

Geography 1500: Environment and Development Challenges

Course outline: Fall 2019 (Aug 30 version)

Course Description

This course examines environmental change over long periods of earth history, considering both physical processes and human impacts. An integrative approach (which combines physical and social science perspectives) provides a basis for understanding some of the world's most pressing environment and development challenges, such as biodiversity loss, climate change, energy use, and persistent hunger and inequality. (0.5 credit)

Place and Time

Lectures: Monday and Wednesday 12:30-1:20, WSC-55

Tutorials: Every other week – see schedule below.

Date	Time	TA	Room
Monday	4:30-6:30	TBC	SSC 1004
Tuesday	12:30-2:30	TBC	SSC 1004
Tuesday	4:30-6:30	TBC	SSC 1004
Thursday	11:30-1:30	TBC	SSC 1004
Thursday	1:30-3:30	TBC	SSC 1004

Contact information

Role	Name	Email	Office	Office hours
Instructor	Dr. Carol Hunsberger	chunsber@uwo.ca	SSC 2409	Thurs 1:30-3:00
TA	Alina Medeiros	amedei9@uwo.ca	TBC	TBC
TA	Evans Batung	ebatung@uwo.ca	TBC	TBC
TA	Haley Everitt	heveritt@uwo.ca	TBC	TBC

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify and explain major drivers of environmental change;
- Explain how physical and human processes interact to shape the course of key environmental and social challenges;
- Apply geographical concepts of space, place and scale to world issues;
- Articulate well informed, convincing statements in writing;
- Connect theory to practice by reflecting on a 30-day behavioural change.

Prerequisites: None

Format

The course involves lectures, tutorials, readings and written assignments. Although it is a large class, lectures will be interactive and will involve discussions and other activities. Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned readings and ready to participate. Students are responsible for all material covered in lectures and tutorials as well as the readings. A partial version of the lecture slides will be posted on OWL before class, with blanks to fill in.

Readings

There is no required textbook. Readings for each topic will be posted on OWL.

Lecture and tutorial schedule (may be changed with notice)

Date	Lecture Topic	Tutorials	Due Dates
Sep 9	Global systems		
Sep 16	Drivers of environmental change	Lab 1	
Sep 23	Biodiversity and conservation: Valuing the diversity of life		Lab 1 due in lecture Mon/Tues labs: due Mon Thurs labs: due Wed
Sep 30	Case Study: The Amazon	Lab 2, Writing skills	
Oct 7	Cities: Hubs and frontiers	Change assignment	Lab 2 due in tutorial
Oct 14	Mon: Thanksgiving – No class Wed: Practice midterm		
Oct 21	Food and agriculture: Feeding 7+ billion	Lab 3	Change 1 due in tutorial
Oct 28	Case study: The Horn of Africa		Lab 3 due in lecture Mon/Tues labs: due Mon Thurs labs: due Wed
Nov 4	Reading Week: no classes or labs		
Nov 11	Energy systems: Powering human activities	Lab 4	
Nov 18	Case study: Canada's oil sands		Lab 4 due in lecture Mon/Tues labs: due Mon Thurs labs: due Wed
Nov 25	Climate change: The politics of co-operation	Exam Review	Change 2 due online: Fri Nov 29, noon
Dec 2	Case study: The Colorado River		
Dec 8-19			Final exam to be scheduled

Evaluation

Grades will be allocated based on the following tasks:

Evaluation Components	Percentage of Course Grade
Tutorial assignments	40%
Change assignment	20%
Participation	10%
Final exam	30%

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned readings. Writing the final exam is a requirement to pass the course.

Tutorial Assignments (4 x 10% = 40% total)

Each tutorial explores a specific topic in depth and involves a written assignment, due on the dates shown. You are expected to attend all tutorials at your assigned time. Only under special circumstances can you arrange to attend at a different time. Unless you discuss and receive permission from your lab instructor, missed assignments will be given a zero.

Change Assignment (20%)

The Change assignment involves choosing and completing a 30-day behavioural challenge that contributes to sustainability in some way. You will produce a plan (worth 10%) and a final reflection about the experience (worth 10%) and share them with the class through the course OWL site. Detailed instructions will be provided separately.

Participation (10%)

In lectures, you will be asked questions using “iClickers” – a system where you use your laptop or phone to submit answers electronically. Answers will be graded for completion, not correctness – but they must be relevant to receive points! Because there may be times when you have to miss class or the technology fails, your participation mark is calculated as 1.25 times the percentage of questions you answered, up to a maximum of 100% (10/10).

Final Exam (30%)

The final exam, to be scheduled during the December exam period, will include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, definition and short-answer questions. It will draw on material from all lectures, tutorials, and readings. If you fail to write the final on the scheduled date and time, you will be given zero, unless you qualify for a makeup exam (see note on makeup examinations below). No books, notes or electronic devices will be allowed at the exam.

Submission Policy and Late Policy

Hard copies will be handed in at the beginning of class or lab on the due date. The penalty is 5% per day for late assignments (weekends count as one day; the clock “starts” at the beginning of class/lab on the due date). Assignments will no longer be accepted after they have been handed back to the rest of the class. Material should be printed double-sided and stapled. Do not use folders or covers. Put your name, the course name, instructor’s name and TA’s name on the front page. Late assignments should be put in the drop box outside SSC 2322.

Additional Information

Statement on Electronic Devices: Using electronic devices in class for non-academic purposes distracts you and everyone around you. Do not surf, text, tweet, chat, shop, etc. during class. Video recording in class is not permitted. Please ask the instructor if you wish to audio record lecture material.

For interactive learning we will use iClickers, a free app for any Wi-Fi enabled device. Register and sync to this course by selecting the iClickers link in the Class OWL. Then 'Sign Up' for an account using your UWO email. Your student ID is NOT a number: it is the part of your UWO email address before the @. Enter 'Western University' as your institution, then select 'Western University Ontario' from the options.

Mental Health: If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are resources here at Western to assist you. Visit Western's [Health and Wellness website](#) for more information.

Medical Issues: For Western's NEW [Policy on Accommodation for Illnesses](#) please refer to the Academic Calendar section on [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#). Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed exams and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must follow the procedure outlined below. Students seeking accommodation for missed work worth less than 10% of their final grade should speak with the instructor.

Requesting Academic Consideration: Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, etc) serious enough to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may request academic consideration through the following routes:

- (i) Submitting a [Self-Reported Absence form](#) provided that the conditions for submission are met;
- (ii) For [medical absences](#), submitting a [Student Medical Certificate](#) (SMC) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner; or
- (iii) For [non-medical absences](#), submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration. Students are encouraged to clarify with Academic Counselling what documentation is appropriate.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or delaying handing in work;
- are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (upset stomach) or upsets (argument with a friend) are not normally an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence;
- **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or SMC, or immediately upon their return following a documented absence.

Academic consideration is not normally intended for the following circumstances:

- **Students who require academic accommodation based on an ongoing physical or mental illness (recurring or chronic) or an existing disability.** These students are responsible, in consultation with health professionals, to determine if they are capable of pursuing their studies and, if so, with what accommodations. Students are expected to seek and arrange reasonable accommodations with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible in accordance with the [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disability](#). Students with pre-existing accessibility plans arranged through SAS may not need to provide additional documentation when seeking academic

consideration where such request for consideration relates to their disability and where their accessibility plans allow for coursework deferral or deadline extensions.

- **Students who experience high levels of stress related to academic performance** (including completing assignments, taking part in presentations, or writing tests or examinations). Students with academic or exam stress should access supports through [Student Health and Wellness](#) and [Learning Skills Services](#) in order to deal with this stress in a proactive and constructive manner.

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

Makeup Examinations: Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. For missed exams, you must take your documentation to Academic Counselling within 48 hours of the exam. The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination. Makeup exams will not be granted for occasions such as employment interviews, weddings, family reunions, vacations, misreading an exam timetable, oversleeping, or booking flights home for holidays. Makeups are scheduled for **Fri Dec 13, Thurs Dec 19** and **Fri Jan 10** (2020), all from 9-12 in SSC 1004.

Accessibility: The Department of Geography strives 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 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 519-661-2147 with any questions regarding accommodation. More information about [Accessibility at Western](#) is available.

Academic offences: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the definition of what constitutes a [Scholastic Offence](#). The most common offense is failing to cite properly. If you quote directly, you must cite the author! "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers 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.com](#)."

Support Services

[Student Support Services](#)

[Student Development Services](#)

Important Dates

September 5: Classes resume

September 13: Last day to add a first term half course

October 14: Thanksgiving Holiday – Department Office Closed

November 4 to November 10: Fall Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

November 12: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

November 30: Last day to drop a full course without penalty

December 5: Classes end

December 6 and 7: Study days

December 8-19: Examination Period