out to students in ENVR 3900 throughout the term. **Only your University email account will be used. Ensure you frequently monitor for these from Jo and myself.**

Registration fees are offset by the Cooperative Education Option. Often, the program is able to pay full registration fees but this may vary depending on the number of students attending. Note - If there is an expense associated with your registration and you cannot attend, you **MUST** notify the Coop Office as soon as possible so that we can attempt to find an alternate student or cancel your registration.

You are required to provide a summary of your activities within your professional portfolio/LinkedIn at the end of the academic term. The summary should highlight the knowledge you acquired from participation in the event and/or specific skills acquired. This will be a useful reference to you in the future when you are asked to explain your experiences and current knowledge while participating in interviews and other networking events.

MEIA Coop Career Expo Winter, 2018

Everyone in ENVR 3900 has the opportunity to assist in delivering the 9th Annual Manitoba Environmental Industries Association Career Expo hosted by the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association, Cooperative Education Option and the C.H.R. Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources. It is an ambitious project and therefore we need everyone to assist in the day of the event. Details to follow.

Environmental Professional Organizations – A component of networking and course participation marks may include your work and involvement with an organization. There are a number to consider and only a few are highlighted here:

- A: Manitoba Environmental Industries Student Chapter** – <https://www.meia.mb.ca>
Relevant for students in Environmental Sciences (resource based focus areas) and Environmental Studies
- B: Manitoba Chapter, The Wildlife Society** – <http://www.tws-mb.com/>
Relevant for students considering focus areas in biodiversity and conservation, geomatics, and ecosystem management.
- C: Canadian Water Resources Association** - http://www.cbj.ca/canadian_water_resources_association_cwra/
- D: UofM Ducks Unlimited Wetlanders Association** - <http://www.ducks.ca/stories/rescue-our-wetlands/the-university-of-manitoba-wetlanders/>

E. Canadian Meteorological and Oceanography Society – Atmospheric Science students should become members and also join the Weather Club offered at UofM.

F: Canada Green Building Council

(<http://www.cagbc.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Chapters/Manitoba/Membership/default.htm>)

If you would like to be reimbursed for your membership fee, you MUST demonstrate that you have been active in the organization through volunteering, attendance at conferences/workshops, seminar attendance etc. Use the form available on UM Learn to have your attendance recorded by the registration representative.

III. Professional Mock Interview

Students will have opportunity to participate in a mock interview in which you will receive constructive feedback about your strengths in interview and areas where you can make improvements. A panel of two or more professionals will ask key questions that pertain to past experience, skill assessment, project management, and interpersonal skills that form the basis of evaluation and feedback. The interview will be conducted in a similar style to a formal “real” interview so students should prepare by reviewing a mock job description, dress accordingly and prepare their resume as they would be expected to do in reality.

Students will be given the opportunity to pick a job posting from several provided in key environmental sectors involving ecological monitoring, corporate sustainability, environmental communication, natural resource management, environmental toxicology, etc. These postings will be available in the Fall term. Students will access the Doodle poll to schedule their interview date and time.

New this year, students will receive a score out of 10 and ranked according to overall preparedness. You need to research mock employers; prepare your resume and cover letter to reflect the job and be obviously prepared for the interview. You should look and dress the part as well.

IV. Professional Informational Interview

Students are required to conduct at least two informational interviews targeting representatives in research, government, industry, and/or ENGOs who can speak to the aspects of current trends and challenges in the profession, specific training and wisdom s/he can share in building your network, skills and overall preparedness to enter the career upon graduation. Your “go-to” academic advisor or past employer will not suffice for this exercise. You are expected to research and connect with new professionals whom you’ve not crossed paths with in previous years.

Students are required to provide a minimum one-page summary at the end of the term describing each of the interviews and overall outcomes for their individual professional development.

V. Employer (Elevator) Pitch

Last year you had opportunity to engage in peer mentorship with a senior Coop student when you provided your elevator pitch and this year is your turn! Students in ENVR 2900 will be developing a 30 second elevator pitch (maximum length 40 seconds). You will be evaluating these students but also making recommendations to them at the conclusion of their presentation. Through this process, you’ll be able to apply what you like to your own marketing abilities.

The idea of the employer (elevator) pitch is to have a short pre-prepared speech that explains who you are, your career aspirations and your accomplishments that you could essentially deliver in a 20-30 second time span (the length of time of an elevator ride). It actually requires tremendous thought about what you’d want to share while ensuring it is memorable and succinct.

The development of an effective pitch means that you need to reflect on your experiences and accomplishments, your goals and what makes you unique. Essentially you'll need to perform a self-evaluation and find effective communication approaches in relaying this information.

Check out the following to refresh your memory: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6U9OGpvV78>

Elevator pitches will take place in February and March 2020. ENVR 3900 students must attend pitches for students in relevant focus area/streams.

VI. National Occupation Standards (NOS) and Professional Certification

Professional certification is becoming increasingly sought after by environmental sectors. Through professional certification, graduates and industry professionals:

- establish credibility at a national level
- recognize and verify environmental skills and knowledge
- enhance marketability and mobility
- gain access to a growing network of environmental practitioners

To obtain certification upon graduation, you must formally submit an application to a certifying body. For environment professions in environmental science, environmental studies and physical geography, this certification often comes from the Canadian Environmental Careers Approvals Board (CECAB; <http://www.cecab.org/public/default.aspx>), and/or The Wildlife Society (<http://wildlife.org/learn/professional-development-certification/certification-programs/>). Successful applicants are awarded credentials including the Environmental Professional (EP), and Associate Wildlife Biologist (AWB).

Understanding the requirements for NOS and certification can be challenging. In support of this, we will be hosting two workshops introducing the importance of certification, presenting wide ranging certification formats including CECAB self evaluation as well as The Wildlife Society academic review. Students will become familiar with certification options and learn more about the standards or professional requirements that build the structure of the program. Considerable time will be spent in reviewing the steps in the certification process and providing opportunity for students to complete the application during the workshop.

Undertaking certification also provides insight into the thematic areas of competencies and their rankings by employers and managers. This helps to structure marketing tools such as resumes, portfolios, business profiles and business cards.

Workshop Dates – TBA (Winter 2020)

Wildlife Professional Certification Workshop

Environmental Professional Certification Workshop