ENVS 103.01W and 02W  
Natural Disasters  
Environmental Science  
Course Syllabus Fall 2018

Instructor: Janet Hull  
Office Location: online  
Online Office Hours: M-S 10:00-5:00  
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Preferred Communication: campus email  
Communication Response Time: within 24 hours M-F

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Optional Materials: Lecture Notes, and websites provided by Instructor; various online “note and flashcard” services are not an approved source of class information

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 lots of changes are ahead. This course will increase your appreciation of the immense power of our planet, and how this can affect you.
The material and information for this class will come from the 10th textbook edition and will be the primary focus of information on your weekly, Unit tests.

As a result of this course curriculum, you will become familiar with the various countries worldwide, locating them on a world map, and understanding how natural disasters affect our global populations.

**Prerequisites:**

No prerequisites. Intro to Geography, ENVS, 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 through the construction of cities and pollution;
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 / Activity 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% 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 on the calendar for each Unit;

- Each unit exam is timed, and exams are open book. No unit exams are accepted once the next unit begins. 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;

• You are allowed to use your textbook and lecture notes *only* for your tests; you are **NOT** permitted to search Google, Wiki, or various college websites such as Quizlet. Using these online data sites for class notes or as flashcards for the tests is not approved, and students who access these online sites will receive a zero for the tests;

• 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 work will be automatically saved, but **you must 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 = A
• 80-89 = B
• 70-79 = C
• 60-69 = D
• Below 60 = F
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, only the selected recommended Internet resources I email you, 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, and you are allowed to use your book and my lecture notes only for the tests.**

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;

Students taking online classes at Texas A&M University-Commerce have the same rights as students enrolled in on-the-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 and FB page on current environmental events, and I
encourage you to stay aware of current Earth events on
https://www.facebook.com/extinctiontheory/ and
http://www.extinctiontheory.com/ for current posts. 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 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 fall behind, you'll make it through O.K. If you fall behind, there are no make-up opportunities.

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 week. 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.

Learner Support

The One Stop Shop 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 provides academic resources to help you achieve academic success. http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/academicSuccessCenter

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Content By Unit:

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.


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)

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

**VERY IMPORTANT:**

If you experience computer issues during a test, do NOT log out of your test - immediately contact campus IT 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.*

Make sure to check your system (as directed below) to insure that you do not lose a connection during your tests.

**Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or inquire about their Live Chat to submit an issue via email.
System Maintenance

D2L runs monthly updates during the last week of the month, usually on Wednesday. The system should remain up during this time unless otherwise specified in an announcement. You may experience minimal impacts to performance and/or look and feel of the environment.

Browser Support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
  - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
  - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
  - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
  - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
  - Speakers or headphones.
*For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: Java web site

- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported. Pop-ups are allowed. JavaScript is enabled. Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
  - Adobe Reader  https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Adobe Flash Player  (version 17 or later)  
    https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/  
  - Adobe Shockwave Player  https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/ 

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

Note:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.
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/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx

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

TAMUC Attendance
For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.
http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

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


Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10
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 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
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.