

GEOG 1200A: The Climate Emergency Course Outline Fall 2024

This course is taught in person



1. Course Information

Classes Start	Fall Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
September 5	October 14-20	December 6	December 7 & 8	December 9-22

September 13, 2024: Last day to add a second-term half course

September 30, 2024: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

October 14, 2024: Thanksgiving Holiday

November 30, 2024: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Dr. Evan Bowness	ebowness@uwo.ca	Mondays 1-2 pm, SSC 1411

Teaching Assistants	Contact Information	Office Hours
Evans Batung	ebatung@uwo.ca	TBD
Reforce Okwei	rokwei@uwo.ca	TBD
Joy Adebisi	jadebis2@uwo.ca	TBD

2. Calendar Description

An introduction to the science and politics of climate change. The course pivots on the great gap between the urgency and magnitude of changes that climate scientists are imploring, and enduring 'business-as-usual' approaches. Struggles for action are considered in light of highly unequal responsibility and vulnerability.

3 lecture hours, 0.5 credit. No prerequisites.

Note: *This course was created by Dr. Tony Weis and has been adapted from last year's offering.*

3. Readings

There is no required textbook and all readings for each unit are available on OWL in the unit folders (in the Resources tab).

The PowerPoint slides also provide an abundance of additional links to encourage you to dig deeper into the subjects you are most interested in.

4. Course Format

The course content is organized into 6 units, as outlined below, which are based on in-person lectures and readings/videos. There are 3 lecture hours per week on most weeks. The readings for each of the 6 units should take about 3-4 hours in total on average. All PowerPoint slides will be posted to OWL as PDFs shortly before each lecture. Attendance is required and there will be regular in-class quizzes.

All course material will be posted to the new OWL Brightspace learning environment: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/home>. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class.

Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#).

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

5. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- be able to understand and explain the basic physical and anthropogenic dynamics of climate change, and how climate change threatens the stability of life on Earth;
- be able to understand the deep inequalities associated with climate change with respect to past and present emissions and urgent mitigation and adaptation efforts;
- be capable of critically engaging with political debates, conflicts, and policy initiatives with respect to climate change;
- have a conceptual basis for further studies in climate change and geography more broadly;
- be inspired to think about the ethical dimensions of environmental change and take action, individually and as part of wider social movements.

6. Course Content and Schedule

You are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned readings, and it is important to keep up with lecture material and readings on a unit-by-unit basis. The evaluation is based on 2 mid-term tests, 5 quizzes, and a final exam (dates are listed in the table below).

Week	Dates	Assessments	Topic
1	September 5		Course Introduction
2	September 9		Unit 1: Causality
	September 12		
3	September 16		
	September 19	In-Class Quiz 1 – Unit 1	
4	September 23		Unit 2: Growth
	September 26		
5	NO CLASS SEPT 30		
	October 3	In-Class Quiz 2 – Unit 2	
6	October 7		
	October 10	In-Class Term Test #1 (20%)	Units 1 and 2
	October 14-18		Reading Week – No Classes
7	October 21		Unit 3: Urgency
	October 24		
8	October 28		
	October 31	In-Class Quiz 3 – Unit 3	
9	November 4		Unit 4: Inequality
	November 7		
10	November 11		
	November 14	In-Class Term Test #2 (20%)	Units 3 and 4
11	November 18		Unit 5: Inertia
	November 21	In-Class Quiz 4 – Unit 5	
12	November 25		Unit 6: Action
	November 28		
13	December 2		
	December 5	In-Class Quiz 5 – Unit 6	
	TBA in exam period	Final Exam	Units 1-6

7. Communication

You are encouraged to check the OWL site every 24 – 48 hours

Please post general course-related queries (whether content or logistics) to the Discussions section under the Communications tab in OWL. That way the clarifications can be seen by everyone.

For queries posted in the Discussions section in OWL or sent via email, you can expect to receive a response in 48-72 hours (or longer if over a weekend)

Some communications about the course will arrive through your university email account. It is your responsibility to ensure that email received from the University at your UWO address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).

8. Evaluation

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated.

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Dates
Quizzes (5)	Multiple Choice and/or True or False	20% (5% each x top 4)	September 19 October 3 October 31 November 21 December 5
Term Tests (2)	Short answer responses	40% (20% each x 2)	October 10 & November 14
Final Exam	Short answer + paragraph responses	40%	TBA in exam period: December 9-22

The evaluation methods described in the syllabus are essential requirements for the course. Students are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned readings.

Quizzes (4 x 5% = 20% of course grade)

On 5 Thursdays (see schedule on pg. 3) you are expected to complete a short in-class quiz. These quizzes will review material covered in the preceding unit, and some of these will cover documentary films and short videos as indicated in class. There will be 5 quizzes, and your top 4 marks will count.

Quizzes are “open book,” meaning you are allowed to bring and use notes during the quizzes. Only physical (hardcopy) notes are permitted, which can be either typed or handwritten. Electronic devices such as laptops or tablets are not allowed during the quizzes.

No accommodations or considerations are provided for missed quizzes since the lowest score will be dropped and everyone has been provided a time extension (30 minutes to take a 10-minute quiz). Quiz answers will not be posted, but you will learn the answers immediately after taking the quiz. If you have questions about the answers, you can speak to the instructor after class or during office hours.

Alternative Assignment: You will have the option to complete an alternative assignment to replace your second-lowest quiz score. More information will be provided in class.

Term Tests (2 x 20% = 40% of course grade) and Final exam (40% of course grade)

The 2 Term Tests are based on short answer questions and the final exam combines short answer questions and questions that involve paragraph responses. In both, students are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned readings. More detailed instructions will be given in advance of both the tests and the final exam.

If you fail to write the term tests or the final exam on the scheduled time you will be given zero, unless you communicated and came to an arrangement with the instructor before the exam. Exam absences require a note from your physician (see note on special examination policy below).

Notes on grading

- After you receive your grade on a test or exam, if you have concerns you should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting your TA. To ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days
- Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The following table outlines the University-wide grade descriptors

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

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.

9. Accommodation Policies

Absence from Course Commitments

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

Students missing coursework for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this

document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with the information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Academic Consideration for Quizzes

This course has 5 quizzes with only 4/5 quizzes counted towards your final grade. Academic consideration will not be granted for missed quizzes. If students miss 1/5 quizzes, the remaining 4 quizzes will be used in the calculation of the final grade. If students miss more than 2 quizzes, they will receive a grade of zero on each missed quiz.

Academic Consideration for Mid-Terms.

The first Term Test (October 10) is designated as requiring supporting documentation for academic consideration.

Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

10. Make-up Examinations

Make-ups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to the Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the scheduled 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.

11. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be allowed during quizzes, tests and examinations.

12. How to Be Successful in this Class:

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

1. Invest in a planner or application or use a calendar to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
2. Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.

3. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively.
4. Connect with others. Try forming a study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
5. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards or contact your instructor(s) and or teaching assistant(s).
Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.

13. 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.

Computer-marked multiple-choice quizzes, tests, and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

14. Western's 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 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.

15. 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.

16. Support Services

Western's Support Services

Student Development Centre

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

17.Important Dates

- September 5: Classes resume
- September 13: Last day to add a first-term half-course
- September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (No classes)
- October 14: Thanksgiving Holiday – Department Office Closed
- October 14-20: Fall Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)
- November 30: Last day to drop a first-term half course or a full course without penalty
- December 6: Classes end
- December 7 and 8: Study days
- December 9-22: Examination Period