

The University of Western Ontario  
 Department of Geography and Environment  
**GEOG 2152G: Geography of Hazards**  
 Winter 2024

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## 1. Course Information



Winter Classes Start	Reading Week	Winter Classes End	Study Days	Winter Final Exams
Jan 8	Feb 17 – 25	Apr 8	Apr 9 – 10	Apr 11 – 30

Jan 16: Last day to add a second term half course

Feb 19: Family Day Holiday

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

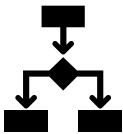
Mar 29: Good Friday Holiday



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office	Office Hours
Mark Moscicki	mmoscic@uwo.ca	SSC 2219	Mondays 2:00 – 3:30 PM

## 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 2152 A/B

Prerequisite: None

### 3. Readings

Readings will be posted on the course website throughout the semester.



### 4. Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course are to provide students with:

- an introduction to social science theories of hazard responses
- recognition of the risks caused by hazardous events
- knowledge of hazard planning and management solutions
- enhanced geographical problem-solving skills
- improved map reading abilities and geographic awareness



### 5. Course Format

Attendance at class sessions is expected as assignments will be completed during class time in the classroom. Selected course material will be posted to [OWL](#).

[Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#). Using the proper browser is important, especially when using different features integrated with OWL.



If students need assistance, they can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They are also available by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 6. Schedule

<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>
1	Jan 11	Introduction
		Overview of Hazards
2	Jan 18	Disaster and Risk Research
		<i>Assignment 1: Flood Risk Assessment</i>
		<i>Video: Japan Tsunami</i>
3	Jan 25	Tsunamis
		<i>Assignment 2: Tsunami Inundation</i>
		Models of Human Response
4	Feb 1	Risk and Culture
		<i>Assignment 3: Landslide Risk</i>
		Landslides
5	Feb 8	Severe Weather
		<i>Assignment 4: Discussion I</i>
	Feb 15	Midterm Exam
6	Feb 29	<i>Video: Hurricane Katrina</i>
		Human-Environment Relations
		<i>Assignment 5: Environmental Change</i>
7	Mar 7	Earthquakes
		<i>Assignment 6: Hurricane Tracking</i>
8	Mar 14	Volcanoes
		<i>Assignment 7: Discussion II</i>
		<i>Video: Mt. St. Helens</i>
9	Mar 21	Technological Hazards
		<i>Assignment 8: Groundwater Contamination</i>
		Meteorite Impacts
10	Mar 28	<i>Video: Chelyabinsk Meteor</i>
		<i>Assignment 9: Snowpack Monitoring</i>
		Snow Avalanches
11	Apr 4	Wildfires
		<i>Assignment 10: Discussion III</i>
		<i>Video: Megafires</i>



## 7. Communication



Students should check the course website regularly to keep up with announcements. E-mails must be sent from a UWO account and should contain the course code in the subject. E-mails will receive a response within 24 hours on weekdays.

## 8. Evaluation



Students are responsible for material covered in lectures as well as readings and videos. Assignments and question sets are practical, interactive applications of course content and will be completed during class time. Each assignment is worth 2% of the course grade except for discussion-based assignments (which are worth 1%). Detailed information about the essay will be provided early in the semester. The midterm exam will cover material studied from Jan 11 through Feb 8. 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.

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Value</i>
Assignments	Weekly	17%
Question Sets	Weekly	5%
Midterm Exam	Feb 15	25%
Essay	Mar 21	18%
Final Exam	TBA	35%

### Requirements

The evaluation methods above are essential requirements of the course. Students must complete at least 5 assignments to pass the course. Students must earn a passing grade on the essay to pass the course.

### Late Assessments

Essays submitted late without approved documentation will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day.

### Course Grades

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

## 9. Accommodation Policies

### Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

### Academic Consideration for Missed Assessments

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed *assignments* or missed *question sets* should contact the instructor within 48 hours of the assessment deadline. If a valid reason is provided, the accommodation for the above assessments involves transferring the weight to the final exam.

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for the *essay*, the *midterm exam*, or the *final exam* shall only be granted in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities. This documentation must be submitted to an academic counselling office within 48 hours of the assessment deadline.

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#)

[Student Medical Certificate](#)

### Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the instructor and an academic counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

## 10. Make-up Examinations

A make-up exam will only be granted with approval from an Academic Counselling Office. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to counselling within 48 hours of the originally scheduled exam and students must notify 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. If a student is absent from both the midterm exam and its make-up exam for approved reasons, then the weight of the midterm exam will be transferred to the final exam.

## **11. 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 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.

The use of artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT or artificial intelligence writing assistants is not permitted in the essay or the assignments. Representing an idea, and expression of an idea, or a writing style or structure that was generated by artificial intelligence will be considered an offence. The AI detector that accompanies Turnitin will be used to check for this.

For assignments 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.

## **12. Use of Electronic Devices**

No electronic devices will be permitted during exams.

## **13. Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography and Environment 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.

## **14. 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.

## **15. Support Sites**

[Student Support Services](#)

[Student Development Centre](#)

## **16. Important Dates**

Jan 8: Winter classes begin

Jan 16: Last day to add a second term half course

Feb 17 - 25: Winter Reading Week (no classes; department office open)

Feb 19: Family Day Holiday (department office open)

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

Mar 29: Good Friday Holiday (department office closed)

Apr 8: Winter classes end

Apr 9 - 10: Study days

Apr 11-30: Examination period