

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Geography and Environment  
**GEOG 2152G-001: Geography of Hazards**  
Winter 2026

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## 1. Course Information

| Delivery Mode | Day and Time             | Location |
|---------------|--------------------------|----------|
| In-person     | See UWO Course Timetable |          |



| Winter Classes Start | Reading Week | Winter Classes End | Study Day   | Winter Final Exams |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Jan 5                | Feb 14 – 22  | Apr 9              | Apr 10 – 11 | Apr 12 – 30        |

Jan 13: Last day to add a second term half course

Feb 16: Family Day

Mar 30: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

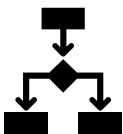
Apr 3: Good Friday



| Course Instructor | Contact Information                                | Office  | Office Hours |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------|
| Mark Moscicki     | <a href="mailto:mmoscic@uwo.ca">mmoscic@uwo.ca</a> | See OWL |              |

## 2. Calendar Description

A survey of the methods and models used to understand human responses to hazards. The course reviews the rich tradition of hazards research in geography, particularly through the lens of social science. The course will include discussion of both natural hazards and technological hazards as examples.



3 lecture hours, 0.5 course weight

Antirequisite: The former GEOG 2152 A/B

Prerequisite: None

### 3. Readings

Readings will be posted on the course website throughout the semester.



### 4. Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course are to provide students with:

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



### 5. Course Format

Attendance at class sessions is expected as assignments and question sets will be completed during class time in the classroom. Selected course material will be posted to [OWL Brightspace](#).

[Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL Brightspace; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#). Using the proper browser is important, especially when using different features integrated with OWL Brightspace.



If students need assistance, support can be found on the [OWL Brightspace Help page](#). Alternatively, students can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They are also available by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Closed captioning is provided on all video clips.

## 6. Schedule

| <i>Lecture</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Topic</i>                                   |
|----------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1              | Jan 8       | Introduction                                   |
|                |             | Overview of Hazards                            |
| 2              | Jan 15      | Disaster and Risk Research                     |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 1: Risk Assessment</i>           |
|                |             | <i>Video: Japan Tsunami</i>                    |
| 3              | Jan 22      | Tsunamis                                       |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 2: Tsunami Inundation</i>        |
|                |             | Models of Human Response                       |
| 4              | Jan 29      | Risk and Culture                               |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 3: Landslide Risk</i>            |
|                |             | Landslides                                     |
| 5              | Feb 5       | Severe Weather                                 |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 4: Discussion I</i>              |
| 6              | Feb 12      | <i>Video: Hurricane Katrina</i>                |
|                |             | Human-Environment Relations                    |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 5: Environmental Change</i>      |
|                | Feb 26      | Midterm Test                                   |
| 7              | Mar 5       | Earthquakes                                    |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 6: Hurricane Tracking</i>        |
| 8              | Mar 12      | Volcanoes                                      |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 7: Discussion II</i>             |
|                |             | In-Class Essay                                 |
| 9              | Mar 19      | <i>Video: Mt. St. Helens Eruption</i>          |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 8: Earthquakes</i>               |
|                |             | Floods                                         |
| 10             | Mar 26      | Technological Hazards                          |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 9: Groundwater Contamination</i> |
|                |             | Meteorite Impacts                              |
| 11             | Apr 2       | <i>Video: Chelyabinsk Meteor</i>               |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 10: Snowpack Monitoring</i>      |
|                |             | Snow Avalanches                                |
| 12             | Apr 9       | Wildfires                                      |
|                |             | <i>Assignment 11: Discussion III</i>           |
|                |             | <i>Video: Megafires</i>                        |



## 7. Communication



Students should check the course website regularly to keep up with announcements. E-mails must be sent from a UWO account and should contain the course code in the subject. E-mails will receive a response within 24 hours on weekdays.

## 8. Evaluation



Students are responsible for material covered in lectures as well as readings and videos. Assignments and question sets are practical, interactive applications of course content and will be completed during class time. Each assignment is worth 2% of the course grade except for discussion-based assignments (which are worth 1%). Each question set is worth 0.5% of the course grade. Detailed information about the research paper will be provided early in the semester. The midterm test will cover material studied from Jan 8 through Feb 12. The final exam is cumulative but weighted toward material studied in the second half of the semester. The test and exam will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions.

| <i>Assessment</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Value</i> |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Assignments       | Weekly      | 19%          |
| Question Sets     | Weekly      | 5.5%         |
| Midterm Test      | Feb 26      | 23%          |
| In-Class Essay    | Mar 12      | 8.5%         |
| Research Paper    | Mar 26      | 10%          |
| Final Exam        | TBA         | 34%          |

### Requirements

The evaluation methods above are essential requirements. To pass the course, students must complete at least 5 assignments and the in-class essay. Students who have not met these requirements will not be permitted to write the final exam.

### Course Grades

Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. You are responsible for your grades in the course.

## **9. Accommodation Policies**

### **Accessible Education**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Absence from Course Commitments**

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request through the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is always required for the final exam.

Missed lecture notes are not sent out by e-mail. It is the students' responsibility to obtain any missed lecture notes from a classmate.

### **General Information about Missed Work**

University policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation on the Student Absence Portal within 48 hours. Any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

### **Course Assessment that Requires Supporting Documentation (Midterm Test)**

The midterm test has been designated as an assessment that requires formal documentation because it is considered central to the learning objectives for this course. Students seeking academic consideration for the midterm test will be required to provide formal supporting documentation to their Faculty of Registration. If academic consideration for the midterm test is granted, then a make-up midterm test will be scheduled. If a student is unable to attend the make-up midterm test at the scheduled time for a valid reason, then its weight will be transferred to the final exam.

### **Course Assessment with a Flexible Deadline (Research Paper)**

The research paper has a flexible deadline. Students are expected to submit the paper by the deadline listed on the course outline. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit the paper up to 48 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should a paper be submitted beyond 48 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 10% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. Since a flexible deadline is used for the paper, requests for academic consideration for the paper will not be granted. If you have a long-term academic consideration or an accommodation for disability that allows greater flexibility than provided here, you must notify the instructor at least one week prior to the deadline listed on the course outline.

### **Accommodation for Religious Holidays**

Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write an exam due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform the instructor as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the final exam. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform the instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior.

## **10. Make-up Final Examinations**

A special final exam is any exam other than the regular exam, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered in consultation with the Instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a special final exam may be given based on compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. The format and content of make-up exams may differ substantially from the original exam.

## **11. Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a [scholastic offence](#).

The research report is subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the university for the detection of plagiarism. All reports submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.

For assignments that are completed in pairs, each student must write their own identifying information (name, student number, and signature). Writing someone else's identifying information is an offence; any student who has been found to have done this will receive a grade of zero on the assessment.

## **12. Use of Electronic Devices**

No electronic devices will be permitted during the in-class essay, test, or exam.

## **13. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

The use of AI to aid in completing any assessment is not permitted in this course.

Representing an idea, an expression of an idea, or a writing style or structure that was generated by artificial intelligence will be considered an offence.

## **14. Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography and Environment strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. 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 Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding [accommodated exams](#) is available. More information about [accessibility](#) is available as well.

## **15. Mental Health**

Students who are in emotional or mental distress should refer to the [Health and Wellness](#) site for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

## **16. Support Services**

[Office of the Registrar](#)

[Western Support Services](#)

[Learning Development and Success Centre](#)

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

## **17. Important Dates**

Jan 5: Winter classes begin

Jan 13: Last day to add a second term half course

Feb 16: Family Day (department office closed)

Feb 17 - 20: Winter Reading Week (no classes; department office open)

Mar 30: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

Apr 3: Good Friday

Apr 9: Winter classes end

Apr 10 - 11: Study days

Apr 12 - 30: Winter examination period