Chemistry of the Environment
JOHN ABBOTT COLLEGE

Discipline:	Chemistry	Semester:	Fall 2015
Course Code:	202 -DDN-05	Instructor:	
Competency Code:	00UV	Office:	
Ponderation:	3-2-3	Tel:	
Credits:	2.67	Office Hours:	
Prerequisites:	202-NYB-05 & 202-NYA-05 (Chemistry)		
Lectures:			
Labs:			

B: Introduction

Chemistry of the Environment (for science students) is an option course in the science program. It is specifically designed to partially fulfill the requirements of objective 00UV, and is normally taken by science students after they have completed at least two semesters of the program.

This course is designed to apply basic chemical knowledge to the understanding of certain environmental problems, and to encourage students to participate in seeking solutions to these problems. Over the past few decades, environmental contaminants due to human activities have been shown to negatively affect human societies and ecosystems. A related concern is the overuse and depletion of finite natural resources. Awareness of these issues is now widespread. Even as we set out to study how we are altering the environment, we must understand the state of the undisturbed environment which precedes these alterations.

This course explores a number of the current issues in environmental studies in which chemistry and chemical compounds play an important part. Drawing on the procedures and methods of chemistry, physics and mathematics, students will assess the effect of chemical contaminants on environmental and biological systems.

This course can contribute to the Environmental Studies certificate. For more information, talk to the teacher or contact the certificate coordinator at envirostudies@johnabbott.qc.ca

Comprehensive Assessment and Integration in the Science Program

The Ministry of Education requires every student to pass a program comprehensive assessment and a program integrating activity (Exit Profile Competency 14: "to apply what has been learned to new situations" and Ministry objective 00UU: "to apply acquired knowledge to one or more subjects in the sciences"). The Ministry introduced these requirements because it recognized the importance of connecting the various components within each program.

The various competencies to be addressed in the Science Program are outlined in the outcomes and standards of the Science Program Exit Profile and are listed below. They are divided into two groups: those competencies that are taught and assessed in virtually every course in the program, and those that will be the primary focus of the option courses.

The following competencies are taught and assessed in most courses of the program:

3. To apply the scientific method.
4. To apply a systematic approach to problem solving.
5. To use appropriate data processing techniques.
6. To reason with rigour, i.e., with precision.
8. To learn in an autonomous manner.
13. To display attitudes and behavior compatible with the scientific spirit and method.
14. To apply what has been learned to new situations.

The following competencies will be the special focus of the option courses of the program:

7. To communicate effectively.
9. To work as a member of a team.
10. To recognize the links between science, technology and the evolution of society.
11. To develop a personal system of values.
12. To put into context the emergence and development of scientific concepts.

Rather than impose a major exam or paper at the end of the Science Program, or requiring a single course to fulfill these requirements, John Abbott College has integrated the fulfillment of these requirements into the option courses taken late in the program.

Some option courses in the Science program at JAC, including 202-DDN-05, offer the opportunity to complete the Comprehensive Assessment. Passing the Comprehensive Assessment in any one of these courses will fulfill the CA requirements for obtaining a Science D. E. C. at JAC.

C: Course Objectives

OBJECTIVES **STANDARDS**

Statement of the Competency:

To explore in a systematic manner a number of current issues in environmental chemistry.(00UV)

General Performance Criteria:

- Appropriate choice of concepts, laws and principles
- Rigorous application of the concepts, laws and principles
- Appropriate use of terminology
- Adequate mathematical or graphical representation
- Coherence, rigour and justification of the problem-solving methods
- Respect for the scientific method and experimental protocol
- Justification of the method
- Critique of the credibility of the results
- Use of an interdisciplinary approach (00UU)

Elements of the Competency:

1. To apply the laws and principles of natural sciences to the study of the air, water and soil environment and their pollution.

2. To apply scientific procedures and methods to the resolution of some environmental problems.

3. To apply experimental techniques of the natural sciences to analyse environmental samples.

4. To undertake an interdisciplinary project that integrates current learning and which demonstrates competence in three specific goals of the exit profile at the advanced level (00UU).

Specific Performance Criteria:

Specific performance criteria for each of the elements of the competency are shown below along with the corresponding **Intermediate Learning Objectives.** *For the items in the list of learning objectives it is understood that each is preceded by:*

'The student is expected to .....'

D: Evaluation Plan

Assessment	Ponderation*	Elements of the Competency
Unit Test I	8.33%	1, 2
Unit Test II	8.33%	1, 2
Unit Test III	8.33%	1, 2
Final Exam	25%	1, 2, 3
Laboratory work	20%	3
Comprehensive Assessment Project	15 %	4
Quizzes and assignments	15%	1, 2

*Base ponderation. Your instructor will let you know ahead of time what each individual laboratory experiment, quiz and assignments is worth.

Tentative test dates are October 8, November 12 and December 3

Please Note:

- A student may drop the lowest unit test mark, if it is lower than the final exam mark, so that the remaining unit tests are worth 16% of the final grade, and the final exam is worth 34% of the final grade. This is not available for a student assigned a grade of zero on a unit test because of cheating.
- To pass the laboratory portion of the course, a minimum of 60% of the total laboratory grade must be obtained. Failing this, a laboratory grade of zero will be given and a maximum grade of 55% will be allowed for the course.
- If a student passes the laboratory portion of the course, a grade of 60% or more on the final exam will guarantee a pass in the course.

E: Course Content

Tentative number of classes for each section is indicated in square brackets

1. The Global Environment and the Tools of Environmental Chemistry [4]

1.1 Environmental compartments	1.1.1 Describe and link components (both abiotic and biotic) of the global environment
1.2 Biogeochemical cycles	1.2.1 Explain the environmental cycling of selected elements .
1.3 Sampling	1.3.1 Calculate basic statistical descriptors of environmental quantities 1.3.2 Discuss and appreciate the limitations of a given environmental sampling protocol
1.4 Modelling and Fermi estimation	1.4.1 Indentify the components in an environmental model and their interactions 1.4.2 Discuss the strengths and limitations of environmental modelling as a decision-making tool 1.4.3 Determine the data needed to calculate environmentally relevant quantities, and articulate a strategy to perform the calculation.

2. Radioactive materials [2]

2.1 Nuclear processes	2.1.1 Identify, contrast and write different types of nuclear reactions 2.1.2 Describe and contrast different types of radiation and their effects. 2.1.3 Understand how the isotopic composition of materials may be used to study environmental processes.
5.2 Radioactive materials	2.2.1 Describe the main types and sources of nuclear waste 2.2.2 Describe and discuss major nuclear accidents 2.2.3 Assess and discuss the risks and benefits of the use of nuclear materials

3. The Atmosphere; Air pollution [7]

3.1 Atmospheric properties and composition	3.1.1 Describe the vertical structure and chemical composition of the atmosphere 3.1.2 Appreciate the role of free radicals in atmospheric processes
3.2 Pollutants resulting from combustion; smog	3.2.1 Describe the sources of carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and tropospheric (ground level) ozone (O_3) 3.2.2 Explain the basic chemical reactions involved in photochemical smog formation 3.2.3 Discuss the health effects of CO, NO_x, VOCs, and O_3 3.2.4 Describe measures to control CO, NO_x, VOC pollution
3.3 Stratospheric ozone depletion	3.3.1 Identify the compounds responsible for stratospheric ozone depletion 3.3.2 Describe the reactions which destroy stratospheric ozone 3.3.3 Discuss the consequences of stratospheric ozone depletion 3.3.4 Discuss the control and replacement of ozone-depleting compounds
3.4 Acid deposition	3.4.1 Describe the sources of acidifying pollutants 3.4.2 Discuss the effects of acid rain on aquatic life, vegetation, soil, and materials 3.4.3 Explain the buffering of natural waters and understand how buffering influences the pH of natural waters
3.5 Climate change	3.5.1 Describe what climate is 3.5.2 Explain what the greenhouse effect is 3.5.3 Describe the sources and relative importance of major greenhouse gases 3.5.4 Discuss how human activity is causing climate change and what its consequences will be 3.5.5 Describe what actions may be taken to mitigate or respond to human-induced climate change

4. The Hydrosphere and Water Pollution [7]

4.1 Composition of natural waters	4.1.1 Compare and contrast the composition of fresh and sea water. 4.1.2 Distinguish between hard and soft water 4.1.3 Describe the quality and treatment of drinking water. 4.1.4 Describe the treatment of waste water
4.2 Redox chemistry of natural waters; (de)oxygenation and eutrophication	4.2.1 Define the oxic status of natural and polluted waters 4.2.2 Explain and predict how the oxic status of waters influences the oxidation state of elements in the environment. 4.2.3 Describe and calculate biological oxygen demand 4.2.4 Identify and describe the chemicals and processes responsible for oxygen depletion in aquatic environments.
4.3 Toxic metals and persistent organic pollutants	4.3.1 Describe the sources, ecosystem effects and health effects of selected transition metals in aquatic systems and in humans. 4.3.2 Describe and draw the structures of selected persistent organic pollutants (POPs) 4.3.3 Describe the sources and health effects of selected POPs 4.3.4 Explain why toxic metals and POPs concentrate in certain compartments of the environment and the human body

5. Soil- composition, pollution and depletion [3]

5.1 Description of soils	5.1.1 Compare and describe the physical nature and composition of selected soils, including horizons and elemental/nutrient composition 5.1.2 Identify the elements, compounds and factors required for, or detrimental to, plant growth
5.2 Soil depletion and pollution	5.2.1 Discuss the effects of soil pollution and nutrient depletion on agriculture

6. Sustainability and Green Chemistry [2]

6.1 Sustainability and Life Cycle Analysis	6.1.1 Define Sustainability 6.1.2 Assess on what grounds a process or activity might be considered sustainable 6.1.3 Identify and explain the stages in a product's life cycle
6.2 Green Chemistry	6.2.1 Describe the principles of green chemistry 6.2.2 Contrast percentage yield and atom economy as approaches for evaluating a synthetic process 6.2.3 Calculate the atom economy of a chemical reaction

F: Required Texts and Course Costs

There is no formal text book for this course. All necessary notes, worksheets and handouts will either be handed out in class or made available on Omnivox (Léa). The student will be responsible for the printing of course materials (class and laboratory) if necessary (use of the digital versions is encouraged). Other useful resources are listed in Section G (Bibliography)

Other Course Costs

Course costs are mainly associated with the laboratory sessions.

1. *Safety glasses must be worn at all times in the laboratory*. Good quality safety glasses are available from the bookstore or from most hardware stores (approx. $10). Normal prescription glasses may be worn, but *for safety reasons, the use of contact lenses is not permitted*.
2. A sturdy cotton lab coat is required (approx. $20).
3. A laboratory notebook (approx. $5) is required. Instructions concerning this notebook will be given by the instructor.

G: Bibliography

While there is no specific textbook for this course, the following books are likely to be helpful, and are available either in the JAC library, on loan from the instructor, or on the web. The three bulleted titles are comprehensive environmental chemistry texts; the others deal with more specific topics. You are also encouraged to share other sources (print or web-based) which you may have encountered and found helpful.

● Baird, C., Cann, M., *Environmental Chemistry*, 5th ed., WH Freeman, New York, 2012, 776 pp.

● Spiro, Thomas G., Purvis-Roberts, Kathleen L., Stigliani, William.M. *Chemistry of the Environment*, 3rd ed, Univesity Science Books, 615 pp.*

● VanLoon, G. W., Duffy, S.J., *Environmental Chemistry: a global perspective*, 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, 2011, 545 pp.

Andrews, J.E., Brimblecombe, P., Jickells, T.D., Liss P.S., Reid, B., *An Introduction to Environmental Chemistry*, 2nd ed, Blackwell Science, Oxford, 2004, 296 pages. Available on the web: bit.ly/1NECpfx

Berner, E.K., Berber, R.A., *Global Environment- Water, Air and Geochemical Cycles*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1996, 376 pp.*

Harte, J., *Consider a Spherical Cow- A course in Environmental Problem Solving*, Univesity Science Books, Mill Valley, CA, 283 pp.*

Hobbs , P. V., *Introduction to Atmospheric Chemistry*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, 262 pages.

Lancaster, M., *Green chemistry: an introductory text*, RSC Publishing, Cambridge, 2010, 340 pages.*

Libes, S. M, *An Introduction to Marine Biogeochemistry*, John Wiley, New York, 1992, 734 pp.

Houghton, J., *Global Warming-The Complete Briefing*, 4th ed., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009, 438 pp.**

White, R., *Climate Change in Canada*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, 174 pp.*

*Available at the JAC Library. **3rd edition available at the JAC library

The MacDonald campus (McGill) library, a five-minute walk from our classroom, is also an excellent resource, especially for soil chemistry.

H: Teaching Methods

The course will be 75 hours, divided into lecture and laboratory periods. There will two 1.5-hour classroom periods per week, for the introduction of new material and practicing of previously learned material. Preparation for upcoming laboratory sessions may also be discussed during lecture time, and we expect to welcome several guest speakers during the term.

There will be one 2-hour laboratory period per week. Laboratory sessions may be used for workshops.

I. Departmental Attendance Policy

a) Regular attendance is expected. If lectures are missed, it is the responsibility of the student to cover the material missed and to be aware of any announcements made concerning assignments, quizzes, tests or changes to the laboratory schedule.
b) Students must attend the laboratory session in which they are officially registered.
c) There will be no make-up tests, quizzes or laboratory periods. If you miss an evaluation session or deadline due to illness, you must notify your instructor as soon as possible. A valid medical note is required to prove absence for a medical reason. If a test is missed for a valid reason, then the final exam mark will be used as a basis for a substitute for the missed test mark.
d) Periodically there will be workshops held during the laboratory period. Attendance is required. Quizzes or assignments may be given during these workshops.
e) **A special note concerning the use of chemicals**: this course uses chemicals as part of its normal teaching practices. If a student has experienced allergic reactions in the past due to any particular chemical or chemicals he or she must inform the instructor. In the event that an allergic reaction is experienced at the college, the student should report to Campus Security immediately (local 5226, 5231, or 9-514-398-7777).
f) **Cell phones and computers may only be used during class for pedagogical purposes.**
g) Students are expected to behave respectfully towards their classmates and teachers. In case of inappropriate behavior a student will be asked to leave the class or the lab session. If an assessment is planned for this session, a mark of zero will be given in that case.

J. College Policies:
Policy No. 7- IPESA, Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement

a) **Changes to Evaluation Plan in Course Outline** (Article 4.3 in IPESA)
Changes to the evaluation plan, during the semester, requires unanimous consent.

b) Mid-Semester Assessment MSA (Article 3.3)
All students will receive an MSA in accordance with College procedures.

c) **Religious Holidays** (Article 3.2)
Students who wish to observe religious holidays must inform their teacher in writing within the first two weeks of the semester of their intent.

d) **Student Rights and Responsibilities** (Article 3.2, item 19, and article 3.3, item 7)
It is the responsibility of students to keep all assessed material returned to them for at least one month in the event of a grade review. (The deadline for a Grade Review is 4 weeks after the start of the next regular semester.)
Students have the right to receive the results of evaluation, for regular day division courses, within two weeks. For evaluations at the end of the semester/course, the results must be given to the student by the grade submission deadline.

e) **Cheating and Plagiarism** (Article 8.1 & 8.2)
Cheating and plagiarism are serious infractions against academic integrity which is highly valued at the College; they are unacceptable at John Abbott College. Students are expected to conduct themselves accordingly and must be responsible for all of their actions.

Cheating
Cheating means any dishonest or deceptive practice relative to examinations, tests, quizzes, lab assignments, research papers or other forms of evaluation tasks. Cheating includes, but is not restricted to, making use of or being in possession of, unauthorized material or devices and/or obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance in writing examinations, papers or any other evaluation task and submitting the same work in more than one course without the teacher's permission. It is incumbent upon the Department through the teacher to ensure students are forewarned about unauthorized material, devices or practices that are not permitted.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It includes the intentional copying or paraphrasing (expressing the ideas of someone else in one's own words), of another person's work or the use of another person's work or ideas without acknowledgement of its source. Plagiarism can be from any source including books, magazines, electronic or photographic media or another student's paper or work.