



**ENVS 103.02W
Natural Disasters
Environmental Sciences
SYLLABUS**

Instructor: Janet Hull

Office Location: online

Online Office Hours: M-S 10:00-5:00

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbook Required: Natural Disasters by Patrick Abbott, Tenth (10th) Edition. McGraw Hill.

Course Description and Goals:

The course goals are designed to increase your awareness about global natural disasters. The Earth is definitely on the move today, and this course will increase your appreciation of the immense power of our planet.

The material and information for lecture will come from the 10th textbook edition, and will be the primary focus of information on your weekly, unit tests.

This course is fairly intensive because you will spend time studying geographic locations around the globe. If you are on campus, it is worthwhile to study the maps and globes in the library. You can also compare the various world maps found on the Internet with the information within each book chapter.

As a result of this course curriculum, you will be able to list the names of countries worldwide, locate them on a world map, and calculate and compare how natural disasters affect global populations.

Prerequisites:

No prerequisites.

Intro to Geography, ENV5, or Intro to Geology preferred, *but not required*.

Course Goals:

1. In the first part of this course, you will be able to describe the ways natural disasters affect the human, cultural landscape;
2. In the second part of this course, you will be able to list the ways human beings influence the “impact” of natural disasters, and analyze the ways modern societies alter the natural landscape;
3. During the entirety of the course, you will be able to describe geographic locations and list where natural disasters are occurring today; explaining *why* natural disasters are increasing, and analyzing *where* they may occur in the future.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Describe both natural and man-made factors that alter the severity of natural disasters;

2. Analyze what effects natural disasters have on human populations, *worldwide*;
3. Explain how natural Earth processes result in earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, and other geologic natural disasters;
4. Describe the physical methodologies that create both normal and extreme weather patterns;
5. List the factors that contribute to man-made disasters.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

- A. Read each weekly unit's overview, lecture, and textbook assignments.
- B. Complete a scheduled exam after each weekly unit, beginning with Unit One.

Grading:

- A. Fifteen (15) unit exams; 100 pts each (100% of course grade)

Unit Assignments:

- Each unit exam must be completed prior to starting the next unit, and will be available to take within a designated 48-hour period that is posted in the **Test Section** within each Unit;
- Each unit exam is timed, and exams can be open book. No unit exams are accepted once the next unit has begun. This means **NO MAKE UP TESTS**.

- You will have fifteen (15) unit exams; no Midterm and no Final exams will be given for this class;
- You have 48 hours to schedule a time to take your weekly tests; **no make-up tests** are accepted after this 48-hour period;
- Make sure you are using a reliable Internet server; if your computer goes down during an exam, no additional make-up time will be granted. I suggest confirming a good connection before each exam. If you do go down, your previous work will be automatically saved, contact IT ASAP, and **do not log off**.

Note: the 48-hour scheduling of your weekly exams teaches problem-solving skills; *i.e., don't wait until the last minute to take your tests in case something unexpected occurs*; take the time to secure using a dependable Internet; do not log off once you open your test, and contact campus IT if hardware or software issues arise.

Grade Scale:

The grading for on-line classes is done by percentages, but at the end of the semester, the percentages translate into the following grade points:

- 90-100 pts = A
- 80-89 pts = B
- 70-79 pts = C
- 60-69 pts = D
- Below 60 pts = F

If you have not missed any tests, I will give you 2 points extra credit on your final average.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

You will be utilizing various forms of learning tools available on-line, through your textbook and on-line discussions. You will be required to monitor specific websites throughout this course, and I will email you those links when applicable.

VERY IMPORTANT:

If you experience computer issues during a test, do NOT log out of your test - immediately contact campus IT or the e-college hotline so they can witness the issues occurring at that time using screen share. If you log out, no one can help you resolve any problems, and you will not get credit for missing the test.

Note: when you quit a test session, always click on the "Exit Course" button at the bottom of your screen to save your work.

Each unit's material will consist of:

- An overview of the unit topic and the unit objectives. When you click on a unit, you will be taken first to the requirements.
- Lecture consists of both instructor emails and your chapter reading assignments.
- A weekly unit test will be required after each unit. The weekly tests will be based on book material, recommended Internet resources, and my lecture. There will be no Mid-Term Exam or Final Exam for this course. 100% of your grade comes from the weekly unit tests.

- There is **no extra credit work** offered for this on-line course, but if you have not missed any tests, I will give you 2 points extra credit on your final average.
- **There are no make-up exams.**

If the course software is new to you, it may help to go through the software tutorial.

How to get started:

1. e-mail me to let me know that you are on line;
2. Read through the syllabus;
3. Click Unit 1 to read the unit overview;
4. Read your chapter and the lecture notes for Unit 1;
5. Don't hesitate to contact e-college with any questions. *The -eCollege HelpDesk is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The on-campus HelpDesk can be reached by sending an email to helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or by calling 1-866-656-5511.*

Students taking online classes at Texas A&M University-Commerce have the same rights as students enrolled in on-ground classes. The A&M-Commerce Student Guidebook details those rights and explains complaint and grievance procedures, as well as the Student Code of Conduct. Students have the right to appeal course grades, admissions committee decisions, or any adverse action taken by any *online* faculty against any student. The appeals process is the same for all types of appeals.

The student should first attempt to resolve non-tech problems directly with the involved faculty member.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

I have taught Natural Disasters at A&M Commerce since 2010. I have an interactive blog on current environmental events, and I will email you that blog link. This is a good way to maintain a current understanding of the global relationship that natural disasters create, *daily*.

I regularly monitor my email, and I like to remain active with the class through emails, so you can send me a message at any time. I will answer you as soon as I can. You can email at Janet.Hull@tamuc.edu.

The time you spend for this course will be equal to the time spent for an on-ground 3-hour course. There are fifteen (15) units to complete for the course; one unit each week. How you organize your daily schedule is completely up to you, but you must finish one unit each week. **A unit test will be given after each unit every week.** This course isn't hard, but it does consume a lot of time. If you don't get behind, you'll make it through O.K. **If you fall behind, there are no make-up opportunities.**

Learner Support:

The [One Stop Shop](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/) was created to serve you by providing as many resources as possible in one location. <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/onestopshop/>

The [Academic Success Center](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/) provides academic resources to help you achieve academic success.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter/>

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Content By Unit:

1. Human Disasters – Unit 1. Global geographic introduction into populations and their locations.
2. Internal Energy – Unit 2. Knowledge of the Earth’s internal processes enhances a deeper understanding of earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, and violent storms.
3. Seismology – Unit 3. What is an earthquake? This unit requires understanding the different types of earthquakes, where they occur, and why.
4. Plate Tectonics – Unit 4. The theory of Plate Tectonics and crustal movement provides the core to understanding many natural disasters.
5. Earthquakes in US and Canada – Unit 5. Studying past earthquakes in USA and Canada helps us predict future disasters, and hopefully, prevents human devastation in North America.
6. Tsunamis– Unit 6 (**skip to Chapter 8**). Earthquakes cause tsunamis, which are one of the most damaging natural disasters on Earth. Not every earthquake spawns a tsunami, and Unit 6 (Chapter 8 in your book) explains how they form and their dangers.
7. Volcanic Eruptions - Unit 7 (**back to Chapter 6**). Unit 7 introduces how a volcano forms, and where they are found along plate boundaries. Unit 7 requires daily monitoring of current volcanic eruptions.
8. Volcanoes From the Past - Unit 8 (**Chapter 7**). You will learn about past volcanic eruptions to increase awareness for what can occur again in the future.
9. Weather and Climate – Unit 9. This unit introduces the mechanics driving the atmosphere, our climate and local weather. Before weather patterns can be understood, the energy systems fueling our air and water must be studied.

10. Tornadoes and Storms – Unit 10. This unit introduces how tornadoes and thunderstorms form.
11. Hurricanes – Unit 11. This unit introduces how hurricanes form and where they are the most common.
12. Climate Change – Unit 12. With the knowledge you have gained from the previous unit studies, this unit brings all the current issues of climate change to the forefront.
13. Floods – Unit 13. One of the biggest disasters caused by climate change is flooding. This unit explains why and where floods occur worldwide.
14. Fire – Unit 14. Human beings do not always start wildfires. Nature, through lightening and climate changes, ignite some of the most deadly wildfires known to man. These disasters occur when humans build neighborhoods and cities within natural areas prone to wildfires.
15. Space Objects- Unit 15 (Chapter 17). This unit introduces the types of extraterrestrial objects that can impact the Earth and cause global natural disasters. (Chapter 17 in your book)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:

On-line courses are dependent on your course syllabus. Make sure you read the syllabus carefully! **The #1 key to success on-line is to keep up with your assignments every day. Do not procrastinate on any assignments or you will fall behind.**

The tests for each unit will be given every week, and all unit tests will be open book. The tests are timed, however, so you must know this material **before** each exam. No tests will be accepted late, after the unit test has closed.

University Specific Procedures Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: [Netiquette](#)

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Academic Integrity:

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library- Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 Email:

Rebecca.Tuerk@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice:

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement:

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web URL:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M- Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903- 886-5868 or 9-1-1.