



UNSW Course Outline

ZPEM3204 Environmental Hazards - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : ZPEM3204

Year : 2024

Term : Semester 2

Teaching Period : Z2

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : UNSW Canberra

Academic Unit : UC Science

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : UNSW Canberra at ADFA

Campus : UNSW Canberra

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This course will look at both natural and human-induced environmental hazards and what their study can tell us about how humans interact with the environment. We will look at how a number of concepts (e.g. privilege/poverty; time/change; scale/intensity; risk/vulnerability) can inform

our understanding of both hazards and institutional reactions thereto. As members of the ADF, it is quite likely at some point you will be involved in a relief operation either in Australia or overseas. An understanding of the nature of hazards, hazard mitigation and emergency management will help to prepare you for participation in these activities.

Course Aims

The aim of this course is for students to look at both natural and human induced environmental hazards and examine what their study can tell us about how humans interact with the environment

Relationship to Other Courses

Not applicable

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CL01 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' reponses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.
CL02 : Apply theoretical concepts used in hazards research (such as privilege/poverty; risk/vulnerability, etc.) to the analysis of a particular environmental hazard
CL03 : Develop an environmental hazard event scenario for a specific location and a planning brief for responding to that event.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CL01 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' reponses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Hazards Explainer• E-portfolio• Hazard Scenario Plan• Tutorial Assessment
CL02 : Apply theoretical concepts used in hazards research (such as privilege/poverty; risk/vulnerability, etc.) to the analysis of a particular environmental hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• E-portfolio• Hazard Scenario Plan
CL03 : Develop an environmental hazard event scenario for a specific location and a planning brief for responding to that event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hazard Scenario Plan

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Echo 360

Learning and Teaching in this course

There is no set textbook. Readings are available as links through Moodle.

Additional Course Information

Teaching Strategies

Enrolment in this course or participation in any activity that is recorded constitutes consent to be recorded during tutorial and other teaching sessions. Recordings will only be used for the purposes of teaching this course. If you do not consent to be recorded, you must notify your course convenor immediately so other arrangements can be made.

Student-centred learning is a key component of the teaching philosophy for this unit. Students will be provided with the support that encourages a level of self-directed learning appropriate to a first- year undergraduate course. It is understood that students come to the class with a widely diverse skill set but, nonetheless, with capacities and knowledge on which we can build. Students' active participation in all aspects of the course is encouraged, including collaborating with colleagues to create a supportive learning environment.

Students are expected to attend all lectures and tutorials/labs as per the timetable. It is vital that students prepare for these contact hours by completing course readings.

Students are expected to complete independent reading and research for the course each week. To pass this course students will need to engage with all the required readings.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Environmental Hazards Explainer Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (2 days)	10%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 04/08/2024 11:59 PM
E-portfolio Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (2 days)	50%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 04/10/2024 11:59 PM
Hazard Scenario Plan Assessment Format: Group Short Extension: Yes (2 days)	30%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 04/11/2024 06:00 PM
Tutorial Assessment Assessment Format: Individual	10%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 12: 14 October - 18 October

Assessment Details

Environmental Hazards Explainer

Assessment Overview

The first assessment is a short piece of work undertaken both during and outside of class. A written report (1000 words) is to be submitted that provides a plain language explainer of what an environmental hazard is and how they are defined. Drawing on academic sources, this report is to be written in the style of [The Conversation](#).

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' responses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.

Detailed Assessment Description

The first assessment is a short piece of work undertaken both during and outside of class. A written report (1000 words) is to be submitted that provides a plain language explainer of what an environmental hazard is and how they are defined.

Assessment Length

1000 words

Submission notes

Electronic submission

Assessment information

This will be due in Weeks 4 (CLO 1).

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

E-portfolio

Assessment Overview

This exercise should be a piece of work (<4000 words) composed of several communication sections related to learning activities both inside and outside of class. It is designed for you to demonstrate your knowledge of key course components. You will choose a hazard to include in your portfolio, and independently analyse the real-life impact of this hazard in a specific area with varying impacts or compare two areas, e.g., the causes of a chosen hazard, geographic profile, social and demographic profile, poverty and privilege, protection/mitigation/adaptation strategy.

More details will be provided in a handout in Week 1.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' responses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.
- CLO2 : Apply theoretical concepts used in hazards research (such as privilege/poverty; risk/vulnerability, etc.) to the analysis of a particular environmental hazard

Detailed Assessment Description

This assessment should be a piece of work (<4000 words) composed of several communication sections related to learning activities both inside and outside of class. It is designed for you to demonstrate your knowledge of key course components. You will choose a hazard to include in your portfolio, and independently analyse the real-life impact of this hazard in a specific area with varying impacts or compare two areas, e.g., the causes of a chosen hazard, geographic profile, social and demographic profile, poverty and privilege, protection/mitigation/adaptation strategy. More details will be provided in a handout in Week 4. Students are required to report their chosen hazard to the course convenor by week 4.

Assessment Length

4000 words

Submission notes

Electronic submission

Assessment information

This will be due in Weeks 10 (CLO 1 and CLO2) .

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Hazard Scenario Plan

Assessment Overview

This assessment provides you with the opportunity to deepen your understanding of a specific hazard and the preparation and response strategies that are available for managing the hazard. You will construct a scenario for a specific hazard event that occurs at a specific location, using researched characteristics of past events. Then you will plan a response strategy that could be used by hazard event responders to prepare for the event (where it is not a rapid-onset event), and manage the immediate aftermath of the event. The project and report (2000 words) will be carried out in teams of two, with each student contributing ~1000 words.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' responses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.
- CLO2 : Apply theoretical concepts used in hazards research (such as privilege/poverty; risk/vulnerability, etc.) to the analysis of a particular environmental hazard
- CLO3 : Develop an environmental hazard event scenario for a specific location and a planning brief for responding to that event.

Detailed Assessment Description

This assessment provides you with the opportunity to deepen your understanding of a specific hazard and the preparation and response strategies that are available for managing the hazard. You will construct a scenario for a specific hazard event that occurs at a specific location, using researched characteristics of past events. Then you will plan a response strategy that could be used by hazard event responders to prepare for the event (where it is not a rapid-onset event) and manage the immediate aftermath of the event. The project and report (2000 words) will be carried out in teams of two, with each student contributing ~1000 words. The type of hazard and the region over which it occurred must be different from that chosen for your ePortfolio.

Assessment Length

2000 words

Submission notes

Electronic submission

Assessment information

This will be due in exam week (CLOs 1, 2 and 3).

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Tutorial Assessment

Assessment Overview

In your allotted tutorial, you will be scheduled to submit and discuss a reading relevant to Environmental Hazards during 5 separate classes across weeks 3-12. You will spend up to 5 minutes discussing the main points and overall significance of the article, what you have learned from it, and how it is relevant to environmental hazards. Unless previously discussed with the course convenor, all students must attend their allotted tutorial. Those that do not without expressed prior consent from the course convenor will have their tutorial mark penalised

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Demonstrate a holistic understanding of both hazard events and humans' responses to hazards, including an appreciation for the complexity of environmental hazard systems.

Detailed Assessment Description

In your allotted tutorial, you will be scheduled to submit and discuss a reading relevant to Environmental Hazards. Unless previously discussed with the course convenor, all students must attend their allotted tutorial. It is related to CL01.

Assessment Length

Across weeks 3-12

Submission notes

n/a

Assessment information

Tutorial participation, readings and discussion.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

General Assessment Information

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

PLANNING ASSISTANCE

As this assessment task involves some planning or creative processes, you are permitted to use software to generate initial ideas. However, you must develop or edit those ideas to such a significant extent that what is submitted is your own work, i.e. only occasional AI generated words or phrases may form part of your final submission. It is a good idea to keep copies of the initial prompts to show your lecturer if there is any uncertainty about the originality of your work.

If the outputs of generative AI such as ChatGPT form a part of your submission, it will be regarded as serious academic misconduct and subject to the standard penalties, which may include 00FL, suspension and exclusion

All marks obtained for assessment items during the session are provisional. The final mark as published by the university following the assessment review group meeting is **the only official mark**.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

To pass this course, students must complete all compulsory components or meet minimum performance standards, and achieve at least 50% of the total grades.

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 15 July - 19 July	Lecture	Course introduction & foundational core concepts
Week 2 : 22 July - 26 July	Lecture	Hazard management, risk and vulnerability
	Tutorial	
Week 3 : 29 July - 2 August	Lecture	Scale and Trend
	Tutorial	
Week 4 : 5 August - 9 August	Lecture	Hazard examples
	Tutorial	
Week 5 : 12 August - 16 August	Lecture	Hazard examples
	Tutorial	
Week 6 : 19 August - 23 August	Lecture	Hazard examples
	Tutorial	
Week 7 : 9 September - 13 September	Lecture	Hazard examples
	Tutorial	
Week 8 : 16 September - 20 September	Lecture	Poverty and inequality
	Tutorial	
Week 9 : 23 September - 27 September	Lecture	Disaster trends and statistics
	Tutorial	
Week 10 : 30 September - 4 October	Lecture	Hazard examples
	Tutorial	
Week 11 : 7 October - 11 October	Lecture	Hazard examples
Week 12 : 14 October - 18 October	Lecture	Hazards in Asia-Pacific Region; Detection, Monitoring & Early Warning
	Tutorial	
Week 13 : 21 October - 25 October	Lecture	Course wrap up

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

General Schedule Information

Students who have missed assessments or a tutorial, or expect to miss such a requirement, must inform the course coordinator **by email** at the earliest practicable date. In typical circumstances of missed assessments, a formal application for [Special Consideration](#) via the prescribed University procedure is appropriate. Otherwise, in the case of absence a mark of zero will be awarded for the assessment.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

No compulsory Textbooks

Recommended Resources

Readings are available as links through Moodle.

Additional Costs

n/a

Course Evaluation and Development

One of the key priorities in the 2025 Strategy for UNSW is a drive for academic excellence in education. One of the ways of determining how well UNSW is progressing towards this goal is by listening to our own students. Students will be asked to complete the myExperience survey towards the end of this course.

Students can also provide feedback during the semester via: direct contact with the lecturers; the “On-going Student Feedback” link in Moodle; SSCI Student-Staff Liaison Committee meetings; and informal feedback conducted by staff. Student opinions really do make a difference. Refer to the Moodle site for this course to see how the feedback from previous students has contributed to the course development.

Important note: Students are reminded that any feedback provided should be constructive and professional and that they are bound by the Student Code of Conduct Policy.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Lecturer	Difei Deng		R107, B26	n/a	By appointment	Yes	Yes