GEOL 1301 – NATURAL HAZARDS AND DISASTERS

SECTION INFORMATION

Section 001, Synonym 06565
Lecture – Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:50-4:05 p.m., Room 2213, Northridge Campus

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor: Meredith Denton-Hedrick
Office Hours: *Mondays & Wednesdays*
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in CYP Adjunct Faculty Office (Room 2204.4)
Tuesdays & Thursdays
2:15-2:45 p.m. in Northridge Adjunct Faculty Office (Portable 4)
See me or email me to schedule a conference outside of regular office hours.
Voicemail: 223-1790 x26216
E-mail: *mdentonh@austincc.edu* (Email is the best and fastest way to reach me.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a survey of earth sciences through an examination of natural hazards including causes and effects of earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, floods, landslides, hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, climate change, and impacts of extraterrestrial objects. Discussion will focus on personal and societal adjustments to these hazards.

PREREQUISITES

Reading proficiency on Texas Success Initiative (TSI) testing or are TSI exempt; knowledge of high school and middle school mathematics is required.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK & MATERIALS

Textbook - Keller, Edward A., and Blodgett, Robert H., 2008. *Natural Hazards; Earth's Processes as Hazards, Disasters, and Catastrophes* (2nd edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 488 p., ISBN 978-0-13-231864-8
Multimedia - King, Hobart M., Carpenter, B. M., and Wilson, Nicole D., 2008. *Hazard City: Assignments in Applied Geology* (3rd edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 1 CD packaged with Keller and Blodgett (2008).

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course will be taught in a lecture/discussion format illustrated with PowerPoint presentations, videos, maps, diagrams, digital photographs, and content on Web sites. Student learning will be assessed with in-class examinations, quizzes, and assigned exercises.

COURSE RATIONALE

As the world's population grows and expands, humans are encountering natural hazards more frequently, and are contributing to a rapid change in the world's climate. College-educated consumers, voters, and decision-makers need to understand the scope and impact of these changes and the limitations that science and technology have in reducing their negative effects. Studying natural hazards provides a valuable perspective for this understanding. This is a general survey course that does not count towards a major in the geological sciences.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Learn how earth processes affect and interact with our civilization, especially those that create hazards
- Learn basic principles of geology, meteorology, oceanography and solar system astronomy
- Review basic concepts of mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology as applied to natural hazards
- Develop an understanding of the methods scientists use to predict and assess the risk of natural hazards
- Become familiar with natural hazards that threaten Central Texas and ways to minimize the personal and societal consequences of these hazards

EXAMINATIONS

Two examinations and a final exam will be given. All examinations will be in-class, closed-book tests. Questions will be drawn from lectures, handouts, reading assignments, and homework assignments. A study guide will be distributed approximately one week before each examination. A final exam on the last day of class will be comprehensive. Exams will be multiple-choice. *No exams will be given early.*

COURSE GRADE

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

50% -- two lecture examinations
20% -- class assignments
30% -- final exam

No extra credit will be given. The following scale will be used to determine your course grade:

90-100%	- A
80-89%	- B
70-79%	- C
60-69%	- D
Below 60%	- F

COURSE POLICIES

Missed Exams

All exams will be given in class. Missed exams must be made up within one week of the scheduled test date in the testing center, unless extenuating circumstances apply. See instructor regarding make-up exams.

Missed Quizzes

All quizzes will be given in class. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. If you know you have to miss class on a certain date, alert the professor ahead of time to avoid a zero on the quiz.

Late Work

You are responsible for any assignment that you miss. Check the Blackboard website or contact the professor or another student as soon as possible to get information on the assignment that you missed. All work must be turned in no later than one week from the day it was assigned, even if you are absent.

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Any work turned in late will be penalized five percentage points each calendar day it is late, beginning with the due date. However, it is better to turn an assignment in late for a reduced score rather than to receive no points for the work.

Late assignments placed in the instructor's mailbox in the campus administration area MUST have the date of receipt stamped on them by the administrative assistant in the mailroom. Late assignments can also be emailed to the professor. ***Late work will not be accepted after an assignment has been returned to the class.***

Attendance

Students are expected to attend lectures and participate in class discussion, as tests and quizzes are derived from materials presented in lecture as well as from the text. You will learn more from attending the classes than if you just read the text. The instructor, at her discretion, may drop a student from the class for excessive absences.

Withdrawals

Should a student decide to withdraw from class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that his/her name is removed from the class roll.

The instructor reserves the right to drop a student should she feel it is necessary. This is most common in when students have excessive absences. Departmental policy forbids the instructor from withdrawing you from the class after the withdrawal date listed in the course catalogue.

Per state law, students enrolling for the first time in Fall 2007 or later at any Texas college or university may not withdraw from more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This applies to all courses and to all institutions of higher learning in Texas. Some exemptions for good cause could allow a student to withdraw from a course without having it count toward this limit. The specifics of how the law is to be implemented, and how information will be shared between institutions are not fully defined. Many students are not aware of this legislation recently passed by the Texas legislature.

If you decide to drop this class, you must protect your academic record by withdrawing no later than **Monday, April 26, 2010**. It is your responsibility to verify that you have successfully withdrawn from the class before the final withdrawal date. You are strongly encouraged to keep copies of paperwork should there be a problem in the computer records.

Incompletes

An incomplete grade ("I") will only be given if extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death of a loved one, keep a student from completing the final examination. Incompletes must be requested in writing with documentation of the circumstances. If a grade of I is given, the final examination must be taken by a date set by the student and professor. This date must be at least two weeks before the end of the 2010 Summer Semester, which is Monday, August 2, 2010.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Please be seated and ready for class on time. **Lectures start promptly.** If you arrive late or need to leave early, please sit near the door. As common courtesy, please do not carry on conversations during lectures, and turn off audible sounds on your cell phone, pager, or computer before you come to class. Do not send text messages during class. Use of a laptop is acceptable, as long as its use is course-related. Students who are disturbing others will be asked to leave the classroom. Repeated offenses may result in the instructor dropping you from the class.

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

Acts prohibited by the College for which discipline may be administered include scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating on an exam or quiz, plagiarizing, and unauthorized collaboration

with another in preparing outside work. Academic work submitted by students shall be the result of their thought, research, or self-expression. Academic work is defined as, but not limited to tests, quizzes, whether taken electronically or on paper; projects, either individual or group; classroom presentations, and homework.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Students enrolled in this course are expected to comply with the provisions of this syllabus and the Student Code of Conduct. With the exception of scholastic dishonesty, violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be reported to the Campus Dean of Student Services for disciplinary action. Any student suspected of scholastic dishonesty will meet in private with the professor to discuss the alleged offense(s) and review the evidence that supports the charge. After conferring with the student, the professor will dismiss the allegation or assess an academic penalty. A student will be informed in writing if an academic penalty is assessed. He or she should consult the Student Handbook for his/her rights and responsibilities.

SAFETY

Health and safety are paramount values in science classrooms, laboratories, and field activities. Students are expected to learn, understand and comply with environmental, health, and safety (EHS) procedures and protocols, and must agree to abide by the ACC science safety policy. Students are expected to conduct themselves with appropriate professional behavior and with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual will be immediately dismissed from the day's activity, may be withdrawn from the class, and or be barred from attending all activities. Specific safety information for each activity will be discussed at the beginning of the activity. For those activities that require specific safety training, a student who is late and misses the safety training will not be able to participate in the activity. The comprehensive science safety policy can be found at *http://www.austincc.edu/sci_safe/*.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented physical or psychological disabilities. Students with disabilities must request reasonable accommodations through the Office for Students With Disabilities on the campus where they expect to take the majority of their classes. Students are encouraged to complete the request three weeks before the start of the semester.

Students requesting accommodations must provide the professor with an Approved Accommodations and Academic Adjustments form from the OSD at the beginning of the semester. Accommodations can only be made <u>after</u> the instructor receives the letter of accommodation from the OSD.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good. The common good depends upon a search fro truth and upon free expression. In this course, the professor and students shall strive to protect free inquiry and the open exchange of facts, ideas, and opinions. Students are free to take exception to views offered in this course, and to reserve judgment about debatable issues. Grades will not be affected by personal views. With this freedom comes the responsibility of civility and a respect for a diversity of ideas and opinions. This means that students must take turns speaking, listen to others speak without interruption, and refrain from name-calling or other personal attacks.

OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

Studying

Science courses commonly require a different approach to studying than other courses. In this course you will be asked to conceptualize things in three dimensions, understand complex concepts, and learn a whole new vocabulary for describing your planet. You will improve your performance if you:

- take notes from both the textbook and the lecture
- answer the study questions in each chapter
- go over the chapter summary
- revisit fundamental concepts in each chapter
- review key terms at the end of each assigned chapter
- many students find it useful to make flash cards for terms and their definitions

Student Services

Resources for current students	*http://www.austincc.edu/current/*
Student handbook	*http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/*
Testing Center Policies	*http://www.austincc.edu/testctr/*
ACC Bookstore	*http://austincc.bncollege.com/*
Northridge campus directory	*http://www.austincc.edu/nrg/*
Cypress Creek campus directory	*http://www.austincc.edu/cyp/*
RRHEC campus directory	*http://www.austincc.edu/centers/roundrock*

How to Get an A in this Class (or any Other)

An A is supposed to indicate "outstanding scholarship." Something is "outstanding" because it is significantly better than what most people normally produce. This write-up is provided as a guide. Each person is different and has different ways of learning; this is what works for me. Also, take into account time available and need. For example, if you are doing well, don't bother recopying notes.

Good Habits (Be active, not passive!)

- Attend class and stay current with class material.
- Read the material before class.
- Stick to business in the classroom. Socialize outside.
- Take notes so you have a record of what was discussed. Note what slides were shown.
- Fill in the "holes" in your notes while the lecture is still fresh in your mind.
- Look up what you don't understand (see textbook glossary and/or index, or online resources).
- Write out definitions in notes so that they are handy when you are studying.
- Recopy notes (time-consuming but helpful), or type them into your computer.
- Expect to put in time. Good grades require at least 3 hours of "homework" per hour of class.
- Review what you learned in class within 24 hours of learning the information. Don't wait until the day before the test. Cramming doesn't lead to understanding.

Studying for Tests

- Have a comprehensive set of class notes.
- Turn off your cell phone, television, and internet access (especially instant messaging).
- Don't study where you sleep. Do as much of your studying in the daytime as possible.
- Do ACTIVE, not passive studying.
- Study with a group of your classmates – as long as you're studying, not socializing.
- CONCENTRATE while studying. Staring at words isn't enough. Just reading isn't enough.
- Make sure you can give definitions from memory for key vocabulary terms.
- Compile important factual information on "summary sheets".
- Redraw key diagrams. Try to do it from memory.
- Make use of the online supplemental information for your textbook.