



YORK UNIVERSITY – FACTS

- Location: northern Toronto but in the centre of the GTA
- 3rd largest university in Canada: 50k students plus 20k staff
- Approaching its 50th birthday (2007)
- Large sprawling campus with modern aesthetics



Faculty of Environmental Studies

- Approximately 800 Students: 400 graduate students (Master's, PhD)
- Mission: Interdisciplinary teaching, learning & researching about natural, built, social and organizational environments
- Unique relationship with Schulich School of Business and Osgoode Hall regarding integration of environmental course content



Environmental Issues at York

- Like any large corporation/institution, York has its share of internal issues impacting the environment
- Waste, air/water pollution, energy, transportation etc.
- 2001 Report on Sustainability initiated by President Marsden
- Tallories Declaration signed by President: a commitment for the university to meet certain environmental standards



ENVS 4442: A course on “Environmental Auditing”

- Open to 3rd/4th year and graduate students
- Course Description: “Focuses on the principles, processes and techniques of environmental auditing and management systems...”
- Course Highlight: requires the students to conduct, in a team setting, an on-campus environmental audit with formal presentation of findings plus writing an audit report



ENVS 4442 – Part I Content

- Defining environmental auditing
- Environmental risk assessment
- ISO 14001
- Environmental legislation, due diligence
- Environmental audit process: letter of engagement, checklists, legal requirements interviewing, field observation, working papers, meetings, report writing



ENVS 4442 – Part 2 Content

- Conducting the audit in teams of 5-6
- Formal presentation of findings: class and university administration
- Writing audit report
- Environmental monitoring
- Occupational health and safety
- Quality



ENVS 4442 – Assessment

- Mid-term examination on environment audit theory (20%)
- Audit: presentation and report (40%)
- Final take home examination on Part 2 of the course (20%)
- Other assignments/participation (20%)
- Issue a certificate of audit completion



Course Benefits

- Students get practical experience: they “do” an actual audit including: conducting interviews, fieldwork, document review, presentation, report writing, teamwork
- Students become stakeholders, i.e., its their university
- York University gets “free” audits



Course Issues

- Not perfect or totally comprehensive
- Course is only 12 weeks, a lot to do
- Students are busy (heavy course load) so want to give 'taste/flavour' of auditing
- Operating in teams is a time consuming and daunting task (75% of York's students are commuters)
- No suitable textbook, only dated ones



Summary

- Key to success: need the support of both Faculty and university administration responsible for environmental issues
- Students get to “do an audit”
- Students are better prepared to enter the workplace
- Provide the basics of health and safety issues in the workplace