

GEOG 3432B – Environmental Hazards and Human Health

Course Outline: Winter 2020

1. Course Information

1.1. Classroom Location:

Lecture: Thursday 7:00 pm -9:00 pm, Social Science Centre (SSC) 3014

Tutorial: Thursday 10:30 am – 11:30 am, Middlesex College (MC) – 17

Thursday 11:30am – 12:30pm, University Community Centre (UCC) – 65

1.2. Contact Information:

Professor: Josh Tobias

Office location: SSC 2221

Office Hours: Thursday 5:45pm-6:45pm

E-mail: jtobias2@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistant: Gabrielle Bruser

Office Location: SSC 1424

Office Hours: TBD

Email: gbruser@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistant: Evans Batung

Office Location: SSC 2316

Office Hours: TBD

Email: ebatung@uwo.ca

2. Calendar Description

In this course, we will explore the relationship between human health and exposure to environmental hazards. We will seek to increase our awareness of the various mechanisms through which environmental hazards impact the health of human populations with a particular emphasis on growing our understanding of: approaches to the study of environmental hazards and human health; the intersections of health and environmental policies; sources of exposure (water, air, soil, indoor, industrial, natural) environmental racism and activism; global and local issues.

Course Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course. However, students are strongly encouraged to draw upon knowledge and skills gained through theoretically related courses, such as: Geography 1400 (Introduction to the Human Environment); Geography 2152 (Geography of Hazards); Geography 2160 (Healthy Cities); Geography 2430 (Public Health and Environment); Geography 3250 (Social Science Research Methods in Geography) Geography 3431 (Geography of Health and Health Care), etc.

3. Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course, however there are assigned weekly readings, which will be placed on the course OWL site. Please read in advance of class as these readings will form the basis of the lectures and discussion.

4. Course Objectives and Format

This is a lecture based course that will emphasise theoretical and applied concepts through readings, lecture and class discussion. We will also be placing a particular emphasis upon gaining practical and applicable skills which are used daily by those actively working in this area. To learn about and understand these key concepts, a variety of teaching methods will be used in lecture, including documentary and film, guest visits, student discussion and participation. Most of the substantive material will be covered in the lecture time and led by Professor Tobias. The tutorial shall be reserved for case studies as well as introduction and take-up of assignments, including time to discuss and practice skills related to writing, referencing, working in groups, delivering presentations, and other topics as they emerge.

5. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Describe the complex relationships between environmental hazards and human health;
- 2) Critically analyze, compare, and contrast environmental hazards and human health research and policy;
- 3) Apply practical approaches to the study of environmental hazards and human health problems.

6. Evaluation

Evaluation Components	Deliverables	Value	Due dates
Core Project	Project Scoping	5%	January 30th
	Group Presentation	15%	April 2nd
	Individual Report and Team Evaluation	25%	April 2nd
Briefing Notes	5 x 1 page each	20%	February 13 th (2 max) March 19 th (remainder)
In-Class Mid-Term	Definitions and Short Answer	25%	February 13 th
Class and Tutorial Participation	Attendance + Participation	10%	Randomly Assessed

Students are responsible for material covered in lectures, tutorials as well as assigned readings.

For Western’s Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable SMC please refer to the Academic Handbook.

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

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.

7. LECTURE, READINGS & TUTORIAL SCHEDULE

Date	Lecture Topic	Tutorial Topic
Part I: Core Concepts, Approaches, and Policy		
Week 1 Jan 9	Course overview Introduction to the course and to one another.	No Tutorial
Week 2 Jan 16	Key Concepts: Environments, Risks, and Health What do we mean by Environment? What is health? How can the environment make us sick?	Core Project Discussion, Group Formation, Topic Selection
Week 3 Jan 23	Approaches to understanding Epidemiologist: why do they keep making scary red maps? What ways are these issues studied? All science is incomplete, right? Matters of Place: what do geographers do?	Group Work: Project Scoping
Week 4 Jan 30	At the intersection: Environmental and Health Policy What is policy? What policies exist in Canada?	Guest Library Session Project Scoping Due
Part II: Earth, Wind, Fire, Water....Heart?		

Week 5 Feb 6	Risks From Industry What are the major concerns from industry? How can industry make us sick? What is the environmental burden of cancer in Ontario?	Case Study: Policy Blitz Activity Briefing Note Submission Date 1 (Two Max)
Week 6 Feb 13	In-Class Mid Term	Documentary Screening and Discussion: Canada's Toxic Chemical Valley
Feb 20	READING WEEK: No Class ☺	No Tutorial
Week 7 Feb 27	Climate Change and Human Health What are the potential impacts of climate change? Which areas could be particularly affected and how?	Documentary Screening and Discussion:
Week 8 Mar 5	Guest Lectures: Environmental Change and Human Health *Topics TBD*	Group Meetings and Presentation Slot Sign Up
Week 9 Mar 12	Indoor Environments How can where you work make you sick?	Case Study: Built Environment and Health
Part III: Taking Action – where do we go from here?		
Week 10 Mar 19	Making a Stand: Activism on Environmental Hazards and Human Health. Environmental racism in Canada Environmental Justice Community-Based Actions Organizations to keep an eye on	Group Meetings Briefing Notes Due

Week 11 Mar 26	Guest Lecture: Community-Based Activism in the face of Environmental Racism. Group Presentations Slot 1	Case Study: NIMBYism in Ontarios Waste Facility Siting
Week 12 April 2	Group Presentations Slot 2 Where do we go from Here? Course summary Individual Reports and Team Evaluation Due	No Tutorial: TAs available for consultation

8. Make-up Examinations

Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided the Academic Counselling Office and Instructor within 48 hours of the scheduled exam. For missed exams, you must take your documentation to Academic Counselling within 48 hours of the exam. Otherwise, the instructor will assign a grade of zero. The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination.

9. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

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.

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 (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

11. Western's 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 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 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "Accessibility at Western" is available.

12. Medical Issues

For Western's [NEW Policy on Accommodation for Illnesses](#) please refer to the Academic Calendar' section on [Academic Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Requesting Academic Consideration

Students who experience an extenuating circumstance (illness, injury, or other extenuating circumstance) sufficiently significant to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for 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 in order to be eligible for Academic Consideration; or
- (iii) For [non-medical absences](#), submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to Academic Counselling in their Faculty of registration in order to be eligible for academic consideration. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Counselling unit to clarify what documentation is appropriate.

Students seeking academic consideration:

- are advised to consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams 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.** 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 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.

13. Mental Health

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

14. Support Services

[Student Support Services](#)

[Student Development Services](#)

15. Important Dates

January 6: Classes resume

January 14: Last day to add a second term half course

February 17: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 15 to 23: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

March 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

April 3: Classes end

April 4-5: Study day

April 6-26: Examination Period