Connecting Undergraduate Level Economics Courses to GREENR

**Relevant Courses**

**Economics of Waste**
- Students are introduced to the concepts of handling, disposal, and regulation as they relate to waste management. Courses cover topics such as interstate and international waste trade, recycling, and disposal of hazardous and household waste. The goal of courses in waste is to examine how federal, state, and local governments have undertaken the regulation of waste and what the effects of regulation have been on economic efficiency, health, and the environment.

**Environmental and Resource Economics**
- For students who have already applied their economic knowledge to real-world problems, environmental and resource economics courses are the perfect place. These courses look at issues such as nonrenewable resource extraction, property rights, environmental policy through the lens of an economist, applying theory and analysis to better understand and resolve these issues.

**Economics of Development**
- Why are some countries developed and others not? One of the main reasons is access to resources. Courses in Development economics deal heavily in issues that are directly connected to the environment and natural resources. They discuss topics such as malnutrition, poverty, migration of labor, and the relationship between these issues and conflict.

**Experimental Economics**
- What is the best way to incent people to recycle? How do we get multinational corporations to invest in green technology? These are the types of questions experimental economists attempt to answer. Courses are a combination of game theory, market analysis, and behavioral economics. Students learn how to design and test economic and environmental policy using simulations and lab research.

**Major Topics**

**Regulation**
- In almost every economics course there is a unit on regulation. When government enters the free market economists not only debate the merits of the policy but also the positive and negative externalities associated with it.

**Taxing Pollution**
- Economics is a science that believes incentives are the answer to some of the biggest environmental challenges. In economics course students debate plans to tax pollution on the personal and corporate levels.

**Property Rights**
- Property rights are not always as cut and dry as they may seem, especially on environmental issues. For example, who owns water, fish, or the air? Economists are teaching their students to work on more clearly defining property rights.
Three of the most common student assignments

✓ **Policy Analysis Paper**
- Students choose a specific environmental issue, of their choice, to write a brief analysis. The basis of the paper should come from a recent article in a major newspaper/magazine, such as the New York Times or the Wall Street Journal that discusses an environmental issue. The student paper should then elaborate on the following four points: (i) what is the issue, (ii) why is it important, (iii) how economic tools can be applied to analyze the issue, including references to the existing academic literature that discusses this subject, and (iv) what lessons can we learn from the economics analysis (i.e. what are the policy recommendations or what are the new insights for the business world etc.). Papers are expected to be comprehensive and analytical; they should provide a thorough discussion of the economic causes and impacts of the environmental problem under consideration.

✓ **Presentation of Academic Research**
- Students are required to make a presentation to the class of an existing academic paper. Presentations are expected to last between 30-40 minutes. Presentations can be made orally or may incorporate a PowerPoint or handout. As a part of the presentation, students are required to prepare a report (roughly 3 pages) on the paper that they are discussing. The report should summarize and critically review the paper. The critical review is the most important part of the report and should account for roughly two thirds of the total length. Where appropriate, discuss the appropriateness/insightfulness of the model and/or the credibility of the empirical approach. If the paper does not have a model, students may want to discuss what a good model would look like. If the paper is theoretical, students should discuss what a meaningful test of the model would look like.

✓ **Problem Sets, Quizzes, Exams**
- Students enrolled in economics courses can expect to complete a variety of assessments throughout the semester. There are problem sets that cover concepts from readings and course lectures. Quizzes test larger course concepts that are essential to understanding core concepts of the economics discipline. Exams are the capstone assessment for the course in which students are asked to apply basic economic reasoning and analysis relevant scenarios.
How a student would use GREENR to complete these assignments

Features:

Economics courses are some of the most challenging an undergraduate can take. When economics and environmental issues cross, using GREENR can make it easier for students to put them into perspective. First, GREENR explains complex environmental issues in everyday language, which allows students to focus more on the economics and less on comprehending the scenario. GREENR also provides students with assessments of issues from multiple perspectives so that students get the most accurate picture of how people across the globe understand an issue. Finally, GREENR puts the most up to date research in student’s hands so students can understand both the scientific and economic aspects of an issue.
Presenting an academic paper

For undergraduate students one of the biggest challenges they face is being unfamiliar with the research process and the revision process academic papers must undergo. To help undergraduate students work around this GREENR not only has scholarly articles on topics found in the environmental economics course but also easy to understand reference and periodical content. Students can use these more common texts to fully understand the issue and find illuminating examples of how these issues affect communities around the globe.

Preparing students for exams

In many economics courses, students are graded on “a curve,” meaning that students are competing against one another for a set number of top grades. Economics students want every advantage that they can get and GREENR can give it to them. Most exams require a student to show what they know by answering a series of short and long answer essay questions where students apply knowledge from the course to scenarios selected by the instructor. Students can use the case studies found in GREENR to anticipate exam questions and find professional responses.

Resources for the policy/position paper

When students have assignments that require them to take a position on an issue finding the latest research is essential to formulating a strong position. GREENR gives students a look at not only the latest scholarship but suggests relevant conference presentations, reports/overviews and libraries that specialize in controversial research topics. These resources are the perfect complement to GREENR’s in-depth reference content. GREENR also provides students with links to outside pages where they can continue their research, such as websites and blogs from respected environmental organizations and associations.

Organized portals to help students draw conclusions on problem sets

When an instructor assigns a problem set, they want to make sure their student’s understand key concepts and curriculum presented in the previous session. When textbooks do not make sense, students can use the concept portal pages to get a plain English overview of the topic. GREENR is the ideal resource for economics students because it contains portal pages on environmental economics, discounting, cost-benefit analysis, green economy, ecological economics, market mechanisms and more.

Understanding the environmental economics of emerging nations

An emerging nation is a case study in progress. Economics students can take advantage of GREENR’s coverage of emerging nations. GREENR provides premier coverage of developing nations from respected reference sources and news outlets. Students will get analysis of the precise factors that in education, government, and healthcare that play a crucial role in how a state cares for its natural resources and protects its environment.