

FALL 2025

FIRST YEAR FAQ

If this is your first year at Saint Mary's, welcome to the university and to ENVS 1200 Environmental Sustainability! I hope to make your learning experience as interactive and exciting as possible. This course provides a scientific introduction to environmental problems and their interdisciplinary, evidence-based solutions. We use critical thinking to understand ecological processes and their importance to global sustainability and a healthy planet. The following information is intended to help you succeed in ENVS 1200.

Many students have questions before the start of the course. I will go over the course outline on the first day of class, but if you would like answers before then, please see below for some general information.

Course website

Saint Mary's University uses Brightspace for course websites. The ENVS 1200 Brightspace site will be opened in the first week of September. Plan to check Brightspace regularly throughout the term for essential information, lecture slides and important announcements.

To log into Brightspace, activate your S-number at <https://activate.smu.ca/>. For help, please contact the EIT help desk at hdesk@smu.ca.

Is there a laboratory session?

This is a lecture-only course and there is no lab component.

ENVS 1200

Environmental Sustainability

Professor: Dr. Karen Harper

Do I need to purchase a text book?

Yes, there is a textbook and some additional reading.

Required textbook: J. Withgott, S. Brennan and B. Murck. 2017. **Environment: The Science Behind the Stories**, 3rd Canadian Edition. Pearson Canada.



Braiding Sweetgrass Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants. Milkweed Editions, by R. Wall Kimmerer. 2013. Free online edition: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

Reading is very important to your learning, vocabulary, and overall success in courses. Lectures won't cover all material you'll need to know, and the textbook will be your primary source of information on these topics.

Attending class

The course begins on Wednesday, September 3, 2025. Please plan to attend every class and participate fully in all of the course's learning activities. The textbook and course website will not be a substitute for regular attendance and participation. Likewise, lectures will not be a substitute for textbook reading or material available on Brightspace.

Consult your syllabus regularly to make sure that you do not miss anything. Keep up with weekly lectures and assignments and this practice will help you do well in the course. Enjoy the rest of your summer, and I look forward to seeing you in September!



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