University of Guelph - Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics
Course Outline – Fall 2020

**GEOG*1350 - EARTH: HAZARDS AND GLOBAL CHANGE – Credit Weight 0.5**

**Synchronous and Asynchronous Classes:** Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 3:30 – 4:20, See CourseLink for Class Meeting details - extra class days at the end of the semester to replace Thanksgiving Monday and Tuesday the Fall Study Break Day

**Instructor:** Laura J. Brown ([laura@uoguelph.ca](mailto:laura@uoguelph.ca))

**Office Hours:** refer to Courselink for Office Hours information

**Graduate Teaching Assistants:** Emma Shay, Matthew Burch-Forgie, Jay Creen, and Bryce Miller

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Prerequisites:** None

**REQUIRED TEXT**

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**
"This course investigates physical aspects of natural hazards that affect people and society and will focus on the natural systems and processes that cause climate variability and change, floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, hurricanes, tornados and other natural disasters."

**OVERVIEW**
Of the 40 deadliest disasters between 1970-2016 (47 years), 23 were due to earthquakes, and 10 to hurricanes. Thirty of these natural disasters occurred in a region stretching from China into Bangladesh, India, Iran and ending in Turkey. None occurred in the United States or Canada. Why are there so many deaths in that one region and none in the US and Canada? How are agencies working towards preparedness and mitigation of natural disasters?
This course investigates the components and processes that contribute to naturally hazardous environments. We will focus on the forces and processes driven by internal and external sources of energy that cause floods, earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, hurricanes, tornados and other natural disasters. The course includes a discussion of significant events in the geologic and historical record as well as future hazard potential and how Geographers are working toward understanding these issues and developing strategies for mitigation and adaptation. We look at the risks humans face in different regions, including local hazards, our contribution to geologic hazards, and how we can minimize and cope with future events. We will also spend time discussing and analyzing how risk is assessed and managed by insurance companies and emergency response agencies.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course aims to introduce and enhance the learning objectives identified by the University of Guelph and the Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics. Specifically, in this course, students will:

- Develop a comprehensive depth and breadth of understanding of the core concepts and principles that dictate earth hazards. Students will evaluate the earth as an integrated system by examining dynamic flows, interactions and exchanges at different spatial and temporal scales.
- Critically and independently recognize, synthesize and evaluate diverse sources of knowledge, arguments and approaches pertinent to exploring elements of geoscientific problems.
- Appreciate and begin to reflect critically on the importance of holistic, integrative human-environment perspectives.
- Investigate complex real-world challenges using appropriate concepts, methods, and tools from the geographical sub-disciplines.
- Recognize and identify the societal relevance of geographical knowledge and apply it to real-world human-environment issues.
- Value respectful, responsible, and just community engagement and demonstrate active citizenship when addressing human-environment issues.

CourseLink Page
There is a course webpage on CourseLink. To access our class webpage, use your central account ID and password. The same login ID and password that you use to access your University of Guelph e-mail and WebAdvisor. CourseLink can be accessed from the University's homepage, and I bookmark it in my browser for easy access.

Overview of Course Content and Organization
We will have one topic each week:

- Introduction to Natural Hazards
- Plate Tectonics, Earthquakes and Volcanoes
- Tsunamis
- Weathering, Slope Stability and Mass Movements
- Severe Weather: Thunderstorms, Tornadoes and Hurricanes
- Rivers and Flooding
- Climate Change: past, present and future
- Asteroids, Impacts, Extinction Events

Each topic will be covered through a combination of micro-lectures, readings, CourseLink and synchronous discussions.
Each week students will complete an online quiz based on the lecture and assigned readings for that week; students are responsible for preparing and completing these
quizzes in the timeframe stipulated. There are two short individual assignments during the term based on recent or notable hazards. Please refer to CourseLink for more details and the deadlines of these assignments.

**EXPECTATIONS**

Since synchronous class discussions and written assignments will be based on the assigned readings, students are expected to have done the appropriate readings prior to the start of each topic. Discussions may involve students being called on to read prepared answers to questions on the readings. All quizzes, tests and final exam questions will be based on micro-lectures, readings, and synchronous discussions.

**COURSE NOTES**

I will post the slides I use in my micro-lectures on CourseLink so you can follow along and take notes.

**Learning Services for First Year Courses**

Although many of you may not be first year students, because this course is designated as a first-year course there are additional resources available to you. Learning resources for first-year students at the Library and Learning Commons. They offer free services to help you succeed in first year courses at the University of Guelph.

These opportunities include:

- meeting with a peer helper to talk about study strategies or your writing assignments
- attending Supported Learning Groups
- getting assistance finding journal articles and books
- registering for academic workshops

For more information please visit the Library website or ask me to direct you to someone at the Library and Learning Commons. Library website, [www.lib.uoguelph.ca](http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca)

**COURSE EVALUATION**

**Evaluation (select the scheme that works for you before Test 1)**

*Scheme A (if you do not select a scheme by Test 1, this is the scheme you will be evaluated on):*

The final grade will be assessed from weekly review Quizzes completed online (10%), two Assignments (15% each, 30% total), Participation and Engagement (CourseLink Discussions, 10%) and two tests a Midterm (20%) and the Final exam (30%). Quizzes, CourseLink discussions and exams are based on information presented in asynchronous micro-lectures and discussed in weekly synchronous meetings. The midterm is in week 7, the final exam is focused primarily on the second half but has some cumulative content and is scheduled during the second week of the university exam period. Both exams are online, and more details will be provided on CourseLink. In summary:
Weekly Quizzes  10%
Participation/Engagement  10%
Assignments  30%
Midterm Test  20%
Final Exam  30%

**Scheme B:**

The final grade will be assessed from two Assignments (15% each, 30% total), Participation and Engagement (CourseLink Discussions, 10%) and two tests a Midterm (25%) and the Final exam (40%). You will still have access, and are encouraged to complete the weekly review quizzes, but the score on the quizzes will not count toward your final grade, thus the test section of your evaluation is weighted more heavily. Weekly review Quizzes, CourseLink discussions and Exams are based on information presented in asynchronous micro-lectures and discussed in weekly synchronous meetings. The midterm is in week 7, the final exam is focused primarily on the second half but has some cumulative content and is scheduled during the second week of the university exam period. Both exams are online, and more details will be provided on CourseLink. In summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation/Engagement</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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Students with a **documented conflict** for any tests need to see me at least **two weeks** prior to arrange an alternative time, there is no guarantee that this will be accommodated, but ensuring that you address the issue several weeks in advance will certainly assist the process.

**Weekly Review Quizzes – worth 10% in the default evaluation scheme, completed online**

The weekly review quizzes are an incredible opportunity for students to review and 'test' themselves on the relevant material at a relatively frequent pace. The quizzes in total are worth 10% of the final grade in the class (default scheme). The quizzes are used to incentivize engagement with the course material one more time. So if you read the assigned readings before you watch the micro lectures, take helpful notes of the reading and lecture material, participate in the synchronous class, review your notes each week that is approximately six points of engagement with the material. Adding the quiz makes it seven points. I think these points of engagement with the material are vital to an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of complex concepts in GEOG*1350. So, the quizzes might feel like extra work – and they should – because the whole point was to get you to engage with the material one more time. Furthermore, the quiz questions help me to gauge student comprehension and usually reflect the most important or challenging ideas and concepts covered during that week. Finally – quiz questions are often re-used on the exams – so in case you needed one more reason to pay attention to
them, they will likely help you out with the tests.

Assignments – 15% each, 30% total
These assignments are an opportunity for you to demonstrate to us that you understand key concepts. More details about the assignments will be presented at the end of week 1 during our synchronous class.

All assignments must be submitted through Dropbox on CourseLink. Late assignments (without prior approval) will be penalized at a rate of 25% of the value of the assignment per class day. This course uses Turnitin to help encourage academic integrity.

COMMUNICATION
This course uses CourseLink and Zoom as the primary tools for communication and distribution of course materials.

All e-mail correspondence will be sent to your University of Guelph e-mail address. I normally respond to student inquiries within 24-36 hours during University Business hours. I also do not reply to messages from off-campus e-mail addresses because they are often spam or phishing scams. Keep in mind this is a professional environment, and your messages should reflect this. For example, e-mails that begin "Hey," or "Yo Prof" or include texting lingo are not appropriate.

University of Guelph Policy Statements:

E-mail Communication
As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement
When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date
Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments
Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility
The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.
When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day.

More information: [www.uoguelph.ca/sas](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

**Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

**Recording of Materials**

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

**Resources**

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

**Disclaimer**

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class e-mail. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website [https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/](https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/) and circulated by e-mail.

**Illness**

The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the fall 2020 or winter 2021 semesters.