

**GEOGRAPHY 314:**  
**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND THE HUMAN RESPONSE**  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA  
Course outline – Summer 2015

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

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**Office hours:** Thursday 3:00 to 4:00 pm, Friday 10:30 to 11:30 am  
or by appointment

**Lecture Information:**

Time: T/R – 12:30-2:30 pm, F 12:30-1:30 pm  
Location: COR B111

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on the causes of global environmental change, the present and expected impacts on natural and social systems, and response strategies that have been proposed or enacted. Topics include global environmental change; sustainable development; biodiversity; and population impoverishment and environmental degradation among others.

**COURSE OBJECTIVE**

This course has been designed with the idea in mind that it will be important, regardless where you live in the world, that you understand the ecological, social, cultural and economic changes that will surround you in the coming decades.

By the end of the course you should be able to answer the following questions:

- What is the relationship between natural climate variations and human-induced climate change?
- What are the major concerns regarding global environmental change?
- How does global environmental change relate to other problems like population growth, sustainable development, biodiversity, poverty, pollution and

land/environmental degradation?

- What are some current response strategies (i.e. mitigation and adaptation) to global environmental change and how are they being implemented around the world

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Assignments (2)	25%
Term Paper	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%

**Exam format** will include a combination of short and long-answer and multiple-choice questions. The questions for the midterm exam and final exam will be based on lectures, assigned readings and class discussion. The midterm test will cover only the topics discussed immediately preceding it. The final exam is comprehensive, although may be weighted more heavily on material not previously tested on.

**Final Grade Allocation:**

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
90-100%	85-89%	80-84%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	65-69%	60-64%	50-59%	<=49%

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Understanding Climate Change: Science, Policy and Practice, (2014), Burch, S. L., and Harris, S. E. University of Toronto Press.  
(available at the University Bookstore)

A list of supplemental reading and texts will be posted on CourseSpaces.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATION**

CourseSpaces learning management systems (LMS) will serve as the main avenue of communication in this course (<http://coursespaces.uvic.ca>). Please monitor the page on a regular basis for course announcements, readings assignments and lecture handouts. If you are having difficulty logging in or password problems, contact the Computer Help Desk Email: [helpdesk@uvic.ca](mailto:helpdesk@uvic.ca), Tel: 250-721-7687

## **LECTURE HANDOUTS**

Topic handouts *based* on lecture presentations will be provided. They will be posted on CourseSpaces the evening before the next lecture. Topic handouts will be removed 7 days after the posting date. Students are responsible for downloading/saving and completing notes packages. If you miss any material, make arrangements to get handouts from a fellow student, not from instructor.

## **IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES**

- Students must complete all evaluation components to obtain credit.
- All assignments must be submitted to write the final exam.
- Failure to complete an assignment, term paper or exam (midterm or final), without permission from the instructor, will result in an 'N' grade, which equals a Grade Point Value of 0

Missed exams:

- Students will not be permitted to write make-up tests except for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Please inform the instructor of your situation promptly and present written proof within five (5) working days.
- Any make-up test or examination may not follow the same format as the in-class one.
- Conflicts with holidays or travel plans are not considered an acceptable reason to apply for a deferred examination.

Assignments/papers:

- Late assignments/papers will be penalized 20% per day (including weekends and holidays). Exceptions will only be granted for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Only the course instructor can grant exceptions.
- Conflicts with holidays or travel plans are not considered an acceptable reason to apply for an assignment extension.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A high level of student cooperation and participation, involving asking and answering questions during the lectures and labs.
- *Cell phones and portable music players must be turned off or silenced during lectures. Students are also required to remove earphones.*
- Students are expected to be punctual for classes and labs.
- Students are required to attend all lectures and take notes. Not all material provided in the lecture handouts is covered in assigned readings and learning resources.
- Not all assigned readings and learning resources will be covered in the lectures but may be covered in the exams.

## **CLASS CLIMATE**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

The University of Victoria has made a conscientious effort to increase diversity in the student, staff and faculty member populations. To ensure that all class members feel welcomed and equally able to contribute to class discussions, we will all endeavour to be respectful in our language, our examples, and the manner in which we conduct our discussions and group work. If you have any concerns about the climate of the class, please contact me.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating) is a very serious matter in any academic institution and is dealt with severely at the University of Victoria.

*The responsibility of the institution:* Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

*The responsibility of the student:* Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor.

Infractions will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. Commonly, the penalty for any form of cheating/plagiarism is a grade of F on the tests or laboratory assignments, or a final grade of F in the course. However, depending on the severity of the case other penalties may include a record on the student's transcript or expulsion. Please familiarize yourself with the University policy on academic integrity found in the Undergraduate Calendar at the following website. Please contact me if you have any questions. (<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2011/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html>)

## **STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY**

If you have any type of disability, there are support systems, resources, and accommodation actions available to you. If you wish to access any of these supports, resources or accommodations, I encourage you to contact the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (<http://www.uvic.ca/services/rcsd/>) to ensure your success in this course. Please note that you are under no obligation to disclose your disability.

## **COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY**

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, table, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

## **TERM WORK – IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION**

### **Assignments (25%)**

Assignment 1 (12.5%)      Date Assigned: May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Date Due: May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

Assignment 2 (12.5%)      Date Assigned: May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015  
Date Due: May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Information on individual assignment topics will be provided in class.

### **Midterm Exam (25%) – June 2<sup>nd</sup> (in lecture period)**

### **Term Paper (25%) - Due June 26<sup>th</sup> by 1:30 pm**

The term paper component of this course should be viewed as an opportunity to perform an insightful analysis on a climate change topic or hypothesis of the individual students choosing.

Students need to have their term paper topic approved by **June 10<sup>th</sup>**. Before (or on this date) submit a 1-page document outlining your final project (ie. topic and hypothesis (if applicable), anticipated organization (headings), key papers/literature to be used).

*This is worth no marks, but rather acts an opportunity for me to make sure you are on the right track for a successful and interesting term paper. However, failure to do this will result in an automatic 10 mark deduction on your final paper.*

### **Final Exam (25%) – June 25<sup>th</sup>, in class period (12:30-2:30 pm)**