

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Geography
GEOG 2152G: Geography of Hazards
Winter 2017

Instructor: Mark Moscicki

Lectures: Thu 9:30 am – 12:20 pm
UCC 146

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Office Hours: Thu 12:30 – 2:30 pm
SSC 2219

Overview:

The course is a survey of the methods and models used to understand human responses to hazards. The tradition of hazards research in geography will be reviewed particularly through the lens of social science. The course will examine both natural and technological hazards and the models for understanding human influences on and responses to hazards.

Objectives:

The objectives of this course are to provide students with:

- an introduction to social science theories of hazard responses and case examples of disasters
- recognition of the risks to people and the environment caused by hazardous events
- knowledge of hazard planning and management solutions
- enhanced geographical problem solving skills, map reading abilities, and geographic awareness

Readings:

A list of readings will be posted on the course website.

Assessment:

| <i>Assessment Method</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Value</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Assignments | Weekly | 10% |
| Activities | Weekly | 5% |
| Midterm Exam | Feb 16 | 30% |
| Essay | Mar 23 | 20% |
| Final Exam | TBA | 35% |

The assignments and activities are practical, interactive applications of course content and will be completed during class time. Detailed information about the essay will be provided early in the semester. The midterm exam will cover material studied from Jan 5 through Feb 9. The final exam is heavily weighted toward material studied in the second half of the semester. Exams will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions.

Schedule:

| <i>Lecture</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Topic</i> |
|----------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | Jan 5 | Introduction |
| | | Overview of Hazards |
| 2 | Jan 12 | Disaster and Risk Research |
| | | <i>Assignment 1: Flood Risk Assessment</i> |
| | | <i>Video: Japan Tsunami</i> |
| 3 | Jan 19 | Tsunamis |
| | | <i>Assignment 2: Tsunami Inundation</i> |
| | | Models of Human Response |
| 4 | Jan 26 | Risk and Culture |
| | | <i>Assignment 3: Landslide Risk</i> |
| | | Landslides |
| 5 | Feb 2 | Severe Weather |
| | | <i>Assignment 4: Discussion I</i> |
| 6 | Feb 9 | <i>Video: Hurricane Katrina</i> |
| | | Human-Environment Relations |
| | | <i>Assignment 5: Environmental Change</i> |
| | Feb 16 | Midterm Exam |
| 7 | Mar 2 | Earthquakes |
| | | <i>Assignment 6: Hurricane Tracking</i> |
| 8 | Mar 9 | Volcanoes |
| | | <i>Video: Mt. St. Helens</i> |
| 9 | Mar 16 | Technological Hazards |
| | | <i>Assignment 7: Groundwater Contamination</i> |
| | | Social Unrest |
| 10 | Mar 23 | Meteorite Impacts |
| | | <i>Assignment 8: Discussion II</i> |
| | | <i>Video: Chelyabinsk Meteor</i> |
| 11 | Mar 30 | Snow Avalanches |
| | | <i>Assignment 9: Snowpack Monitoring</i> |
| | | Pandemics |
| 12 | Apr 6 | Wildfires |
| | | <i>Assignment 10: Discussion III</i> |
| | | <i>Video: Firewars</i> |

Accessibility:

The University of Western Ontario is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for everyone studying, visiting and working at the university. Please contact the instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make the course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at ssd@uwo.ca for any specific questions regarding an accommodation.

Accommodation Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed assessments must notify the instructor within 48 hours of the missed assessment. Students must then apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home faculty and provide documentation. For the University of Western Ontario policy on accommodation for medical illness and a downloadable Student Medical Certificate, see this link:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Make-up Exams:

Students with special accommodation will write make-up exams administered by the department on Fridays during a respective period of the semester. To prevent prior disclosure, the content of the make-up exam may differ from the originally scheduled exam.

Academic Integrity:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a scholastic offense at this site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All essays are subject to submission for textual similarity review to the plagiarism detection software Turnitin. All essays submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of essays subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the current licensing agreement between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.

Computer marked multiple choice exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate academic misconduct.

Electronic Devices:

No electronic devices other than calculators will be permitted during examinations.

Mental Health:

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources at the University to assist. Visit this site for more information on mental health resources:

http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/

Support Services:

Registrarial Services: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>

Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>