

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Geography  
**GEOG 2152F: Geography of Hazards**  
Fall 2015

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**Instructor:** Mark Moscicki

**Lectures:** Wed 12:30 – 3:30 pm  
UCC 146

**E-mail:** mmoscic@uwo.ca

**Office Hours:** Wed 3:30 – 5:30 pm  
SSC 2223

**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 hazards 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	Oct 28	30%
Essay	Nov 25	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 Sep 16 through Oct 21. 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	Sep 16	Introduction
		Overview of Hazards
2	Sep 23	Disaster and Risk Research
		<i>Assignment 1: Flood Risk Assessment</i>
		<i>Video: Japan Tsunami</i>
3	Sep 30	Tsunamis
		<i>Assignment 2: Tsunami Inundation</i>
		Models of Human Response
4	Oct 7	Risk and Culture
		<i>Assignment 3: Landslide Risk</i>
		Landslides
5	Oct 14	Severe Weather
		<i>Assignment 4: Discussion I</i>
6	Oct 21	<i>Video: Hurricane Katrina</i>
		Human-Environment Relations
		<i>Assignment 5: Environmental Change</i>
	Oct 28	Midterm Exam
7	Nov 4	Earthquakes
		<i>Assignment 6: Hurricane Tracking</i>
8	Nov 11	Volcanoes
		<i>Video: Mt. St. Helens</i>
9	Nov 18	Technological Hazards
		<i>Assignment 7: Groundwater Contamination</i>
		Social Unrest
10	Nov 25	Meteorite Impacts
		<i>Assignment 8: Discussion II</i>
		<i>Video: Chelyabinsk Meteor</i>
11	Dec 2	Snow Avalanches
		<i>Assignment 9: Snowpack Monitoring</i>
		Pandemics
12	Dec 9	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](mailto:ssd@uwo.ca) for any specific questions regarding an accommodation.

**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](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.

**Accommodation:**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed assessments must 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/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

**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/](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/)

**Support Services:**

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

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