**GEO/GLG 170 – Disasters, Living On the Edge (Accelerated Blended Class)**

**Syllabus**

**PART 1: Course Information**

**Instructor Information**

**Instructor: Dr. Iddrisu (Iddi) Adam**

**Office Location**: 136B (Aldo Leopold Science Building)

**Office Phone Number:**389-6527

**Consultation:**No appointment is needed.  I make every effort to be present in my office during the following hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:00AM to 3:00PM

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 10:00AM -1:00 PM and from 3PM to 5PM

…but drop in any other time the door is open or feel free to call/e-mail for a set time that suits you.

**Email:** [iddi.adam@uwc.edu](mailto:iddi.adam@uwc.edu)

**Course Description**

This course reviews some of the natural and anthropogenic issues that confront our planet and the people who occupy the small mass of the universe. The course is designed as a natural science course, but will also deal with topics such as population, which are usually dealt with in a social science setting. We would study various environmental hazards, their causes, impacts on humans, and mitigations. Core topics are natural hazards (earthquakes, volcanoes, flooding, landslides, tornadoes, hurricanes), and anthropogenic hazards (climate change/global warming, nuclear hazards, and overpopulation). Additional topics may be covered: coastal hazards, pollution of groundwater, air, soil, and water, other atmospheric hazards (extreme weather, droughts), impacts from space, extinctions, biohazards, chemical hazards, and terrorism.

 Successful completion of this course will earn 3 Natural Science (NS) credits toward the UW Colleges Associate of Arts and Science degree.

**Information on Assessment**

The UW-Colleges assessment program enhances the quality and effectiveness of curriculum, programs, and services to our students.  Because they are of primary importance for student learning in Geography and Geology, the following two proficiencies may be assessed in this course:  Analytical Skills and Quantitative Skills.  Further information about assessment will be provided in class.

Specifically, the Department is interested in your ability to:

* Synthesize, evaluate, and/or interpret information and ideas (i.e. evidence, statements graphics, and questions);
* Detect and refute bias, if present;
* Identify, analyze and evaluate alternative points of view;
* Draw conclusions and examine implications; and,
* Ability to interpret graphs tables, and diagrams, as part of your general proficiency with quantitative material.

In order to assess your proficiency in each of these areas, a specific set of questions will be incorporated into regular tests in the course.  You will *not*be told the questions ahead of time and the results of these questions will impact your grade only insofar as these skills are a normal part of the expectations in this course, and the questions being tracked do not impose a different, higher standard of knowledge or ability from questions normally asked in this course in any given semester. Your individual performance on these questions will be reported, using your name, to the UW Colleges Central Office, and the overall results of the class (*without your name*) will be reported to the Geography-Geology Department Assessment Committee at the end of the semester. The results will be used to help the university, academic departments, and professors improve teaching as well as assisting students in improving their learning in general and their analytical and quantitative skills specifically.

*Please inform the instructor if you wish not to have your assessment result reported to Central Office.*

**Prerequisites:**

There are no prerequisites. However, minimal computer skills are strongly recommended.

**Textbook**

**Natural Disasters,** Seventh Edition. Patrick Abbott. McGraw Hill, 2009.

In addition to the above reading, there will be weekly readings in the form of online articles, and select book chapters that will either be supplied to you in class or found on reserve on the class’ D2L website. These readings will be assigned to you in as the semester progresses. Details on some of these readings can be found on the course D2L site.

**Course Requirements**

Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)

**Course Structure**

This course is designed to provide a hybrid experience, including both face-to-facer and online activities.

Please remember that this is an accelerated blended course, and will require substantial work outside of the f2f class time.

Contact time will be divided in the following way:

50% face-to-face

50% online

Face-to-face sessions will be held in Room 135 (Geography Lab) Tuesdays from 6PM to 9.15PM

Online sessions will be a blend of self-paced and group activities on D2L. Activities will include reading online articles, discussions, discussion summaries and online quizzes. Students would also be working on some math skills (unit conversions, Reading points from a Graph, and Density and Specific Gravity) using a program found here: wamap.org

**Part 2: Course Objectives**

As a result of taking this course:

* a student should gain understanding and insight into the nature of disasters, including the physical process associated with natural hazards;
* A student should be able to understand the related concepts of disaster magnitude and the recurrence intervals of hazardous events;
* A student should be able to understand the geographic distribution of natural hazards;
* A student should be able to understand the historical impacts of natural hazards on society;
* A student should be able to understand how different social groups react to the potential threats associated with natural hazards;
* A student should be able to understand the proactive and reactive mitigation strategies implemented to reduce the impact of natural hazards;

We will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

* Active participation in in-class and online discussions;
* Successful submission of discussion summaries; and
* Tests submitted online (D2L Dropbox)

**Part 3: Topic Outline/Schedule**

**Week 1 – Overview of hazards and the disaster cycle**

* The Math You Need Pre-Test
* Overview of hazards
* The nature of the disaster cycle
* The Math You Need (Unit Conversions) Post-Module Assessment

**Week 2 and 3 – Meteorological and Climatic hazards**

* Introduction to weather and climate
* Air masses and fronts
* Thunderstorms and tornadoes
* Hurricanes
* Droughts
* The Math You Need (Reading Points from a Curve) Post-Module Assessment

**Week 4 and 5 – Anthropogenic hazards**

* Air pollution
* Water pollution
* The Math You Need (Densities) Post-Module Assessment

**Week 6 – Geologic hazards**

* Plate tectonics
* Earthquakes
* Volcanic eruptions
* Tsunamis
* Flooding

**Week 7 – Disaster Mitigation**

* Pre-disaster
* Post-disaster

**Part 4: Grading policy**

To receive a grade for this course you are required to complete the following:

* *7 tests submitted online (D2L Dropbox)*
* *Successful participation in online discussions for each week*
* *Successful participation in The Math You Need (through wama.org)*
* *Submission of discussion summaries online (D2L Discussion forums)*

**Grade Component Values**

Your course grade will be based on the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation** | **Points** |
| Introduce yourself Post | 10 |
| Pre-Test (The Math You Need) | 12 |
| 3 Post (The Math You Need) Module Assessment @ 15 points each | 45 |
| Post-test (The Math You Need) | 12 |
| 7 Online tests @ 50 points each | 350 |
| 16 Online discussion (2 each week, except week 3 and 6 which have 3 each) @ 10 points each | 160 |
| 7 Online Discussion summaries (1 each week) @ 20 points each | 140 |
| **Total** | **729** |

**Online Discussions**

For each lesson we will have an online discussion. The online discussions pertain to specific topics covered in each lesson. Topics and specific expectations for each online discussion are posted with the material for that lesson. You will submit your comments in the appropriate discussion forum in the **Discussions** area.

It is important that you participate in the online discussions for each lesson because this is where we exchange some of our ideas. Your contributions to each lesson's discussion are worth 10 points for a total of 160 points for the semester (each Week has 2 lessons, with the exception of Weeks 3 and 6, which have 3 each).

**Lesson Discussion Grading Rubric:**

For your lesson discussion postings, you will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Competency** | **Points** | **Percent** |
| Exemplary | 9.0 to 10.0 | 90 to 100 |
| Above typical | 8.0 to 8.9 | 80 to 89 |
| Typical | 7.0 to 7.9 | 70 to 79 |
| Below typical | 6.0 to 6.9 | 60 to 69 |
| Non-responsive | 0.0 to 5.9 | 0 to 59 |

**Competency Definitions:**

**Exemplary**

* Information clearly relates to the main topic and adds new concepts and information. It includes several supporting details or examples.
* Consistently provides resources even if not required.
* Enhances the critical thinking process consistently through premise reflection and difference of questioning self or others.
* Encourages and facilitates interaction among the members of the group.
* Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used consistently throughout the discussion.

**Above typical**

* Information clearly relates to the main topic.
* Occasionally provides resources even if not required.
* Critical thinking and premise reflection is demonstrated in the discussion by the individual only.
* Responds to other members of the group.
* Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used consistently throughout the discussion.

**Typical**

* Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details or examples are given.
* Provides resources when requested.
* Responds to questions but does not engage in premise reflection.
* Rarely interacts or responds to other members of the group.
* Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used occasionally throughout the discussion.

**Below typical**

* Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic or simply relates to the main topic.
* Does not provide resources even when requested.
* Does not respond to questions posed by the instructor.
* Responds to the instructor only.
* Professional vocabulary and writing style is not used.

**Non-responsive**

* Posting not submitted to the discussion forum by the due date or fails to meet the minimum expectations of "Below Typical" effort.

**The Math You Need**

This semester, we would be using a program to help us better understand and solve some of the math and math-related problems we would be encountering. As part of this, we would have three modules of online materials for you to work on. These modules would be self-paced but need to be completed before we meet on Tuesday. The three unites are:

* + Unit Conversions
  + Reading Graphs
  + Density and Specific Gravity.

At the beginning of the course, there would be a pre-test. This is designed to gauge how much math proficiency you bring to the class. After we are done with all three modules, we would have a post-test, to gauge if there has been any improvements in your understanding of those same math skills you were tested on in the pre-test.

**Final Grade Determination**

It is important to remind yourself that this class is a 3*-credit****science course***. You can expect that the material covered in this course would be fairly rigorous**.** Semester grades will be figured on a percentage basis, with letter grades determined by a “curve” of points.  Generally, the following curve applies:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A =    100-94% | B  =    86.9-83% | C =    76.9-73% | D =    66.9-63% |
| A- =    93.9-90% | B- =   82.9-80% | C- =   72.9-70% | D- =   62.9-60% |
| B+ =    89.9-87% | C+ =    79.9-77% | D+ =  69.9-67% | F =    < 60% |

**Part 5: Course Policies**

**Tests, Quizzes, group work, essays and Examinations – *Read the Fine Print***

* You will be responsible for any missed lecture material.
* Late writing assignments will **NOT** be accepted unless permission has been obtained **ahead of time** to hand in the assignment after the due date, following the conditions and procedures set out below. Otherwise the grade will be **zero** (not "F").
* A "make-up" test will be given only if the conditions and procedures set out below have been met, otherwise the grade will be **zero**.
* All make-up exams or tests **will** be essay in format (no exceptions).
* There will be discussions on prepared materials and videos at various times throughout the course. *Attendance may be taken on these days and may be used to decide final grades*.

**Procedures to be followed in case of absence from quizzes and exams**

I have been informed of the absence by telephone message (not e-mail) **by 4:00pm on the day on which the absence occurs** (I expect you to leave a voice-mail with your name and a return number if I am not in my office, and I also expect you to call at a reasonable time of the day). I want to TALK with you. Be aware that I might not accept your excuse -- therefore, it is in your best interests to contact me **before** the test.

1. Written documentation of a medical or compassionate cause for the absence or lateness (e.g. physician's note, funeral notice) supplied by the time of the next class meeting.

*Follow these procedures should the need arise*.

Attendance

* Students are highly recommended to regularly attend classes;
* Evaluation is based on the readings and lecture materials;
* It will be extremely difficult to pass this course if you do not attend lectures and study the materials that are presented;
* We are all adults. As such, I will not take roll (except on occasions when I show a video or hold special discussion seminars);
* You are expected to attend lectures (attendance mean showing up on time, staying the duration of the class period, and participating);
* If you miss a class, you need to get the notes for the missed lecture from one of your classmates;
* I do not give out my notes, nor will I give you a “repeat performance” of my lecture during my office hours; and,
* If you bring in your notes I will, however, clarify any points that are unclear to you as well as discuss any other course material.

**Time Commitment**

College instructors assume that students will spend approximately two to three hours outside of class for every hour in class for a traditional class. Thus, since this is a three credit-hour course, the average student will need to spend six to nine hours per week outside of the classroom reading the text, completing writing assignments, and studying for quizzes and exams. Since this is a hybrid course, make accommodation for more online time. Be aware some weeks will likely require fewer hours, but others (such as exam weeks) will require significantly more.

**Academic Conduct**

As a student at the University of Wisconsin-Marshfield/Wood County, you are part of an academic community and therefore expected to behave in a manner that is respectful of the community, by not engaging in ***academic misconduct***.

         1. **Academic misconduct is an act in which a student**:

(a) seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;

(b) uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;

(c) forges or falsifies academic documents or records;

(d) intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;

(e) engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student’s academic performance; or,

(f) assists other students in these acts.

 2.   **Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to**:

* cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course;
* submitting a paper or assignment as one’s own work when a part/or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another;
* submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas;
* stealing examinations or course materials;
* submitting, if contrary to the rules of the course, work previously presented in another course;
* tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; and,
* knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination of other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student whose name the work is submitted or performed.

**Course Concerns or Problems:**

If you have any problems with any aspects of the course or have questions or comments, it will be in your best interest to see me as they arise so they can be dealt with effectively. Please do not wait till it is too late to seek help or advise if you are struggling. Let me know how you feel about the course as the semester progresses

**Accommodation for special needs and disabilities**

If you have a religious affiliation, a learning situation or disability for which you need accommodation, please see student services as soon as possible. Also, please notify me so that I can make provisions in a timely manner. Please note that it is your responsibility to contact student services. I will need verification from student services in the form of a note or an email before I can make any accommodation.

***Alright – Look out of the window. What do you see? How has the environment changed in the last two thousand years? How can we explain that? Strap on your seatbelts and let the adventure begin!!!***