GEOG 1500F – Environment and Development Challenges
Course Outline: Fall 2023

1. Course Information

Course Description: Examines environmental change over long periods of earth history, considering both physical processes and human impacts. An integrative approach provides a basis for understanding some of the world's most pressing environment and development challenges, such as biodiversity loss, desertification, climate change, energy consumption, and persistent hunger and malnourishment.

2 lecture hours; 1 tutorial hour, 0.5 course; no prerequisites
Course instructor: Dr. Haley Everitt

Land Acknowledgement: Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. We respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation. Further, in this course, we are committed to recognizing how Indigenous Peoples continue to be disproportionately impacted by climate change and other environmental hazards. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

All course material will be posted to OWL: **http://owl.uwo.ca**. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class.

Google Chrome or **Mozilla Firefox** are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click **here.**
If students need assistance, they can seek support on the **OWL Help page**. Alternatively, they can contact the **Western Technology Services Helpdesk**. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

2. Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

(1) Identity and explain major drivers of environmental change.
(2) Describe how physical processes and human impacts interact to shape environment and development challenges related to climate change, waste management, biodiversity loss, and energy creation and consumption.
(3) Recognize that environment and development challenges often disproportionately impact marginalized communities and describe how multiple intersecting identify factors influence how and to what extent an individual is affected.
(4) Demonstrate geographical concepts by articulating well-informed, persuasive statements orally and in writing.
(5) Discuss if and how personal behavioural change can impact climate change by participating in a four-week challenge and designing a critical and creative reflection based on your challenge experiences.

3. Course Materials

You are not required to purchase any materials for this course. All resources will be posted to OWL.

4. Weekly Lecture Schedule

Week	Lecture Dates	Lecture Topic
Orientation Week (September 5 to 6): No lectures		
2	September 11	Global Systems & Foundations of Just Sustainability
	September 13	
3	September 18	
	September 20	
4	September 25	Our Changing Climate
	September 27	
5	October 2	
	October 4	
6	October 9	Thanksgiving holiday: No lecture
	October 11	A World of Waste
7	October 16	
	October 18	
8	October 23	
	October 25	
Reading Week (October 30 to November 3): No lectures		
10	November 6	An Ecological Meltdown
	November 8	
11	November 13	
	November 15	
12	November 20	Powering the World
	November 22	

13	November 27	
	November 29	
14	December 4	Course Summary & Final Exam Review
	December 6	
Mid-Year Examination Period (December 10 to 22): No lectures		

5. Weekly Tutorial Schedule

Week	Tutorial Dates	Tutorial Topic	Tutorial Assignment Deadlines
Orientation Week: No tutorials			
2	Course introduction: No tutorials		
3	September 19, 20, or 21	Introduction to Tutorials & Tutorial Assignment #1	Not applicable
4	September 26, 27, or 28	Introduction to Pro-Environmental Change Assignment	Tutorial Assignment #1 due by the start of your tutorial class
5	October 3, 4, or 5	Introduction to Tutorial Assignment #2	Not applicable
6	Week of Thanksgiving holiday: No tutorials		Tutorial Assignment #2 due by the start of your tutorial class
7	October 17, 18, or 19	Introduction to Tutorial Assignment #3	Not applicable
8	Week prior to Reading Week: No tutorials		Tutorial Assignment #3 due by the start of your tutorial class
Reading Week (October 30 to November 3): No tutorials			
10	Pro-Environmental Change Assignment due this week: No tutorials		
11	November 14, 15, or 16	Introduction to Tutorial Assignment #4	Not applicable
12	November 21, 22, or 23	Exam review: First half of the course	Tutorial Assignment #4 due by the start of your tutorial class
13	November 28, 29, or 30	Introduction to Tutorial Assignment #5	Not applicable
14	December 5, 6, or 7	Exam review: Second half of the course	Tutorial Assignment #5 due by the start of your tutorial class
Mid-Year Examination Period (December 10 to 22): No tutorials or deadlines			

6. Evaluations

Students will be evaluated on the following course assessments:

Assessment	Weight	Deadlines
Tutorial Assignments	50%	Start of your tutorial class during Weeks 4, 6, 8, 12, and 14
Pro-Environmental Change Assignment	20%	11:55 p.m. on Friday November 10, 2023
Final Exam	30%	To be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar between December 10 and 22, 2023

Click **here** for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text. Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember, you are responsible for your grades in this course.

6.1 Tutorial Assignments (50%)

Five of the eight tutorials in this course involve completing a graded assessment. Each tutorial assignment is worth 10% of a student's final course grade, for a total of 50% (i.e., 5 tutorial assignments x 10% = 50%). Detailed instructions for each tutorial assignment will typically be posted to OWL one week before a tutorial assignment's deadline. Instructions will include the grading rubric that will be used by your teaching assistant to evaluate your assignment submission. Your teaching assistant will introduce tutorial assignments in your tutorial classes. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and work towards the completion of these assignments in these classes.

If you are interested in improving your writing skills, Western's Writing Support Centre offers one-to-one advising sessions, writing workshops, and other writing supports that you may find helpful. You can review the Writing Support Centre's website by clicking **here**. Please reach out to the course instructor if you require assistance navigating these resources and supports.

6.2 Pro-Environmental Change Assignment (20%)

The Pro-Environmental Change Assignment is an experiential learning project that allows students to explore if and how personal behavioural change can impact climate change. Throughout the month of October, students will undertake a new, pro-environmental behaviour challenge each week that contributes to mitigating climate change. The challenge schedule is as follows:

- Week 1 (October 1 to 7): Eating for the Environment
- Week 2 (October 8 to 14): Commuting Sustainably
- Week 3 (October 15 to 21): Supporting Environmental Justice
- Week 4 (October 22 to 28): Living with Less Waste

As you complete your challenges, record your progress and critically reflect on your experiences throughout the month.

The Pro-Environmental Change Assignment is a creative and reflective assessment. You will submit your assignment as a 2-3 minute 'Tik-Tok style' video on VoiceThread. Please note that you are <u>not</u>

required to create your video on the TikTok app. You are <u>not</u> required to post your video to any social media platforms. You do <u>not</u> need to sign up for or download TikTok or any other social media platforms to complete this assessment.

Further instructions about each week's challenge and the assignment's required components will be provided to students in tutorial and on OWL. Instructions will include the grading rubric that will be used by your teaching assistant to evaluate your assignment submission.

6.3 Final Exam (30%)

The final exam will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the Mid-Year Examination Period (December 10 to 22, 2023). Detailed instructions will be posted to OWL in November. There will be an opportunity to ask questions about these instructions in lecture once they have been shared with students. Additionally, a final exam review will take place in your final tutorial class.

If you have exam accommodations (e.g., extra time, quiet location, rest breaks, etc.), please make the necessary arrangements with Accessible Education. If you have not arranged for exam accommodations with Accessible Education, but would like to, please follow the instructions listed on the Office of the Registrar's website, which can be accessed by clicking **here**. If you require assistance with this process, please do not hesitate to contact the course instructor.

The final exam is worth 30% of a student's final course grade. The final exam is to be completed independently. No notes, electronic devices, or any other aids are permitted. The final exam is cumulative and will evaluate your knowledge of the material covered throughout the term. All course content, including lectures, class activities, and assigned readings and resources, are testable.

A make-up final exam will only be available to students with approved documentation. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to your academic counselling office within 48 hours of the scheduled exam, otherwise you will earn a grade of zero on this exam. You can access your faculty's academic counselling office's website by clicking **here**. The format and content of the make-up final exam may differ substantially from the scheduled exam.

If you are interested in improving your studying and/or exam writing skills, Western's Learning Development & Success team offers several synchronous and asynchronous resources that you may find helpful. You can review the Learning Development & Success website by clicking **here**. The schedule for Fall 2023 synchronous, in-person workshops can be reviewed by clicking **here**. Additionally, several asynchronous modules are available by clicking **here**. Please reach out to your teaching assistant if you require assistance navigating these resources and supports.

7. Course Policies

Welcoming, Safe, and Inclusive Space: Everyone – students, the course instructor, and the teaching assistants – are expected to communicate professionally and respectfully in this course. Be courteous towards your peers, your teaching assistants, your instructor, and the authors whose work you discuss. Cite the ideas of others appropriately. Proper 'netiquette' and use of academic tone is expected when communicating virtually and participating in online activities. Be respectful of the

diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in class and in assigned readings/resources. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment; however, people's humanity is not up for debate. Anything less than mutual respect for all course participants will not be tolerated.

Class Participation: This is an active learning course. In both lecture and tutorial classes you will be regularly asked to engage in learning activities that will help you co-construct your knowledge of the ideas and experiences we encounter throughout the course. You will be asked to actively reflect and demonstrate how the ideas you encounter in the course have impacted your own beliefs about and actions towards sustainability. Be prepared to be an active participant in this course through discussions, individual tasks, and group activities.

iClicker: iClicker will be regularly used in lectures to encourage participation and facilitate active learning. Students are expected to create an iClicker account (instructions to get started are available **here**), and bring an electronic device to lectures so that they may participate (instructions to participate are available **here**). Please note that iClicker is available to all Western users at no charge.

Tutorials: Tutorial classes are much smaller in size than lectures and will be led by a teaching assistant. Tutorial classes provide students with an opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, and discuss course content in greater depth than is possible in large lectures. Unless you have received permission from the course instructor, you must only attend the tutorial classes for the section you registered for.

Content Warnings: Potentially sensitive content may be discussed in class and/or be present in assigned readings/resources throughout the term. As the course instructor, I will do my best to provide verbal and/or written content warnings so that you can prepare to adequately engage or, if necessary, disengage with this content. You are welcome to email me or attend my office hours at any time throughout the term to request further information about any course content.

Email: During the 'regular' work week (i.e., 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday), the course instructor and teaching assistants will do their best to reply to student emails within 24-hours of receiving them. Please do not expect a response immediately, after 5:00 p.m., on holidays, or on weekends. Please only send emails from your Western account, as non-Western emails usually end up in our junk folders. We kindly ask that you include the full course code in the subject line. This will minimize the likelihood of your email getting lost in our (often very full!) inboxes.

Office Hours: You are encouraged to visit the instructor's and your teaching assistant's office hours to ask questions, discuss concerns, and receive support. If you are not available to meet with us during our scheduled office hours, we are also available by appointment. To request a meeting outside our scheduled office hours, please send us an email with some suggested dates and times that work with your schedule. You may attend the instructor's office hours in-person or virtually. In-person office hours are drop-in. If you would like to meet virtually with the instructor or your teaching assistant, please email us this request so that we can organize a Zoom meeting for the appropriate day and time.

24-Hour Cool-Off Periods: Following the release of assessment grades and feedback, a cool-off period will be in effect for 24 hours. During this period, please refrain from contacting the course instructor

or your teaching assistant about your returned assessment. If you have questions or concerns about your returned assessment, use this 24-hour cool-off period to digest the feedback you've received. Review the applicable instructions and reflect on the time and effort you spent preparing for and/or completing the assessment. If, after completing these two tasks, you still have a question or concern, you are welcome to contact your teaching assistant once the 24-hour cool-off period has ended. You are required to seek assistance within one week of having received your graded assessment.

Flexible Deadlines: All five tutorial assignments and the Pro-Environmental Change Assignment will have flexible deadlines. If you are struggling to meet the deadlines for any (or all) of these assessments, you may have up to 48 additional hours to complete and submit your assignment(s) without penalty. You do not need to email the instructor or your teaching assistant to communicate that you will be using the flexible deadline option. You are not required to provide any explanation or personal details as to why you would like to use the flexible deadline option, and formal accommodation through your academic counselling office is not required. We understand that life happens, so please use the flexible deadline option for some or all of these assessments if needed.

Late Submissions: Assignments that are submitted late (i.e., beyond the flexible deadline), without a granted extension, will be subject to a -5% per day late deduction. Assignments submitted five days (or more) late will earn a mark of zero but will be graded for your educational benefit.

Extensions: Extensions will only be available to students with approved documentation. All documentation for missed assessments must be provided to your faculty's academic counselling office within 48 hours of the original assessment deadline, otherwise you will earn a grade of zero on the assessment. You can access your faculty's academic counselling office's website by clicking **here**.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI): Within this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that you critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop your own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploring a topic; however, you are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources of information and avoiding plagiarism. The inclusion of AI-generated text in course assessments is strongly discouraged. If included, all AI-generated text must be formatted as a direct quotation (i.e., placed within quotation marks and cited according to APA guidelines). As you are the creator of your assessment submissions, all your submissions should reflect your own thoughts and independent work. The use of AI-generated visuals (e.g., figures, graphs, diagrams, etc.) in assessments is not permitted. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and effective learning environment that promotes critical thinking and independent inquiry. The same principles also apply to the use of translation software to support the creation of assessments.

8. Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence: The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness - Undergraduate Students

Student Medical Certificate (SMC)

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the **Western Multicultural Calendar.**

9. Continuity of Education Plan

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the University to direct courses move away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will <u>not</u> change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

10.   Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a **Scholastic Offence**.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

11.   Western's Commitment to Accessibility

The Department of Geography and Environment strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an

accommodation. **Information regarding accommodation of exams** is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about **"Accessibility at Western"** is available.

12.   Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's **Health and Wellness website** for more information on mental health resources.

13.   Support Services

Western's Support Services
Student Development Centre

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, by clicking **here**.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact **support@uwo.ca**.