

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Geography
GEOG 2152G: Geography of Hazards
Winter 2020

1. Course Information

Class Information

Location: University Community Centre 146
Time: Thursdays 9:30 AM – 12:20 PM

Contact Information

Instructor: Mark Moscicki
Office: SSC 2219
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 – 2:00 PM
E-mail: mmoscic@uwo.ca

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 2152A/B
Prerequisite: None

3. Readings

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

4. Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to provide students with:

- an introduction to social science theories of hazard responses
- 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
- improved map reading abilities and geographic awareness

5. Schedule

<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
1	Jan 9	Introduction
		Overview of Hazards
2	Jan 16	Disaster and Risk Research
		<i>Assignment 1: Flood Risk Assessment</i>
		<i>Video: Japan Tsunami</i>
3	Jan 23	Tsunamis
		<i>Assignment 2: Tsunami Inundation</i>
		Models of Human Response
4	Jan 30	Risk and Culture
		<i>Assignment 3: Landslide Risk</i>
		Landslides
5	Feb 6	Severe Weather
		<i>Assignment 4: Discussion I</i>
	Feb 13	Midterm Exam
6	Feb 27	<i>Video: Hurricane Katrina</i>
		Human-Environment Relations
		<i>Assignment 5: Environmental Change</i>
7	Mar 5	Earthquakes
		<i>Assignment 6: Hurricane Tracking</i>
8	Mar 12	Volcanoes
		<i>Assignment 7: Discussion II</i>
		<i>Video: Mt. St. Helens</i>
9	Mar 19	Technological Hazards
		<i>Assignment 8: Groundwater Contamination</i>
		Meteorite Impacts
10	Mar 26	<i>Video: Chelyabinsk Meteor</i>
		<i>Assignment 9: Snowpack Monitoring</i>
		Snow Avalanches
11	Apr 2	Wildfires
		<i>Assignment 10: Discussion III</i>
		<i>Video: Fire Wars</i>

6. Academic Consideration for Missed Course Work

Please see the policy on [Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#)

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other) sufficiently significant to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through these routes:

- (i) Submitting a [Self-Reported Absence Form](#) provided that conditions for submission are met.
- (ii) For [medical absences](#), submitting a [Student Medical Certificate](#) signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner
- (iii) For [non-medical absences](#), submitting appropriate documentation (e.g. obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to the Academic Counselling office of their home faculty.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing or delaying work
- are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances, recognizing that minor ailments (upset stomach) or upsets (argument with a friend) aren't an appropriate basis for a self-reported absence
- must communicate with the instructor no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by either the self-reported absence or the Student Medical Certificate, or immediately upon the 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. Students with an ongoing physical illness or mental disorder (recurring or chronic) or an existing disability are responsible, in consultation with their doctors or other 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 Disabilities](#). 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 exams). 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.

7. Evaluation

<i>Component</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Value</i>
Assignments	Weekly	10%
Question Sets	Weekly	5%
Midterm Exam	Feb 13	32%
Essay	Mar 19	18%
Final Exam	TBA	35%

Students are responsible for material covered in lectures as well as the assigned readings. The assignments and question sets 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 9 through Feb 6. The final exam is cumulative but 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.

Course grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. Ensure you monitor your performance throughout the course; remember that you are responsible for your grades in this course.

8. Make-up Examinations

A make-up exam will be granted if approved documentation has been provided to an Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the originally scheduled exam and the student has notified the instructor of the absence within 48 hours of the originally scheduled exam. Otherwise, a grade of zero on the exam will be assigned. The content of make-up exams will differ from the originally scheduled exam. Make-up exams are scheduled by the department office on selected Fridays during the semester.

9. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be permitted during exams.

10. 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 course essay 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 essays 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.

For assessments 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.

Computer graded 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 cheating.

11. Commitment to Accessibility

The Department of Geography 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.

12. Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources at Western to assist you. Please visit the university's [Health and Wellness](#) site for more information on mental health resources.

13. Support Sites

[Student Support Services](#)
[Student Development Centre](#)

14. Important Dates

Jan 6: Classes resume
Jan 10: Last day to add a second term half course
Feb 17: Family Day
Feb 18-21: Winter Reading Week (no classes; department office open)
Mar 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty
Apr 3: Classes end
Apr 4-5: Study days
Apr 6-26: Examination period