Syllabus

Phase I Environmental Site Assessments

EAS 44100 & Graduate EAS B3300

Meeting Time/Room: Tuesdays, 6:00–8:30 PM in MR 1128
Semester: Fall 2025 (Final Exams: December 16–22, 2025)
Instructor: Angelo Lampousis, PhD, Lecturer, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
Email: alampousis@ccny.cuny.edu
Office Hours: Before or after class and by appointment
Credits: 3

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to good commercial and customary practices in the U.S. for conducting Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) of commercial or residential properties with respect to hazardous substances and petroleum products. A Phase I ESA is the process for determining the presence of an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into the ground, groundwater, surface water of the property, or into structures on the property.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the purpose and scope of Phase I ESAs.
- Navigate the regulatory framework governing environmental site assessments.
- Identify potential environmental liabilities (RECs, HRECs, CRECs).
- Conduct site research, including historical data and records review.
- Assess and document environmental conditions with appropriate supporting evidence.
- Organize findings into professional reporting suitable for stakeholders.

Required Texts & Resources

- ASTM E1527-21 Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments (provided).
- Additional readings, case studies, and datasets (provided via LMS/handouts).

Grading

- Professional Attendance & Participation (on-time required): 20%
  In-class worksheets, speaker Q&A, short reflections.
- Records & Historical Research Labs (Sanborns, aerials, directories): 20%
- Site Reconnaissance & Interviews—Field Notes + Memo: 10%
- Draft ESA Components (rolling submissions): 20%
  E.g., User-provided info request, records summary, historical sources table, site description.
- Final Draft Phase I ESA + 8–10 min briefing: 30%
  Synthesize semester work into a professionally formatted report.

Late Work

Professional deadlines matter. Unless pre-approved with documentation, late work may be penalized up to one full letter grade per 24 hours.

Attendance & In-Class Work Policy

On-time attendance is required every Tuesday and constitutes a very significant part of your grade. We reserve the right to drop students who miss **more than two lectures**. In the age of AI, most take-home homework is replaced with **in-class, handwritten or paper-based activities** and document analysis; bring a pen and be prepared to work from printed materials. Laptops are welcome only when specified.

Academic Integrity & AI Use

You are responsible for the originality and accuracy of all submissions. Generative AI tools may be used **only when explicitly permitted** for brainstorming or formatting; all technical content (observations, interpretations, regulatory citations) must be your own and properly referenced. Disclose any AI assistance per assignment instructions.

Accessibility

If you need accommodations, contact the instructor and the CCNY campus accessibility office at the start of the term.

TENTATIVE Weekly Schedule (Fall 2025)

Week	Date (Tue)	Topic	Guest
1	**Aug 26**	Introduction & Regulatory Overview (CERCLA, AAI, role of ASTM)	
2	**Sep 2**	ASTM E1527 Phase I ESA Process (scope, definitions, RECs)	
3	**Sep 9**	EPA AAI & ASTM E1527; Intro to Records Research (agencies, portals, FOIA requests)	**Tony Alves**, Senior Account Executive, LightBox
4	**Sep 16**	Records Research (databases, interpretation, data gaps)	
—	**Sep 23**	**No classes scheduled (09/22–09/24).**	
5	**Sep 30**	Historical Research—**Sanborn Maps Workshop** (symbols, change detection)	Ezgi Karayel, Principal, vEKtor consultants
6	**Oct 7**	Historical Research II (aerials, directories, topo; triangulating sources)	Ezgi Karayel**,** Principal, vEKtor consultants
—	**Oct 14**	**Classes follow a Monday schedule; no Tuesday meeting.**	
7	**Oct 21**	**Special Topic**—Energy Careers Workshop (environmental roles & pathways)	Cristina Garcia, CEM, Program Manager, Residential Energy Efficiency & Heating Electrification, ConEd
8	**Oct 28**	NYC SCA Template; Non-Scope Considerations, Limitations, Liability	
9	**Nov 4**	Case Studies—Public Transportation (complex urban sites)	Thomas Abdallah, P.E.**,** VP Design Services; Chief Environmental Engineer, MTA C&D

Week	Date (Tue)	Topic	Guest
10	**Nov 11**	Site Reconnaissance & Interviews (planning, photo logs, limitations)	
11	**Nov 18**	Case Studies—Environmental Consulting (best practices, pitfalls)	Vinicius De Paula, P.E. & Elizabeth Burgess, P.E.**,** LANGAN
12	**Nov 25**	Report Preparation I (organization, evidence, figures, appendices)	
13	**Dec 2**	Report Preparation II (findings, RECs, opinions, data gaps)	
14	**Dec 9**	Report Preparation III (QA/QC, peer review, executive briefings)	
—	**Dec 16–22**	**Final Examination Session**	

Deliverables & Milestones (targeted)

- **Weekly in-class worksheets:** Weeks 1–11
- **Records Research Packet (draft):** due Week 5
- **Historical Sources Table (Sanborn/aerials/directories/topo):** due Week 7
- **Site Recon & Interview Plan + Memo:** due Week 10
- **Report Outline + Figures List:** due Week 12
- **Final Draft (report + briefing):** due Week 14

Professional Formatting & Submissions

- Use the NYC SCA template for tables, figures, citations, and appendices.
- Name files: LastName_FirstName_AssignmentName_v#.docx.
- Figures must include sources and scales; maps must include legends and north arrows.

Communication

All announcements, materials, and submissions will be posted on the LMS. Check email/LMS notifications regularly. Guest-speaker prep questions may be assigned in advance.

Professional Preparation Requirement

Students are expected to submit a current résumé by the **second class session** and maintain a functioning, up-to-date LinkedIn profile throughout the semester. In addition, students are required to join the professional networking group **CUNY Assessors** on LinkedIn to benefit from peer and industry engagement.

Acknowledgements

The **Department of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences** of **The City College of New York** and the instructor Angelo Lampousis gratefully acknowledge the following organizations that have enhanced this course through their generous contributions:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Training Program: Provided support in developing curriculum related to Brownfield sites, giving students critical knowledge for the assessment and revitalization of contaminated properties.

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS): Provided funding for the 40-hour HAZWOPER training, which enables students to receive essential safety and health training for working with hazardous materials.

ASTM International: Provided a substantial discount on its online Phase I Environmental Site Assessment training, which offers students invaluable, industry-standard instruction

LightBox EDR for its generous provision of free access to its suite of environmental databases for use by our students. This resource is vital to our educational mission and will allow students to conduct more in-depth research and learning related to environmental risk assessment.