

# Earth SC 2GG3E

## Natural Disasters

### Course Outline Winter 2019

#### Instructor

John MacLachlan

GSB-230

Email: sges2gg3@mcmaster.ca

#### Introduction

---

This course will explore the concepts of natural disasters and hazards from both scientific and human impact viewpoints. Geological, atmospheric and hydrological concepts will be explored to allow for an understanding of the scientific basis of natural disasters on varying spatial and temporal scales. Examples from recent and ancient history will be used and, whenever possible, Canadian examples will be identified. Knowledge gained in this course will allow for a better understanding of the world around us and a greater appreciation of the potential issues moving forward for humans.

#### Course Objectives

---

This course will enable the students to characterize and analyzes natural hazards, to identify their causes and evaluate their significance for the human population. Students will also gain analytical skills for how to develop strategies to predict, prevent or mitigate such hazardous events.

#### Sources

---

Keller, E.A., Devecchio, D.E., Clague J.J., 2012. Natural Disasters (Third Canadian Edition). Pearson, Toronto. ISBN: 978-0-13-307650-9 (paperback version)

Additional reading material may be posted, as required, on A2L (Avenue to Learn).

#### Lectures

---

Lectures are on Tuesday evenings from 7:00pm – 10:00pm. Check your lecture schedule attached for further details. **Partial** lecture notes will be available on A2L. **It is responsibility of the student to ensure that notes are obtained for any classes missed.**

#### Attendance and Emails Policy

---

Office hours are held by the contacting the instructor to help clarify the content of lectures. It is not the instructor's responsibility to go over an entire lecture with you, if you missed it. It is your responsibility to acquire the necessary information from classmates.

It is not appropriate to use email to ask detailed questions (including asking about what was discussed in lecture). As a general rule, you should not expect to receive answers to emails on weekends or in the evening. Rather, emails will

typically be responded to during regular working hours on weekdays, and as schedule allows. Emails sent 24 hours prior to, or on the Final Exam test date will not be answered.

When asking a non-personal question you are encouraged to use the Avenue discussion board. It is likely that any question you have (whether it be clarification or simply of interest) is had by others as well. The instructor will frequent the discussion board.

As a courtesy, and to ensure your emails are properly answered, you must include your name and student ID number in the email signature. **Emails must be sent from McMaster email accounts** or they will not be read or responded to. Emails should be written in a professional manner, spell-checked and proof-read before sending them. The subject line **must** state for which course the query is about. Online discussion terminology must be avoided.

## Evaluation

---

This course will consist of four content quizzes, a responsibility quiz, a midterm and a final exam. There will be 4 content quizzes in the course covering lecture and textbook material. Quizzes are valued at 6% each. Quizzes will be available on A2L for a 6-day period starting on Wednesday afternoons at noon and closing the following Tuesday at noon. Their schedule will be posted on A2L. You can take two opportunities for the quizzes and the **higher of the two grades** will be put used as the grade. **MSAF forms cannot be used for quizzes**. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of quiz start and end dates, and of due dates for assignments (if any). Please see the section titled '*Missed Work or Late Work*' for information regarding missed quizzes.

The Student Responsibility Quiz is a simple true/false evaluation of your understanding of course guidelines. It will only take a few minutes and needs to be done. Until the quiz is completed grades will not be viewable on Avenue.

This course will also contain Final Exam. The final exam will cover all lecture and textbook readings. The final exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Student Responsibility Quiz	0.5%
Mid-term #1 (Feb.12th: 4:30pm)	17%*
Mid-term #2 (March 19 <sup>th</sup> : 4:30pm)	17%*
Online quizzes	20%*
Final Exam	46.5%

*\*note that all of the items with an \* are optional. If you decide to not write one of these components the weight will be automatically redistributed to your final exam. However if you write any of these components and you do better on the final exam I will reweight your grade to give you the best possible outcome.*

---

## **Missed or Late work**

---

If you miss a test, quiz or term paper for a legitimate reason you must file documentation. You can report absences that last up to 3 days using the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF). Please see the section titled '*McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)*' for further information. Do not bring a doctor's note to your instructor or T.A.

Your marks for a missed midterm will be applied to the final exam. If you miss the midterm the weight will automatically be reweighted to your final exam. No MSAF is necessary.

As online quizzes will be available for a 6-day period, MSAFs will **NOT** be accepted for missed quizzes; see the section titled '*McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)*'.

## **McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)**

---

If you are absent from the university for a minor medical reason, lasting fewer than 5 days, you may report your absence, once per term, without documentation, using the McMaster Student Absence Form. Absences for a longer duration or for other reasons must be reported to your Faculty/Program office, with documentation, and relief from term work may not necessarily be granted. When using the MSAF, report your absence to **sges2gg3@mcmaster.ca**. You must then contact your instructor immediately (normally within 2 working days) by email at **sges2gg3@mcmaster.ca** to learn what relief may be granted for the work you have missed, and relevant details such as revised deadlines, or time and location of a make-up evaluation. Please note that the MSAF may not be used for term work worth 30% or more, nor can it be used for the final examination.

**Please note:** students who use the MSAF, but who do not contact the instructor within the 2 working days period, may not be granted any relief.

## **Avenue to Learn (A2L)**

---

URL: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>

A2L is an online system that will be used in this class for communicating information relating to the course (e.g. lecture notes, etc.). To log in to A2L, use your MUGSI login and password. See the A2L home page above for more instructions if you need them. **It is the student's responsibility to check A2L regularly (i.e. AT LEAST twice a week) for updates.**

Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this

disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

If you encounter any technical problems with this service go to the following website for support: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/help/>. ***Please note that it is not the responsibility of the teaching staff of EARTH SC 2GG3 to assist you with A2L issues.***

## **Mark Appeals and A2L grades**

---

You will have **one week** (i.e. 7 days) from the date that marks for an evaluation (e.g. quiz) are released to appeal your mark. The times at which you will be able to retrieve your scantrons will be announced during lecture and on A2L. If you wish to appeal a mark for a quiz, you must send a note via email (including your name, McMaster email address, and student ID number) to the instructor stating why you wish to have the quiz looked after. If you wish to appeal a mark for any midterm you must attach to your scantron with a written note (including your name, McMaster email address, and student ID number) box justifying why you wish to have the class assignment looked after, and leave this in the EARTH SC 2GG3 drop box (this can count for scantrons as well). In any case, if the request is found to be insufficiently justified (e.g. simply wanting a higher mark is insufficient), the matter will not be further investigated. Remember that a resubmitted paper is entirely regarded meaning the grade can go up or down.

Your marks will be recorded on A2L. **It is your responsibility to check that all marks entered into A2L are recorded properly.** You must notify the instructor about any errors with regards to how your marks are entered. You have until 48 hours prior to the final exam to report any A2L mark issues.

## **Student Conduct**

---

Students' behaviour in all aspects of this course should meet the standards of the McMaster University Student Code of Conduct. Any inappropriate behaviour directed against any of your colleagues, T.A, or the instructor will not be tolerated. Disruptive behaviour during lectures will also not be tolerated.

This also means that the A2L Discussion Board is an extension of the classroom. These spaces are to be considered inclusive and safe. Abuse, ridicule, slander, inappropriate language, and discrimination towards the instructor, teaching staff, and other students will not be tolerated in any capacity. This may lead to various disciplinary measures including, but not limited to, removal of access privileges to the A2L for Earth Sc 2GG3.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

---

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at

**<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>**

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Turnitin.com:** In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## **Acknowledgement of Course Policies**

---

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of Earth Sc 2GG3 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.**

Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly (in class and post any changes to the course A2L). **The lecture schedule is only a guideline and may be modified during the course of the class.**

***The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of***

***modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their***