LITERACY OF SCIENCE REVIEW SYLLABUS
ENSC60011

Instructor: LOSR Exam Committee (see below).

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Course Objective: The LOSR examination is a milestone of the Masters program and must be taken by all students during the full semester immediately preceding the semester of their anticipated graduation (example: if you are finishing in 4 semesters, then the LOSR exam is taken in semester 3). The LOSR exam must be taken during the academic year (September through May)* and you must be registered in the LOSR exam course during the semester in which you take the exam**. In addition, the LOSR exam must be completed during the second week of the semester.

Prerequisites: ENSC 60203 Environmental Issues.

Overview: Students will be provided with three questions/topics from which to choose one exam question. Questions will be derived largely from topics presented in ENSC 60203 Environmental Issues. Immediately after the question is presented, the student has 24 hours to conduct research, articulate a thesis statement, and write a 2000-word (minimum) answer. Note: references and bibliography may not be counted toward the total word count of the paper.

The purpose of the LOSR exam is to test the student’s ability to perform rapid research, synthesize data and generate a literate paper on a topic. The exam’s design closely mimics real-world situations where environmental scientists have an extremely limited amount of time to research a topic and provide a clear and concise summary of existing data. The ability to produce a well-organized paper summarizing current literature, creating a thesis for a specific topic and synthesizing an answer to the issue represents a large component of job duties for both environmental professionals and academics alike.

The paper should have these attributes and components:

1. Thesis statement
2. Review of relevant literature summarizing background and history
3. Arguments that support the answer.
4. A “References Consulted” list of at least 15 peer-reviewed or scholarly references, cited in either APA or Chicago style.
5. The appropriate use and parenthetical citation of at least 6 sources from the “References Consulted” list in the body of the text.
6. Use the TCU College of Science and Engineering guidelines for thesis writing for margins, spacing, etc. (Download from http://www.cse.tcu.edu/ThesisDissertation.html)
7. Use a formal, academic prose style suitable for readers with advanced degrees.

LOSR Exam Committee: The exam is administered by a minimum of three and maximum of five full or adjunct professors from the student's advisory committee. For thesis students, your LOSR committee must consist of your thesis committee, and either the ENSC Department Chair, or the ENSC Graduate Advisor. For non-thesis students, your LOSR committee must consist of the ENSC Department Chair, the ENSC Graduate Advisor and up to three additional professors of your choice.
Grading of LOSR Exam:  The LOSR exam is graded using the following scale: A = 90-100 points or B = 80-89 points (F = less than 80 points).

A score of less than 80 points requires a mandatory re-examination with new questions/topics to be scheduled no later than week 6 of the same semester. A score of less than 80 points on the re-examination will result in a mandatory third examination with new questions/topics to be scheduled no later than week 9 of the same semester.

The examination may not be repeated more than twice. A student who does not pass on the third attempt is thereby subject to disqualification from further work as a graduate student in this program. The results of all Masters LOSR examinations must be reported to Dean of Graduate Studies by the end of the semester.

We expect each student to uphold the highest academic standards of honor in accordance with TCU policy. Cheating, plagiarism and collusion will not be tolerated.

Statement on Disability Services at TCU: Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 11. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-7486.

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook) – Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating: Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself;
- Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another’s work without giving credit therefore.
- Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

* Although you may arrange to take LOSR exams during the summer, please know that faculty members have no obligation to serve on summer exam committees.

** If you take the LOSR exam during the summer, you must be registered the semester before or after.
Grading Rubric

Author ___________________  Score Awarded ____________

Examiner ___________________

Length (2000 words)  Word count = __________

Coherency in articulating the thesis statement.

Critical thinking and analytic questions in the argument: organization, quality of evidence, crucial assumptions, terms & jargon defined, uncertainties, contradictions, summation.

Review of background or history: organization, breadth, relevance.

Prose elegance and concision.

Citations

  Number from major professional journals and scholarly books (> 15 required)

  Format and consistency