



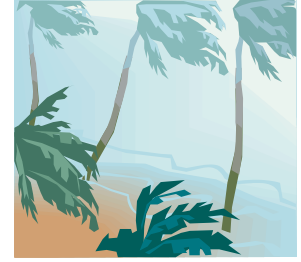
Environmental Hazards

GRG 334C – Unique #3800

Fall 2009

T-Th 3:30-4:45PM

Room: GRG 102



Dr. Robert Dull

office hours: Tues 11:00AM-11:45AM,
and Wed 2:00-3:30 PM. or by appt.

office: GRG 318

phone: 232.3245

e-mail: robdull@austin.utexas.edu

TA: Nancy Aguirre, e-mail: cnaguirre@mail.utexas.edu

Course Description:

Natural disasters are of central concern to citizens and governments across the globe. The loss of human lives, disruption of economies, and destruction of physical infrastructure that result from these events often lead to national crises both in developing and developed countries. This course will introduce students to the geophysical phenomena that are the root causes of natural disasters, as well as the social institutions and human geographies that exacerbate them. Some of the hazards that will be covered in this class include earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tornados, floods, drought, wildfire, and mass wasting events (landslides, etc). We will also consider how future global climate change and population growth might result in a changing geography of natural hazards and human populations susceptible to them.

Course Structure

The Environmental Hazards course includes T-Th lectures, in-class discussion, assigned readings, and three exams. Please know that you are responsible for learning all lecture, video, and reading material presented. Keep this syllabus and refer to it for answers to your questions before approaching Dr. Dull. If you lose the syllabus, please photocopy another student's copy. Several videos on natural hazards will be shown in class; please take notes.

Lecture **Powerpoint slides** will be shown once in class, and **will not be provided online**. Please get notes from another student if you miss a Powerpoint lecture.

Required Text

Keller, Edward A. and Blodgett, Robert H. 2008. *Natural Hazards; Earth's Processes as Hazards, Disasters, and Catastrophes*, 2nd Edition Pearson/Prentice Hall Publishers, 488 pp. ISBN#:0-13-231864-8

Conflicts

Please contact Dr. Dull early in the semester if you have any schedule conflicts, or if you have a documented disability that requires special accommodations (*ADA statement below).

Examinations

There will be three exams given. All tests will cover material from assigned readings, class lectures, and/or course videos. The first two exams are each worth 30% of your course grade, and the cumulative Final Exam is worth 40%. **If you are absent for an exam, you must comply with the examination absence policy (see below).** A review session will be held for the Final Exam, but not for the first two. Exam grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Examination Absence Policy

If you miss any exam, **and you have a valid written excuse**, you will be given an opportunity to take a makeup essay exam or be given the option to remove that exam's points from your course point total. In order to be allowed to makeup the exam you will need to present Dr. Dull with a copy of a **valid written excuse**. If you miss more than one exam due to valid written excuses, you may be asked to take an incomplete and to complete the course requirements the following semester.

What is a valid written excuse?

- Doctor's note. This note should specifically say that you were unable to come to class because of a verified illness. This means that you must go to see a real medical doctor. It must be signed.
 - Note from athletic department, music department, etc. asking for an excuse due to a university function. These notes need to be presented well before the exam, preferably by September 10th.
 - Military Service activation note.
 - Trial or jury duty note.
 - Religious holy day. Religious holy day conflicts must be brought to the attention of Dr. Dull by September 10th. Please check the syllabus to be sure that your religious holy days don't conflict with exams. If there is a conflict: please provide a written, signed request before the end of the second week of class.
- **All notes must be on letterhead, signed, include a contact name and phone number.**

**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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call SSD at (512) 471-6259, TTY (512) 471-4641, or go in person to the Student Services Building, Suite 4.400.*

What are some kinds of unacceptable excuses?

- I am going on vacation at the end of the semester
- I am going to my brother’s graduation
- I am getting married, my aunt’s cousin is getting married, etc.
- I slept in, my alarm clock didn’t work, etc.
- I had a rough night, my girlfriend broke up with me, etc.
- My car broke down, I ran out of gas, etc. (Get a cab!).
- And many more...

If you foresee that any of these unacceptable excuse events may happen this semester, please plan to take this class next semester or some other time. ****Do not ask Dr. Dull to bend the rules for you!** If you do not have a valid excuse, you will receive a zero for that exam. This is in your hands.

Attendance

Please plan to attend classes regularly. Students will be responsible for all material presented during class time, as well as all assigned readings. **If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes and/or copy handouts from other students.** Please do not ask Dr. Dull for materials that were missed.

Grading

Your overall grade in this course will be calculated based on these percentages:

Exams #1 and #2 (2 X 30%).....	60%
Final Exam.....	40%
Overall:	100%

Grades will be determined using a standard grading scale: A= 90-100%, B=80-90%, C=70-80%, D=60-70%. Please note that a plus/minus grading scale will be used this semester per new university policy. (ie. 80-82% = B-, 83-86% = B, 87-89% = B+).

Individual exams will not typically be curved, but a class curve will be adopted for the final grades if necessary.

Office Hours

My office hours this semester are Tuesdays 11:00AM-11:45AM, and Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 PM. You may also arrange to meet with me at another time by e-mailing me to set up an appointment. **Drop-ins are generally welcome if the office door is open/ajar, but not immediately before lecture or on the same day as a class exam.** If the office door is shut, please e-mail Dr. Dull to schedule an appointment.

Course Schedule for Geography 334C – Fall 2009

Date		Lecture Topic	Reading Assignment
Aug	27	Intro., syllabus, hazards, population	Chapter 1
Sept	1	Intro cont., Plate Tectonics	
	3	Earthquakes - faults, seismology, measurement	Chapter 2
	8	Fault zones, prediction, paleoseismology	
	10	Earthquake case studies	
	15	Volcanic hazards and eruptive mechanisms, VEI scale	Chapter 4
	17	Case study – volcanic eruptions – Ilopango, Pinatubo	
	22	Volcano types, eruption styles – explosive/effusive	
	24	Paleovolcanism, hazards in prehistory	
	29	- EXAM #1 -	TEST
Oct	1	Tsunamis	Chapter 3
	6	Case Study - Dec. 2004 Sumatran earthquake/tsunami	
	8	Floods, stream processes	Chapter 5
	13	Case Studies - Floods	
	15	Mass wasting – falls, slides, flows	Chapter 6
	20	Sinkholes, subsidence, soil hazards	Chapter 7
	22	Severe Weather – Thunderstorms, lightening, Tornadoes	Chapter 8
	27	Case Studies – Tornadoes	
	29	- EXAM #2 -	TEST
Nov	3	Mid-latitude cyclones and tropical cyclones - Mitch, Galveston 1900 & 2008	Chapter 9
	5	Case Study – Hurricanes Katrina, Gustav, Ike	
	10	Coastal Hazards, waves, erosion	Chapter 10
	12	Climate Change, Global Warming,	Chapter 11
	17	El Niño-Southern Oscillation	
	19	Extraterrestrial impacts, extinctions	Chapter 13
	24	Case Study - Shoemaker-Levy	
	26	Thanksgiving Holiday – no class!	
Dec.	1	Wildfires	Chapter 12
	3	Final Exam Review	
		Final Wednesday December 9th: 9AM-12Noon	
			TEST

Plagiarism (and cheating): As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues and between professor and student; without this trust research cannot be safely communicated and knowledge cannot be adequately assessed.