

## GEOG 306 Geographies of Disaster

### Course Description

This course provides a broad global overview of disasters resulting from natural or technological hazards. Disasters continue to maim and kill; the property losses continue to increase. This course emphasizes the spatial and temporal distribution of hazards, the human impact of disaster, roles played by technology and society in creating or worsening risky situations, and policy options for disaster preparation and loss reduction. This is an approved General Education course and is part of Upper Division Theme U Catastrophe and Humanity.

### Course Objectives

- Understanding how the analysis of natural disasters illuminates the relationship between society and nature
- Gaining insights into how different societies manage crises
- Identifying the "normal" response to disaster
- Providing insights into how natural disasters are inevitable byproducts of human interaction with their environment

### Course Materials

Required: Guide to Global Hazards by Robert Kovach and Bill McGuire, Firefly, 2003  
"Earthweek" at [www.earthweek.com](http://www.earthweek.com), at <http://wizard.csuchico.edu:8092/>, or each week in your Saturday newspaper.

Course Grading: Attendance is not mandatory, but absences generally have an adverse impact on a student's grade. Make-up work will be permitted only with instructor approval. Grades will be awarded in accordance with University catalog standards. Classroom participation will be considered when resolving borderline grades. Course grades will be determined in the following manner:

Assignment	Value	Total
Exam questions	4@5 points	15 points
Bidwell Mansion	1@20 points	20 points
Midterm Exams	3@40 points	80 points
Final Exam	1@40 points	50 points
Total		265 points

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams: There will be three midterm examinations and one final examination. The exams are a combination of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, matching, and essay questions. The final exam is comprehensive. Examinations will be on a Friday. The final examination will be held on Tuesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:00.

Exam questions: By 5:00 on the Wednesday before each exam, each student will submit five multiple choice questions for the exam. The questions must include either four or five possible answers and the correct answer must be underlined. The questions must be emailed to [pmelcon@csuchico.edu](mailto:pmelcon@csuchico.edu) with the subject line GEOG\_306\_Exam.

Readings: Students will read the assigned textbook. Research articles and other readings will be posted on Professor Melcon's website. (<http://wizard.csuchico.edu:8092>).

Mansion Tour: Students will visit the Bidwell Mansion Visitor Center and tour the mansion. A listing of evidence of globalism and a one-page review of the site will be submitted.

Field investigation: To be arranged

Course paper: A paper presenting the content and discussing the origin significance of a specific landform will be prepared. The paper must include citations to at least five journal articles. Both a citation and a one-paragraph abstract of the article must be provided in the bibliography. Each article must be cited in the text using the {name, date} format. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, and either four or five pages in length. A successful paper generally discusses the selected articles in the context of course concepts. Paper having more than three errors in spelling or grammar on a page will be assigned a 'C' (21 points).

## Course Grading

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Assignment	Value	Total
Exam questions	4@5 points	20 points
Bidwell Mansion	1@10 points	10 points
Paper	1@30 points	30 points
Midterm Exams	3@40 points	120 points
Final Exam	1@60 points	60 points
Total		240 points

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

# GEOG 306 COURSE SCHEDULE

Date (week of)	Text Topic/ Activity	Exams and Papers	Furlough Days
August	24 Earthquakes, Volcanoes		
	31		
September	7 Tsunami, Waves		8 Tu, 17 (Th)
	14 Storm Surges Coastal Erosion, Ice Hazards	Midterm Exam	
	21 Flooding		
	28	Bidwell Mansion review due in class ®	
October	5 Winds, Hurricanes, Tornadoes,		13 (Tu ), 14 (W), 15 (Th)
	12 Storms, Rain, Hail, Lightning Snow and Ice	Midterm Exam	
	19 Avalanches, Landslides		
	26 Desertification, Drought, Famine		
November	2 Fires		2 (M), 12 (Th)
	9 Diseases	Midterm Exam	
	16 Water Pollution, Ozone Depletion, Acid Rain, Land Contamination	Paper Submitted	
	30 Global Warming, El Niño		
December	7 Meteorites and Comets, Great Extinctions		2 (W), 8 (Tu)
	14	Final Exam Tuesday December 15 12:00 noon	