

GEOG 143: ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS AND SOCIETY

In Workflow

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Approval Path

1. Thu, 04 Apr 2024 21:52:54 GMT
Matt Schmidlein (schmidmc): Approved for GEOG Chair
2. Wed, 17 Apr 2024 22:41:34 GMT
Mikkel Jensen (mikkel.jensen): Approved for NSM College Committee Chair
3. Fri, 10 May 2024 16:51:51 GMT
Shannon Datwyler (datwyler): Approved for NSM Dean

History

1. Feb 14, 2024 by Matt Schmidlein (schmidmc)

Date Submitted: Thu, 04 Apr 2024 21:43:30 GMT

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Last approved: Wed, 14 Feb 2024 15:01:37 GMT

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Changes proposed by: Matt Schmidlein (211414750)

Contact(s):

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Catalog Title:

Environmental Hazards and Society

Class Schedule Title:

Environ Hazards and Society

Academic Group: (College)

NSM - Natural Sciences & Mathematics

Academic Organization: (Department)

Geography

Will this course be offered through the College of Continuing Education (CCE)?

No

Catalog Year Effective:

Fall 2024 (2024/2025 Catalog)

Subject Area: (prefix)

GEOG - Geography

Catalog Number: (course number)

143

Course ID: (For administrative use only.)

201468

Units:

3

Is the only purpose of this change to update the term typically offered or the enforcement of existing requisites at registration?

No

In what term(s) will this course typically be offered?

Spring term only - even years

Does this course require a room for its final exam?

Yes, final exam requires a room

This course complies with the credit hour policy:

Yes

Justification for course proposal:

The purpose of this proposal is to seek GE Area D designation for an existing upper division geography course that focuses on human responses to hazards and disasters. Geography has an almost 100 year history of social science research and practice focusing on the relationships between societies and hazards events. These events represent substantial social issues in that 1) individual and societal choices shape their occurrence and distribute their losses differentially among members of society, with marginalized and minoritized populations often experiencing much higher relative disaster impacts, and 2) the impacts arising from these events are expected to increase. This class therefore provides our students with an opportunity to explore social science perspectives around a topic critical to continued societal development.

The course also serves to illustrate how social issues arise from human interactions with natural systems more generally. This understanding is important in evaluating many issues of policy before voters and public officials both now and in the future. And these issues are currently quite underrepresented in our upper-division Area D course offerings. Inclusion of this course in Area D will therefore help to fill a gap in our current GE curriculum.

Finally, this course integrates nicely with current lower-division GE B1 courses (Geog 5: Violent Weather/Changing Atmosphere, Geol 7: Natural Disasters) that focus on the physical processes of disaster events. Students taking those courses as part of their GE will benefit from additional insights on how social systems interact with those physical systems to create hazards and disasters. This will help create a GE course cluster for students interested in understanding hazards and disasters from a broad set of perspectives.

Course Description: (Not to exceed 90 words and language should conform to catalog copy.)

Traditional views of hazards focus on the processes associated with natural or technological systems. But societal choices shape the occurrence and differential impact of hazard events. This course focuses on the intersection between physical and social systems that create hazards. We consider the development of various theoretical understandings of hazards; individual and societal responses to hazards; the history of U.S. disaster response; how socio-economic and demographic factors shape differential hazard and disaster impacts, and approaches to hazard vulnerability assessment.

Are one or more field trips required with this course?

No

Fee Course?

No

Is this course designated as Service Learning?

No

Is this course designated as Curricular Community Engaged Learning?

No

Does this course require safety training?

No

Does this course require personal protective equipment (PPE)?

No

Does this course have prerequisites?

No

Does this course have corequisites?

No

Graded:

Letter

Approval required for enrollment?

No Approval Required

Course Component(s) and Classification(s):

Lecture

Lecture Classification

CS#02 - Lecture/Discussion (K-factor=1WTU per unit)

Lecture Units

3

Is this a paired course?

No

Is this course crosslisted?

No

Can this course be repeated for credit?

No

Can the course be taken for credit more than once during the same term?

No

Description of the Expected Learning Outcomes and Assessment Strategies:

List the Expected Learning Outcomes and their accompanying Assessment Strategies (e.g., portfolios, examinations, performances, pre-and post-tests, conferences with students, student papers). Click the plus sign to add a new row.

	Expected Learning Outcome	Assessment Strategies
1	Describe the various ways in which human responses to hazards and disasters (e.g. perceptions, decision making, adjustments, political organization, etc.) influence their occurrence and characteristics.	Exam 1, Exam 2, Disaster Movie Review
2	Utilize existing theoretical frameworks to evaluate the interaction of social and physical systems in creating hazards and disasters.	Group Presentation Assignment
3	Explain how various socio-economic and demographic characteristics (e.g. economics, race and ethnicity, gender, age, family structure, employment, etc.) influence hazard outcomes.	County Vulnerability Profile
4	Integrate datasets describing social and physical systems to create an assessment of the hazard vulnerability for a US community.	County Vulnerability Profile

Attach a list of the required/recommended course readings and activities:

Geog 143 Syllabus Area D Proposal.docx

Is this course required in a degree program (major, minor, graduate degree, certificate?)

No

Does the proposed change or addition cause a significant increase in the use of College or University resources (lab room, computer)?

No

Will there be any departments affected by this proposed course?

No

I/we as the author(s) of this course proposal agree to provide a new or updated accessibility checklist to the Dean's office prior to the semester when this course is taught utilizing the changes proposed here.

I/we agree

University Learning Goals

Undergraduate Learning Goals:

Competence in the disciplines
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world
Intellectual and practical skills
Personal and social responsibility

Is this course required as part of a teaching credential program, a single subject, or multiple subject waiver program (e.g., Liberal Studies, Biology) or other school personnel preparation program (e.g., School of Nursing)?

No

GE Course and GE Goal(s)

Is this a General Education (GE) course or is it being considered for GE?

Yes

In which GE area(s) does this apply?

D. The Individual and Society

Which GE objective(s) does this course satisfy?

Read, write, and understand relatively complex and sophisticated English prose.
Find and use common information resources, engage in specialized library research, use computers and seek out appropriate expert opinion and advice.
Develop an acquaintance and understanding of cultures and major dynamic social institutions which affect one's life.

Attach Course Syllabus with Detailed Outline of Weekly Topics:

Geog 143 Syllabus Area D Proposal.docx

Syllabi must include: GE area outcomes listed verbatim; catalog description of the course; prerequisites, if any; student learning objectives; assignments; texts; reading lists; materials; grading system; exams and other methods of evaluation.

Will more than one section of this course be offered?

No

General Education Details - Area D: The Individual and Society

Section 1.

Please provide a statement indicating the means and methods for evaluating the extent to which the objectives of Area D, the cultural diversity requirements, and writing requirements are met for all course sections.

The core assessment tools for the course have been mapped to its learning outcomes, which in turn have been compared to the Area D, cultural diversity, and writing requirements. The learning outcomes and basic structure of the assessments will remain intact across all course offerings. Course syllabus will also be reviewed during periodic evaluation, providing the department primary committee the ability to review course content and assignments to ensure they comply with these requirements.

What steps will the department take to ensure that instructors comply with the category criteria (and who is responsible)? Before a course can be offered in multiple sections, a designated person in the department must provide a description of what would be common to all sections and what might typically vary between sections.

This course is tied to an individual faculty member's scholarly training and areas of research. It is not anticipated that multiple sections will be offered. But if they are, course learning outcomes will remain consistent across all sections, as well as the basic approach to assessment.

Section 2.

Indicate in written statements how the course meets the following criteria for Area D. Relate the statements directly to the course syllabus and outline. Be as succinct as possible.

Describes and evaluates ethical and social values in their historical and cultural context.

This course considers human interaction with physical systems that create hazards and disaster events and differentially distribute their impacts across members of societies. This includes an consideration of differences in risk perception, communication and

decision making; individual and community hazard histories; and differing evaluations of tradeoffs between costs of, say, hazard mitigation vs. disaster losses. We consider the interplay between social structures and individual agency in shaping disaster outcomes, and how processes of marginalization limit access to the economic, social, and informational resources needed to reduce disaster losses. We review the histories and legal structures that shape US disaster responses. And we explore ways to assess which areas are more likely to experience poor hazard outcomes as a tool to target resources for interventions to those communities. All of this involves exploring the ethical and historical contexts that shape hazards and disasters, and looking for ways to improve our approaches.

Explains and applies the principles and methods of academic disciplines to the study of social and individual behavior.

Students review theoretical models and approaches from the hazards and disaster research literature that help them understand and explain human responses to disasters, and therefore anticipate and understand differential disaster impacts. This body of literature has been developed over the past 80 years or so by geographers, sociologists, social psychologists and others. Students also undertake county vulnerability assessment in which they are required to apply these frameworks to analyze hazard vulnerability for a US county. This project requires them to couple discipline-appropriate data acquisition, management, and analysis skills as they work with US Census Bureau and hazard loss datasets with appropriate theoretical understanding of how population subgroups within the county (defined by race and ethnicity, age, ability, economic status, family structure, and other factors) may be differentially impacted.

Demonstrates an understanding of the role of human diversity in human society, for example, race, ethnicity, class, age, ability/disability, sexual identity, gender and gender expression.

Throughout the class, we consider examples of how factors relevant to human responses to hazards and disasters have been observed to be systematically related to factors such as racism, economic status, sex and gender, age, ability, etc. In the third unit of the class, students are required to apply that knowledge in conducting a county vulnerability assessment, a part of which requires them to identify population subgroups with their study area that may experience poorer disaster outcomes due to these factors.

Explains and critically examines social dynamics and issues in their historical and cultural contexts.

The class challenges the widely held perception that hazards and disasters are caused by external physical or technological systems operating on societies, and explores how individual and societal choices exert an at least equal influence on their occurrence. Hazards and disaster are thus social issues arising from social dynamics. To illustrate this, we explore the range of choices that societies can and have made to influence hazard and disaster events.

Includes a writing component described on course syllabus

1) If course is lower division, formal and/or informal writing assignments encouraging students to think through course concepts using at least one of the following: periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, periodic formal writing assignments, periodic journals, reading logs, other. Writing in lower division courses need not be graded, but must, at a minimum, be evaluated for clarity and proper handling of terms, phrases, and concepts related to the course.

2) If course is upper division, a minimum of 1500 words of formal, graded writing. [Preferably there should be more than one formal writing assignment and each writing assignment (e.g. periodic lab reports, exams which include essay questions, a research/term paper etc.) should be due in stages throughout the semester to allow the writer to revise after receiving feedback from the instructor. Include an indication of how writing is to be evaluated and entered into course grade determination.]

Course writing comes in three main areas spread throughout the semester:

1. Short answer and short essay questions on Exams 1 and 2,
2. Disaster movie review writing assignment, expected to be approximately 500 words, and
3. County vulnerability assessment project, expected to be approximately 1,250 words.

This collection of assignments easily exceeds the GE upper division writing requirements. They are due in the 6th, 10th, 11th, and 16th weeks of class (the last assignment is due during finals week). This allows students to receive feedback on earlier writing before submitting subsequent writing assignments. Students are also provided highly detailed descriptions and suggested outlines for the disaster movie review and vulnerability assessment assignments, along with detailed rubrics prior to their submission. Finally, 2+ weeks of class time is spent helping student acquire, process, and analyze the datasets that they use as the basis for their county vulnerability assessments.

Section 3.

If you would like, you may provide further information that might help the G.E. Course Review Committee understand how this course meets these criteria and/or the G.E. Program Objectives found in the CSUS Policy Manual, General Education Program, Section I.B.

I hope the previous comments address this point.

Key: 2322