



蘇州大學
Soochow University

GEO 206 Global Environmental Change

Summer 2024

Course Credits: 4

Contact Hours: 56 hours

Instructor: TBA

Email: TBA

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course explores the multifaceted nature of global environmental change, investigating the causes, processes, and impacts of environmental transformations at a global scale. Through the examination of various environmental change phenomena, including climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, and pollution, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions between natural systems, human activities, and the global environment. The course will also explore the social and policy dimensions of global environmental change, with a focus on developing sustainable solutions.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

1. Gain a basic understanding of how our climate and natural systems operate, how they change through time, and the causes of environmental change;
2. Examine the natural processes and human activities that contribute to global environmental change;
3. Analyze the impacts of global environmental change on ecosystems, natural resources, and human societies;
4. Explore mitigation and adaptation strategies to promote sustainability and securitize global environmental change;
5. Develop their critical thinking skills in evaluating scientific research, policy responses, and ethical considerations related to global environmental change.

PREREQUISITES

N/A



GRADING

Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
2 Essays	30 Points
2 Lab Assignments & Reports	30 Points
Midterm Exam	15 Points
Final Exam	25 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$.

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Texts:

Mike Walker, Martin Bell, Late Quaternary Environmental Change: Physical and Human Perspectives, 2nd Edition, Prentice Hall, 2005.

Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:

None

COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	Topics: Topic 1: Introduction: Earth Science, Geography and Archaeology Topic 2: Environmental Change and Human Activity Topic 3: Evidence for Environmental Change: Scientific Methodology Topic 4: Fossil Evidence, Sedimentary Evidence, Isotopic Evidence, Historical Evidence Lab Assignment & Report #1



Module 2	<p>Topics: Topic 5: Natural Environmental Change Topic 6: Climate Changes in the North Atlantic Region During the Last Cold Stage Topic 7: Causes of Long-term Climatic Change Topic 8: Consequences of Climate Change Essay#1</p>
Module 3	<p>Topics: Topic 9: How People Cope Environmental Change and Human Evolution Topic 10: The Origins of Agriculture Topic 11: Environmental Disturbance Factors Topic 12: Cultural Landscapes, Human Agency and Environmental Change Assessments: Midterm Exam</p>
Module 4	<p>Topics: Topic 13: People, Climate and Erosion Topic 14: A Time Perspective for Sustainability and Biodiversity Topic 15: Paleoenvironmental Studies and Nature Conversation Topic 16: National Strategies for Conservation Lab Assignment & Report #2 Essay#2</p>
Module 5	<p>Topics: Topic 17: Securitized Global Environmental Change Topic 18: Human Security and Climate Change Topic 19: Redefining Sustainability: A Policy Tool for Environmental Security Topic 20: Policy Dimensions of Human Security and Vulnerability Challenges Assessments: Final Exam</p>

ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately



prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (e.g., note taking, reading course documents).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that



蘇州大學
Soochow University

students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.