NJIT New Jersey Institute of Technology

THE COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND LIBERAL ARTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

EM 631-851 Legal Aspects in Environmental Engineering

Fall 2025

EM 631-851, F 2025, Mode: asynchronous, online Newark,
Syllabus and Welcome letter below
Legal Aspects in Environmental Engineering, EM 631-851
Instructor. MP Bonchonsky, NJIT, adjunct to Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Dept through which this course is offered, and University Lecturer to Chemistry and Environmental Science Department.

Office: Rm. Tiernan Hall 365; Course Modality: This course is being presented asynchronously on NJIT's Canvas system; lectures are found through a link shown on Canvas for each week's entry; email contact through Canvas or michael.p.bonchonsky@njit.edu or bonchons@njit.edu

Required: Text: Bell, C. L., et al. (2025). *Environmental Law Handbook* (25th ed.). Hart Publishing (current edition: 25th edition, 2025 available in the NJIT bookstore; order online from NJIT by going to bkstr@njit.edu, or from other vendors). If you can't get the current ed. 25th, the 24th or recent earlier ed.'s will suffice.

NJIT Academic Integrity Code: All Students should be aware that the Department takes the University Code on Academic Integrity at NJIT very seriously and enforces it strictly. This means that there must not be any forms of plagiarism, i.e., copying of homework, class projects, or lab assignments, or any form of cheating in quizzes and exams. Under the University Code on Academic Integrity, students are obligated to report any such activities to the Instructor. Students are asked to practice extra care and attention in regard to academic honesty, with the understanding that all cases of plagiarism, cheating, multiple submission, and unauthorized collaboration are subject to penalty. Students must properly cite and attribute all sources used for papers and assignments. Students may not collaborate on exams or assignments, directly or through virtual consultation, unless the instructor gives specific permission to do so. Posting an exam, assignment, or answers to them on an online forum (before, during, or after the due date), in addition to consulting posted materials, constitutes a violation of the university's Honesty policy. Likewise, unauthorized use of live assistance websites, including seeking "expert" help for specific questions during an exam, can be construed as a violation of the honesty policy. All students should be familiar with the NJIT Academic Integrity Code

Academic integrity: Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu

Dear Students,
This semester we will witness the vigorous policy debates found in the highly charged atmosphere of an evolving Presidential regime. The current federal EPA Administrator, Lee Zeldin (the 17th administrator) is a recently named appointee who will no doubt

examine and assist in the formulation of the many developing environmental policies of the current administration. The USEPA as a part of the federal government executive branch has long been a driving force in the execution and development of environmental regulation. The EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin is a Long Island, NY Republican politician chosen now to this important post to represent the current administration. As a former technical civil servant at EPA myself, I always hope for the best from a leadership team as the current administration makes its imprint on EPA policies and programs. There is plenty of room, too, for improvement. As the tide of public attention has risen on global environmental matters, changes to address this have not been equally evident in federal policies in recent years. In this course, we will watch for upcoming rules and policy changes, and we will examine a wide range of environmental law and associated rules and regulations. We will track such changes as they may arise this semester and hope for continuing environmentally protective policies and laws as the current administration gears up.

Many regulations and laws over time, however, have forged a complex system of environmental rules that remain stable and today regulates industrial and other private and public actions that affect the environment. We will review these rules from the vantage point of the practicing technical environmental engineer and scientist. You will become familiar with the background and derivation of these laws as well as the major operational features such as environmental permits and enforcement. We will analyze several major environmental cases that give definition to the key features of these laws. Each class will direct itself to the practical application of these laws from the point of view of a practicing environmental scientist and engineer. I have worked as a regulator (USEPA) for 11 years and as an environmental consultant to industry. When I left the EPA I served as the acting enforcement director, and Deputy Director, Region II, in New York. I look forward to sharing my experiences with you and exploring many current and historical environmental issues, particularly as issues heat up in the developing political changes at the national level.

Class Syllabus:

Instructor: Michael P. Bonchonsky
Location: on line through NJIT's Canvas system
http://Canvas.njit.edu
lectures downloadable at the link for each week's material on Canvas
Office: Tiernan 365; instructor meet ups through zoom/ webex by appt., just email for instructions.
Telephone: cell 908-692-3477
E-mail: bonchons@njit.edu

Office Hours: zoom by appointment or other as you may request

I. Description:

This course covers the legal aspects of environmental engineering and science and reviews the major features and principles of modern environmental law. Topics include as an example the major features of the Clean Water Act and related programs for protecting the water environment. In a similar manner, each of the major environmental laws will be reviewed and synthesized (see syllabus topics below.) Primarily for technical students. Credit hours: 3

II. Required Reading

Students in this course must obtain the following materials from the NJIT bookstore or through any of the commercial on-line dealers.

Required: Text: Bell, C. L., et al. (2025). *Environmental Law Handbook* (25th ed.). Hart Publishing
(current edition: 25th edition, 2025 available in the NJIT bookstore; order online from NJIT by going to bkstr@njit.edu, or from other vendors). If you can't get the current ed. 25th, the 24th or recent earlier ed.'s will suffice.

One of two books are also required reading from which you may choose: "A Civil Action" (by Jonathan Harr) or "Silent Spring" (by Rachel Carson).
Weekly Lectures (audio track and ppts) are to be downloaded from link on Canvas (for each week's material)

Each week a chapter pertaining to the area of environmental law presented is to be read. The assigned chapter is designed to give you background knowledge needed to understand the subject matter covered in the weekly lecture found on Canvas and (the PPts) also posted directly on Canvas. The chapter for each topic should be read prior to the lecture. The more you are able to study these the better prepared you will be to understand and consider the information in the lectures.
I will supplement the readings with postings and journal articles that will be available on Canvas.
You must also read one of the two books identified (even if you do not choose the optional writing assignment) and be prepared to answer questions on it in the Final.
"Silent Spring," R. Carson or "A Civil Action", J Harr.

III. Important Notices

1. Students enrolled in this course are forewarned that the consequences of plagiarism or academic misconduct of any kind are severe. Violations will be handled in accordance with the rules outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. If you are unfamiliar with these procedures, you should consult the appropriate section of this governing manual.
2. Please be sure to log into Canvas each week, listen to a lecture, check for assigned readings, and participate in the weekly discussion forum. From my end of Canvas, reports indicate to me when you enter and for how long at all times, so be apprised.
3. All quizzes and exams are closed book, closed notes, no aids**.**

You are required to use Respondus Lockdown Browser for each on-line test:

Using Respondus LockDown Browser and a Webcam for Online Exams

Respondus LockDown Browser is a locked browser for taking exams in Canvas. It prevents you from printing, copying, going to another URL, or accessing other applications during a test. If a Canvas quiz requires that LockDown Browser be used, you will not be able to take the assessment or quiz with a standard web browser. You may be required to use LockDown Browser with a webcam (Respondus Monitor), which will record you during an online exam.

This course requires the use of Respondus LockDown Browser and/or Respondus Monitor with a webcam for the midterm and final online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Watch this short video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature. A student Quick Start Guide (PDF) is also available.

a) Download and install LockDown Browser from this link:
http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=264548414

b) Once your download has finished, locate the "LockDown Browser" shortcut on the desktop and double-click it. (For Mac users, launch "LockDown Browser" from the Applications folder.)

c) You will be brought to the Canvas login page within the LockDown Browser, click "Login with your UCID" to log in with your NJIT UCID and password and then click Login.

d) Under “My courses”, click on the course (EM 631 in this case) in which you must take the exam that requires the LockDown Browser.

e) After you enter the course, find the exam and click on it.

f) A confirmation prompt will appear, click the “Start attempt” button. Once a quiz has been started with LockDown Browser, you cannot exit until the Submit all and finish button is clicked.

g) If you are required to use a webcam (Respondus Monitor), you will be prompted to complete a Webcam Check and other Startup Sequence steps.

4. Final grades are not subject to post-semester adjustment–with the exception of a grading error. Under no circumstances will students be given the opportunity to complete extra-credit papers or other assignments to bolster their final grades.
5. Taking an online course at NJIT
This is an online course and all course work, lectures, and projects can be completed online in the Learning Management System, Canvas. Students are expected to use Canvas to interact with course content and engage with their classmates. Each week will include designated topics as shown on Canvas with an assignment per topic (usually entry into discussion forum) due every Sunday by midnight or as set on Canvas.. For more information, see FAQs for Online Courses at NJIT.
6. Etiquette
Throughout this course, students are expected to be courteous of classmates by being a polite, active participant. Students should respond to discussion forum assignments in a timely manner, so classmates have adequate time to respond to your post. Respect opinions, even those that differ from your own and avoid using profanity or offensive language.

IV. Evaluation : scoring assessment

A 90-100	C+ 75-79	F <60
B+ 85-89	C 70-74	
B 80-84	D 60-69	

The evaluation of student performance in this course is based on the following components:
Note: **Exams will be on-line (on Canvas) on dates as shown on Canvas (any changes check Canvas, Canvas governs) This semester: Quiz: Oct 5, Nov 16; Midterm: Oct 25, 26, see Canvas; Final: Dec 14, see Canvas for all dates.**

Key dates for F 2025 see Canvas for any change; Canvas controls		
First class	Sept 2, 2025	Read Chapter One, as assigned on Canvas. All Assignments as shown on Canvas
Quizzes	Oct 5, Nov 16, 2025	Material covered in first 4 wks for Q1 and for Q2 the 3 weeks after Midterm
Midterm	Oct 25, 26 2025	Material covered in first 7 weeks
Final	Dec 14, 2025	Exam date/week as shown on Canvas

1. Midterm examination (30%): There will be a midterm exam comprised of multi choice questions and short essays. This exam will be based on course lectures, discussion sessions, and assigned readings.
2. Quizzes (20%): The review questions due at the end of the second Clean Water Act lecture must be completed and SUBMITTED on canvas for grading (this is the only set of Review Q's that must be submitted and must be submitted for grading as a take home quiz; all other review questions are for your review purposes each week). The Q2 is a normal online closed book quiz.
2. Participation: 10% based on participation and responsiveness on Canvas, eg, logging on each week, posting and responding to discussion topics, etc.
3. Final examination (40%): There will be a final exam conducted at the end of semester.. The format of the final exam will be the same as the midterm exam; it will be based only on course material covered during the second half of the semester. MidT and Final are closed book no notes, with Respondus Monitor
4. You may select an optional writing assignment. If optional writing assignment is chosen three points extra credit may be achieved based on the quality of the submission. If you choose the optional paper: You are to prepare and submit via email or Canvas a five page double space paper (12 pt font) to include a brief summary and full discussion of how environmental change was induced by either of the two books assigned for the semester: "Silent Spring," Rachel Carson or "A Civil Action", Jonathan Harr. You must use researched references (at least five); peer reviewed sources must be emphasized. Due three weeks before the final. Reminder will be sent.
Note: You must also read one of these two books identified (even if you do not choose the optional writing assignment) and be prepared to answer questions on it in the Final.

Note: Class "participation": Students are expected to check in to Canvas to receive review questions and summaries each week (not required for submission [except for the one on Water law as shown on Canvas]), but you must work on these each week to succeed in the course. Discussion items must be posted each week on Canvas; such regular postings are required and comprise part of your grade as noted above. You must participate by posting regular comments on Canvas discussion forums to receive participation points.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
Chemistry Tutoring Center: Located in the Central King Building, Lower Level, Rm. G12. Hours of operation are Monday – Friday 10:00 am - 6:00 pm. For further information please click contact Chemical Tutoring Center.
Accommodation of Disabilities: Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS formerly known as Disability Support Services) offers long term and temporary accommodations for undergraduate, graduate and visiting students at NJIT.
If you are in need of accommodations due to a disability, please contact Chantonette Lyles, Associate Director at the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services at 973-596-5417 or via email at lyles@njit.edu. The office is located in Fenster Hall Room 260. A Letter of Accommodation Eligibility from the Office of Accessibility Resources Services office authorizing your accommodations will be required. For further information regarding self-identification, the submission of medical documentation and additional support services provided please visit the Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) website at:
http://www5.njit.edu/studentsuccess/disability-support -services/

VI. Course Outline; (see Canvas for any adjustments and all governing dates)

Lectures available for download from NJIT's Canvas site (link for each week's material and dates provided on Canvas). We will use Canvas as the central communication forum (check Canvas weekly, email to me via Canvas or at bonchons@njit.edu).
The downloaded lectures each week progress through the subject matter as follows and as shown weekly on the class Canvas site:

Course Outline:

Intro: the nature of environmental rules and regulations
The History of Environmental Rules
Clean Water Act: water permits, effluent guidelines
CWA Continued: nonpoint source, spill prevention
Clean Air Act
Safe Drinking Water Act
National Environmental Policy Act
Midterm TBD on-line at midpoint shown on Canvas website
Toxic Substances Control Act
Hazardous Waste Law: introduction and Resource Conservations and Recovery Act (RCRA, HSWA)
Superfund (Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liablility Act, CERCLA, amended as SARA)
Underground Storage Tank Rules
Occupational Safety and Health Act
Sampling and Compliance

VII. Learning Outcomes:

This is a survey course of major environmental rules and regulations, emphasizing the technical limits and standards of each. Each of the major federal environmental statutes and rules will be examined as identified above. Learners will be able to identify, recognize and analyze the major provisions of these areas of environmental rules, and will understand and be able to demonstrate practical applications as scientists and engineers, examples of which are shown below:

General Environmental law: Compare statutory law with common law, Describe the development and roots of environmental law.

Clean Water Act: Compare modern provisions and objectives (CWA) with historic goals for clean water, Understand major provisions (CWA); Relate current water conditions to modern regulatory requirements; Design a water discharge permit; Compare ambient and effluent limits; Apply watershed management approaches to the control of water pollution.

Clean Air Act: Analyze major provisions and show evolution of regulatory controls; Apply CAA to modern issues: global climate change, acid rain, Know major provisions (CAA); Predict trends in ambient levels of each criteria pollutant; Understand the role of secondary pollutant controls in human society.

Safe Drinking Water Act: Identify health implications of and basis for the regulation of major parameters controlled; Identify changes in potable water treatment resulting from regulatory provisions; Know the technical system of selecting (by regulatory agency) parameters for control; Compare the roles of the levels of government involved in drinking water controls.

Hazardous Waste regulation, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and CERCLA Superfund program: Apply the legal definition of hazardous waste and hazardous materials, compare; Apply the major provisions to an industrial manufacturing facility; Describe the required major features of remediation of a historically contaminated industrial site.

Final and midterm dates are announced on Canvas (as shown). **Both will be held online on a range of dates generally on a weekend (midway for Midterm) and around final exam week for Final as designated on Canvas and proctored by NJIT by use of Respondus monitor and lockdown browser.**
Please note that you need to follow the syllabus (above) each week through the lectures (downloading and listening to Canvas posted lectures), read the associated textbook chapter (e.g., water law lecture connects with water law chapter, etc.); such reading assignments are required and will strengthen your understanding of the lecture material. There will be quizzes (2), mid semester test and a final exam, and a current book reading from which you may choose one, "A Civil Action" (by Jonathan Harr) or "Silent Spring" (by Rachel Carson) which may be subject to a question on the final. I will from time to time provide additional outline type material and review questions to help you focus on critical areas. Communicate questions to me at any time via email (use primarily Canvas email). I look forward to working with you as you join me in examining our system of environmental rules and regulations.

Fall 2025 academic calendar

Sept	1	Labor Day. University Closed
Sept	2	First Day of Classes
Sept	8	Last Day to Add/Drop a Class
Sept	8	Last Day for 100% Refund, Full or Partial Withdrawal
Sept	9	W Grades Posted for Course Withdrawals
Sept	15	Last Day for 90% Refund, Full or Partial Withdrawal - No Refund for Partial Withdrawa
Sept	29	Last Day for 50% Refund, Full Withdrawal
Oct	2	Wellness Day
Oct	20	Last Day for 25% Refund, Full Withdrawal
Nov	10	Last Day to Withdraw from Classes
Nov	25	Thursday Classes Meet
Nov	26	Friday Classes Meet
Nov	27	Thanksgiving Recess Begins. No Classes
Nov	30	Thanksgiving Recess Ends
Dec	11	Last Day of Classes