

Society and Nature

GEO 1500 F – Fall 2013

Overview

Society and Nature provides an introduction to global environmental change and inequality through time, focusing on some of the most pressing environment and development problems facing the world today, including tropical deforestation, desertification, climate change, and fossil energy dependence and limits. These are explored through a series of case studies which integrate physical and social science perspectives, in an integrative approach that provides a basis for further study in the discipline of geography.

Format

This course is based upon lectures, readings, and 5 tutorials/short assignments. You will find it helpful, and get more out of each lecture, if you keep up with the reading assignments for each unit (pages are specified in the lecture). The course will follow the thematic outline below, but the schedule is subject to some flexibility.

Instructor Information

Name: **Dr. Tony Weis**
Title: Associate Professor
office: Dept. of Geography, Social Science Centre, room 2314
office hrs: Wednesdays 10-11.30
email: aweis@uwo.ca
phone: 519-661-2111 x. 87472

Lectures Location: Western Science Centre (WSC) – Room 55
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30-2:30

Office hours Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:30

Tutorials Location: SSC-2333
Bi-weekly – see schedule below for weeks

Day	Time
Mon.	10.30-12.30
Mon.	12:30-2:30
Mon.	2:30-4:30
Mon.	4:30-6:30
Tues.	4:30-6:30
Wed.	12:30-2:30

-questions regarding tutorial scheduling see Angelica Lucaci, Undergraduate Assistant in the Geography Department: alucaci@uwo.ca (x. 86052)

Outline

DATE	#	UNITS & TOPICS	TUTORIAL DATES
Sept. 10		Course Introduction	
	1	THEME: APPROACHING GLOBAL SYSTEMS	
Sept. 12		Controls on Climate and the Spread of Humans, pre-1492	
Sept. 17			
Sept. 19		Imperialism and the Making of the Modern World	
Sept. 24			Mon-Wed.
	2	THEME: TROPICAL DEFORESTATION case: Amazonia	Sept. 23 rd to 25 th
Sept. 26		The Geophysiology of the Amazon Basin	
Oct. 1			
Oct. 3		The Political Ecology of Amazonian Deforestation	
Oct. 8			Mon-Wed.
	3	THEME: DESERTIFICATION case: The Sahel	Oct. 7 th to Oct. 9 th
Oct. 10		Physical Processes in Sahelian Africa	
Oct. 15			
Oct. 17		Food Insecurity & Famine in a Historical Context	
Oct. 22			
Oct. 24		* MID TERM TEST (25%) – IN CLASS *	
	4	THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE & FOSSIL ENERGY	Mon-Wed.
Oct. 29		case: Carbon Cycle / Middle East	Oct. 28 th to 30 th
Oct. 31		FALL STUDY BREAK (no class)	
Nov. 5		Fossil Fuels and the Carbon Cycle	
Nov. 7			
Nov. 12		The Geopolitics of Oil	Mon-Wed.
Nov. 14			Nov. 11 th to 13 th
	5	THEME: CLIMATE CHANGE case: The Arctic	
Nov. 19		Polar Systems and the Canadian Arctic	
Nov. 21			
Nov. 26		Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples	Mon-Wed.
Nov. 28			Nov. 25 th to 27 th
Dec. 3		The Geopolitics of Climate Change	
Dec. 5			
Dec. 7		study day	
Dec. 8-19		* FINAL EXAM (40%) – DATE TBA IN EXAM PERIOD *	

SPECIAL DATES:

Monday, Oct. 14 – Thanksgiving
 Tuesday, Oct. 15 – Last Drop Date

Thurs, Oct. 31-Sun. Nov. 3 – Fall Study Break
 Friday, December 6 – last day of classes
 December 8 – 19th – exam period

Course Materials

Customized Course Reader based on open-access materials (Available via OWL)

- compiled by Tony Weis
- cost: FREE!

Methods of Evaluation

Labs/Short Written Assignments _____ **35%**

-5 x 7% marks each

Mid-term Test – Thursday, October 24, 2013 (in class) _____ **25%**

Final Exam – TBA during Final Exam period (Dec. 8-19, 2012) _____ **40%**

Note on Exams

Both the mid-term test and final exam are a combination of multiple choice and paragraph written answers, and will cover the content in course lectures, seminars, and readings. If you fail to write the mid-term or the final on the scheduled date and time, you will be given zero, unless you communicate and receive permission from the instructors prior to the exam, in which case you will require a note from your physician (see note on special examination policy below).

Note on Labs and Written Assignments

You are expected to attend all of the tutorial sessions in your assigned time-slot, and only under special circumstances can you arrange to attend a different time. Tutorials require a short written component which are due exactly one week following your lab period. Unless you communicate and receive permission from your lab instructor, missed assignments will be given a 0, and late assignments will lose a 1/5 mark penalty for each day late.

Additional Information

Western's Special Examination Policy

A special examination is any examination other than the regularly scheduled exam. Special exams will be allowed only on receipt of medical documentation verifying a serious illness that kept the student from writing the exam as originally scheduled. Such documentation is strictly confidential and kept in the student's file. In the case of missing a final exam for documented medical reasons, a special exam will be set within 30 days.

Special exams will not be granted for occasions such as employment interviews, weddings, bar mitzvahs, family reunions, vacations, misreading an exam timetable, or oversleeping. Neither will special exams be granted in order to facilitate transportation arrangements, such as booking flights for home or holidays. It is the policy to discourage informal arrangements by faculty which circumvent this regulation.

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed exams must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices are allowed during examinations.

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, at this website:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

Plagiarism – Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes and citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Academic Calendar).

Fire Alarm Policy

Western Occupational Health and Safety requires that all students are required to evacuate the building when the fire alarm is activated. This is imperative, not an option.

Final Marks

The mark awarded by an instructor in a course at Western is only final when students receive it from the Registrar, and even then they can be changed on receipt by the Registrar of a Marks Revision Form. Marks are not finalized until the department chair has signed off.

Western Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness see:

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

For a downloadable **Student Medical Certificate** (SMC) see: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading

Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit the site below for more information on mental health resources: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

Western Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

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

Geography Counseling Services

Students in need of counseling about the geography program and related matters should contact Undergraduate Assistant and Program Advisor Ms. Angelica Lucaci in the Department of Geography. Angelica Lucaci: alucaci@uwo.ca (x. 86052)

Western's commitment to accessibility

The University of Western Ontario is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for persons studying, visiting and working at Western. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Students with Special Needs

Any student with documented special needs should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss any necessary accommodations to make this course a positive learning environment.