

GEOL 1370 – NATURAL DISASTERS

SPRING 2024 SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Daniel Hauptvogel

dwhauptvogel@uh.edu

Class Time: M/W 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm, SEC 100

Office Hours: By appointment. Send me an email and we'll set a date/time.



TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Graduate student teaching assistants will grade your assignments. If you have questions or need help on an assignment, please see one of these TAs in the [Geoscience Learning Center](#). If you have a question regarding the grading of one of your assignments, please email the TA that graded it for clarification.

Tanzina Akther - takther@cougarnet.uh.edu

Ronin Costello - rscostel@cougarnet.uh.edu

Riwaj Ghimire - rghimire@cougarnet.uh.edu

Nilay Gungor - ngungor@cougarnet.uh.edu

Thishan Karandana Gamalath - thishankg@cougarnet.uh.edu

Bhupender Kumar - bkumar@cougarnet.uh.edu

Asmara Lehrmann - aalehrma@cougarnet.uh.edu

Edgar Moreno - eemoren2@Cougarnet.uh.edu

Ray Oware - roware@cougarnet.uh.edu

Ehsan Soleymani - esoleyma@cougarnet.uh.edu

Leo Sun - lsun27@cougarnet.uh.edu

Yin-Kai Wang - ywang272@cougarnet.uh.edu

TEXTBOOK

A textbook is required for this course and is part of the [Cougar Textbook Access Program \(CTAP\)](#). If you opt out of this program, you will need to purchase the digital version of the book [direct from W.W. Norton](#). The book is *Natural Disasters* by Stephen Marshak, ISBN 9780393532654, \$61.95 for the digital version and access to guided learning explorations. There will be several graded assignments given from this book. While I would love to use open-access materials, as I do for my physical geology class, a quality book does not exist for this course.



GRADE BREAKDOWN

I will follow a standard grading scale for this class (Table 1). If your final grade reaches XX.5, it will round up to the next number.

Letter	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Number	≥ 93	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60

Table 1 - Grading Scale

EXAMS: 40%

There will be four (4) non-cumulative exams during the semester and will only cover new material leading up to the exam (i.e., Exam 2 does not have material from Exam 1). The lowest exam grade will be dropped. Exams will take place online through Canvas and will be open for a 14-hour window from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm on exam days. Exams can be found in the “Modules” tab on our Canvas page. Exams are open-book/note. Browser lockdown software and cameras will not be used. You will have 60 minutes to answer 50 questions. There are no lectures on exam days, so use our scheduled class time to take the exam.

GUIDED LEARNING EXPLORATIONS: 10%

Most chapters will have an assigned Guided Learning Exploration (GLE). These are virtual exercises that summarize each chapter and include a range of interactive questions. Questions are based on the chapter readings. These assignments are completion-based. There are no due dates for GLEs, but all must be completed by April 29, our last day of class. All GLEs need to be accessed through the links on Canvas, do not go through the Norton website or your grades will not transfer to Canvas.

QUIZZES: 15%

There will be six quizzes based on the chapter readings and lectures. These will take place on Canvas. Each quiz will contain 10 questions with a 15-minute time limit. Quizzes will be open book/note, and browser lockdown software and cameras will not be used. There are no due dates for quizzes but suggested due dates are given to keep you on pace with the material we cover in class. You can turn in quizzes at any time after they are posted, but there is a hard deadline of April 29, our last day of class, for all quizzes to be completed.

ASSIGNMENTS: 35%

There will be six assignments throughout the semester. You may work with others on the assignments, but all answers must be written in your own words. Full sentences are required to earn credit for answers. Assignments do have due dates, and late work will not be accepted.

Assignments will utilize Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and the desktop version of Google Earth. See [Required Software](#) below for more information on what you need for assignments and [Assignment Submissions](#) about the process of uploading completed assignments to Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Cheating, copying, and plagiarism are taken very seriously in this class. Any work that you submit must be written in your own words, even if you worked with others on an assignment. High ethical standards are critical to the integrity of any institution, and bear directly on the ultimate value of conferred degrees. All UH community members are expected to contribute to an atmosphere of the highest possible ethical standards. Maintaining such an atmosphere requires that any instances of academic dishonesty be recognized and addressed. The [UH Academic Honesty Policy](#) is designed to handle those instances with fairness to all parties involved: the students, the instructors, and the University itself. All students and faculty of the University of Houston are responsible for being familiar with this policy.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS

All assignments will be uploaded to Canvas via Turnitin. Uploading assignments is a 2-step process.

- **Step 1: Initial assignment upload** – You select the document you want to upload.
- **Step 2: Confirm assignment submission** - After you initially upload your assignment, you will be asked to confirm your submission. If you see the big green check mark after hitting “Submit to Turnitin”, then you successfully uploaded your assignment.

If you don't confirm your submission in the 2nd step, your document will not be submitted, and you will receive a grade of 0. The uploading process will take longer when everyone tries to upload with a few minutes remaining on the deadline, so be sure to upload your assignment earlier. If you are having trouble uploaded, try using a different browser.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not taken, but Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) and [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#) for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Under these policies, students with excused absences will be provided with an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the course grade or a satisfactory alternative. Please read the full policy for details regarding reasons for excused absences, the approval process, and extended absences. Additional policies address absences related to [military service](#), [religious holy days](#), [pregnancy and related conditions](#), and [disability](#).

CHATGPT

Most of you have heard about ChatGPT, and you may be tempted to use it for dishonest purposes in your classes. I think this will fundamentally change education from both student and professor perspectives. The bottom line is that using ChatGPT to get answers to questions is academic dishonesty. Can professors catch it? Programs are already being released to detect if answers come from ChatGPT, and the developers are working on a way to invisibly watermark the answers from the program.

While other professors will try to ban its use, I want to encourage you to use ChatGPT smartly because I look at it as another tool to use for education. Most importantly, the answers you get from the program are only as good as the information you feed into it, and even then it can give you incorrect information. Plus, it's not very good at answering many of the questions you'll see on assignments from this class (I've already tried 😊), and it can't make figures/graphs... yet. It is, however, very good at providing basic information to help you. For example, you can ask it to explain something you don't understand, like the concept of partial melting (we'll talk about this during the volcanoes chapter). Ask it to create practice questions about a particular topic. Ask it to create a study guide about a topic. You can ask it to explain how to perform a function or calculation in Google Earth and Excel.

LATE OR MISSED WORK

In general, late work is not accepted without a valid excuse and supporting documentation.

- **Quizzes and GLEs** have suggested due dates, and submissions will be accepted through our last day of class on April 29. After April 29, quizzes and GLEs will not be accepted.
- **Assignments** must be completed by their due dates at 11:59 pm. Submit your assignments as early as possible because Canvas will not have the bandwidth to support several hundred students trying to upload their assignment in the last half hour.
- **Exams** must be completed on the day they are assigned between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm.

Please communicate with me if you will miss an exam and have extenuating circumstances.

RECORDING OF CLASS

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center](#). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

REQUIRED SOFTWARE

You will need the **desktop versions** of the following computer software for this class (all are free to you): Google Earth Pro, Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, and Word. The desktop versions are needed because the web-based versions do not offer the same functionality. If you don't have a desktop or laptop computer, the Geoscience Learning Center in Fleming 136 has several computers you can use.

- **Google Earth Pro:** You will need to download the desktop version of [Google Earth Pro](#). The web application does not have the same functions as the desktop version, so you must download and install the desktop software by clicking on "Download Earth Pro on Desktop".
- **Microsoft Office Products:** You'll need the desktop versions of Excel, Word, and potentially PowerPoint. The desktop versions, particularly Excel, have more functionality than the web-based versions. To download these programs, log in to [access UH](#) > click on the Microsoft 365 icon > log into your

Microsoft account using your @cougarnet.uh.edu credentials > click on the dropdown menu on the right side that says “Install apps” and then “Microsoft 365 apps”.

- **Microsoft Excel:** Many of you will be unfamiliar with Microsoft Excel, so the first assignment will introduce you to some of the basic functions we’ll use.
- **Microsoft Word:** Assignment files are created in Microsoft Word and are best completed using this software. You can also use other word-processing software.
- **Microsoft PowerPoint:** You may find you need to annotate images or graphs for assignments. You can download Microsoft PowerPoint just like you did for Excel. Alternatively, you can use Microsoft Paint or Apple Preview to annotate images.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email, Canvas, and in class.

UH EMAIL

Please check and use your Cougarnet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the Cougarnet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your Cougarnet email, [login](#) to your Microsoft 365 account with your Cougarnet credentials. Visit [University Information Technology \(UIT\)](#) for instructions on how to connect your Cougarnet e-mail on a mobile device.

SERVICES OFFERED BY EAS & UH

GEOSCIENCE LEARNING CENTER (GLC)

Graduate student TAs staff a [learning center](#) dedicated to providing extra help and tutoring to students in geology courses. The GLC is in Fleming room 136. Hours TBA.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students’ mental health and overall wellness, including [CoogsCARE](#) and the [UH Go App](#). UH [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and offcampus. For assistance visit [uh.edu/caps](#), call 713-743-5454, or visit a [Let’s Talk](#) location in-person or virtually. [Let’s Talk](#) are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The [Student Health Center](#) offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The [A.D. Bruce Religion Center](#) offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text [988](#), or chat [988lifeline.org](#).

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

REASONABLE ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS/AUXILIARY AIDS

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

TITLE IX/SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER WORKSHOPS

A great campus resource with [workshops](#) on a variety of classroom success-related topics

SCHEDULE

The following tables are the course schedule (Table 2), GLE and quiz due dates (Table 3), and assignment due dates (Table 4). All dates are subject to change.

Date	Topic
1/17	Introduction
1/22	Ch. 1 – Introducing Natural Disasters *1/23 – LAST DAY TO ADD A CLASS*
1/24	Ch. 2 – Plate Tectonics
1/29	Ch. 2 – Plate Tectonics
1/31	Ch. 3 – Earthquakes *1/31 – LAST DAY TO DROP WITH NO GRADE*
2/5	Ch. 3 – Earthquakes
2/7	Ch. 3 – Earthquakes
2/12	EXAM 1
2/14	Ch. 3 – Earthquakes
2/19	Ch. 4 – Volcanic Eruptions

Date	Topic
2/21	Ch. 4 – Volcanic Eruptions
2/26	Ch. 5 – Mass Wasting (Landslides)
2/28	Ch. 5 – Mass Wasting / Ch. 6 Tsunamis
3/4	Ch. 6 - Tsunamis
3/6	EXAM 2
3/11-3/17	Spring Break
3/18	Ch. 6 - Tsunamis
3/20	Ch. 6 - Tsunamis
3/25	Ch. 7 – Sinkholes and Subsidence
3/27	Ch. 8 – The Atmosphere
4/1	Ch. 8 – The Atmosphere
4/3	Ch. 9 – Thunderstorms and Tornadoes
4/8	EXAM 3
4/10	Ch. 9 – Thunderstorms and Tornadoes
4/15	Ch. 10 – Winter Weather
4/17	Ch. 11 – Hurricanes *4/17 – LAST DAY TO DROP WITH W GRADE*
4/22	Ch. 11 – Hurricanes
4/24	Ch. 12 – Flooding
4/29	Ch. 12 – Flooding
5/3	EXAM 4

Table 2 – Course Schedule. Subject to change.

Quiz	Chapters	Suggested Due Date
1	Chapter 2	1/29
2	Chapter 3	2/14
3	Chapter 4	2/21
4	Chapter 8	4/1
5	Chapter 9	4/10
6	Chapter 12	4/29

Table 3 – Suggested due dates for Quizzes. All quizzes must be completed by 4/29.

Guided Learning Explorations	Suggested Due Date
Introduction	1/22
Earthquakes	2/7
Volcanic Eruptions	2/21
Mass Wasting	2/28
Tsunamis	3/4
Sinkholes and Subsidence	3/25
Thunderstorms and Tornadoes	4/3
Hazardous Winter Weather	4/15
Hurricanes	4/17
Inland Flooding	4/24

Table 4 - Suggested due dates for GLEs. All GLEs must be completed by 4/29

Assignment	Date Assigned	Due Date
1. Introduction	1/17	1/31
2. Earthquakes	1/31	2/14
3. Volcanoes	2/19	2/28
4. Mass Wasting/Sinkholes	2/28	3/20
5. Weather	3/27	4/10
6. Flooding	4/22	4/29

Table 5 - Due dates for assignments. These are hard due dates and late work will not be accepted.