



Course # #25578; 3 credits

Instructor Dr. **Kendra McSweeney**
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Virtual Office hours: Tuesdays 10 am - 12 pm; other times are also available. Please email me to set up a meeting.
My role in this course is to design and deliver it, and to answer questions about the content.

TA **Max Martin**
E-mail: jin.760@buckeyemail.osu.edu
Virtual Office hours: TBD.
Max's primary job is to grade your work, manage the course online, and to answer any questions you have about the assignments.

Lectures : Cohorts & Times

This year, students enrolled in this class are divided into two cohorts.

Everyone will attend ONE LECTURE PER WEEK. The lecture time will span two back-to-back slots: the 3:00 pm-3:55 slot that was originally intended for 'lab' work, and the 4:10-5:05 slot originally intended for 'lecture.' One cohort will attend on Monday, the other on Wednesday. Which you'll attend depends on the course section in which you are enrolled.

- **Cohort A** is the half of the class that is currently enrolled in the **#25579 Course Section**. You will attend in-person on **MONDAYS** over two back-to-back time periods: 3:00-3:55 AND 4:10-5:05, in CBEC 110.

- **Cohort B** is the half of the class that is currently enrolled in the **#25580 Course Section**. You will attend in-person on WEDNESDAYS over two back-to-back time periods: 3:00-3:55 AND 4:10-5:05, in CBEC 110.

There will be four weeks in which there will be NO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT ALL; all coursework will be online. Those are the weeks of Aug. 24, Sept. 7, Nov. 9, and Nov. 23.

You must attend class according to the cohort in which you are registered; I cannot accommodate changes.

Disability Services

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's **request process**, managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Course Description

Geography has a rich heritage of investigating the relationships between people and the natural environment, from the fundamental biophysical processes upon which human existence depends, to humanity's role in transforming nature. This course provides an introduction to current environmental issues from the uniquely integrative perspective of geography. Topics range from global-scale processes such as climate change, to the local-scale impacts of drinking water contamination. In each case, the nature and scope of the problem is reviewed, its underlying mechanisms outlined, and ongoing efforts to resolve the problem are explored. Particular attention is paid to how specific environmental issues are manifest here in Ohio, in Columbus, and on campus.

After taking this course, students should: better understand the basic processes underlying important types of environmental change at local, regional, and global scales; grasp how geographers approach environmental science, assessment, and problem-solving; be able to critically assess multi-media coverage of these issues; better identify the links between everyday consumption choices and

environmental outcomes; and understand the political-economic drivers of environmental change. The course also offers an introduction to the process of scientific research, through hands-on exploratory research leading to research hypotheses and a preliminary research proposal.

This course serves as the first required core course in the Environment & Society track for a BA in Geography, and serves as a Natural Science elective for OSU's General Education (GE) for non-Science majors.

Course Structure & Expectations

This course is listed as a "Hybrid"/"Distance-Enhanced" Course. Both designations refer to the fact that some portion of the class instruction and activities are in-person (or will be synchronous if the campus shuts down), and some portion is conducted asynchronously with online assignments and fieldwork.

You are expected to attend the in-person portions of the class. You should expect to take notes in class. Much of the material will not be on PowerPoint and thus not available except by attending class and taking notes. BRING LAPTOPS/TABLETS to in-class lectures.

There is no substitute for class attendance. Though I will post the powerpoint slides for each lecture, they are image-rich; my lectures provide much of the associated context and content.

I will not take attendance this year. However, success in the class requires review of the material presented in lecture, because the lectures provide the context and content you need to do the weekly assignments. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, it is your responsibility to get the notes from that class from a colleague.

Modules

All readings, assignments, and labs can be found within the weekly module. There is no textbook for this course; all the materials you'll need can be found in Carmen.

Module assignments include readings and videos and accompanying surveys or quizzes. They are designed to review and reflect on the material presented in lecture. You must do these assignments to pass the class.

Weekly labs are also located within the module structure. They are designed to give you an opportunity to apply the insights learned in class to the local scale, by working through a problem in the context of Columbus or OSU campus.

Some of the labs require fieldwork. That means they will ask you to visit outdoor (and some indoor) spaces to map, measure, photograph or survey various phenomena. The labs will give you experience in different methods of data generation used by geographers, will help you see the 'global in the local,' and have you explore in greater depth the city in which we are all living.

You are welcome to do the lab work with a partner or small group. However, you must submit your answers and data individually, and those answers/data cannot duplicate those of your partners.

Evaluation

Activity	Share of Final Grade (100%)
Participation in lectures	5%
Modules	80-85%
a. Labs (% TBD)	
b. Other module content (%TBD)	
Final research proposal draft	10-15%

Participation

We meet 10 times in-person this semester. Participation in class discussion makes for a lively experience and facilitates peer learning. This class is typically comprised of students from a varied mix of majors, and we have much to learn from each others' experiences. I will provide multiple opportunities for you to share your opinions and to debate issues. Being an engaged and encouraging listener is also a form of participation.

If you do not think you can participate in these ways in class, please let me know in advance and I will find ways to accommodate you. Otherwise, students who are constantly distracted by their screens, are disruptive or unwilling to engage in friendly and respectful discussion, should expect a "0" in their participation grade.

Modules: due weekly on Saturday or Monday nights

You will work through 13 modules over the course of the semester. The modules complement the lecture material and test your understanding of it through readings and videos with corresponding discussion posts, surveys, and quizzes. You will earn 1-5% for completing those portions of each module.

The remainder of the module grade comes from the **11-12 labs** that you will complete over the semester. The majority can be completed online, but at least four will require you to—on your own or with others—actually practice field methods by collecting data (visual, numeric, etc.) around campus or in the city. Please alert me to anything that might keep you from being able to engage in a lab activity.

Modules are due weekly at midnight, two days before our next class meeting (Saturday and Monday nights). This allows enough time for me and the TA to grade them before our class meeting, and give you individual and collective feedback on the results.

The labs "build" comprehension of research methods and hypothesis-building throughout the course.

Except under EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, modules cannot be made up and late work will receive a '0.' Please be aware of all pending assignments.

All evaluation for the class is conducted on-line, and can be completed each week at your own pace and schedule.

Research proposal

OSU strongly encourages undergraduates to engage in research, and routinely funds student research projects (for more, visit the [Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Inquiry](#)). An important step in doing research is to write a research proposal. Throughout this course, and especially during the lab portions, we will build the skills needed to come up with a draft proposal for a potential research project. From the week of Nov. 16 onwards, we will focus on this task.

Your five-page, double-spaced proposal draft will be due at the end of the semester (Dec. 7) and is worth between 10-15% of your final grade. How much the final project is worth will be determined later in the course, and will depend on how the semester goes in terms of epidemiological interruptions.

Opportunities for Extra Credit

OSU is a big university and there are typically many events over the semester that are related to course themes. If you attend one of these events (virtually or otherwise), and are willing to share your impressions with the class (please emphasize one or two 'take home' insights from the experience), you can earn **up to an additional 5%**. Please confirm with the instructor or TA if you are not sure if an event qualifies, and let them know in advance if you plan to address the class.

Note: This extra-credit option will have to be modified or eliminated if the course goes completely on-line.

Letter Grades & Requirements

We will use OSU's Standard Grade Scheme:

93 - 100 (A); 90 - 92.9 (A-); 87 - 89.9 (B+); 83 - 86.9 (B); 80 - 82.9 (B-); 77 - 79.9 (C+); 73 - 76.9 (C); 70 - 72.9 (C-); 67 - 69.9 (D+); 60 - 66.9 (D); Below 60 (E).

For information about grade requirements for GE courses, see:

<https://artsandsciences.osu.edu/academics/current-students/advising/ge>

Policies

You are expected to attend the 10 lectures scheduled this semester. If you ABSOLUTELY must miss class, you must notify the Instructor or TA beforehand. Pending our approval, we will discuss potential make-up options. **Exceptions will only be made for serious, unanticipated reasons (emergencies, illness), for which documentation will be required.**

Screen Policy: The only reason to have a screen in front of you in class is if you are using it to take notes. Occasionally, the instructor may ask you to use a smart device to access information or review material in Carmen. Students who are consistently distracted will see this reflected in their participation grade.

Health & Safety Requirements (COVID-19 policies)

All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>), which includes wearing a face mask in any indoor space and maintaining a safe physical distance at all times. Non-compliance will be warned first and disciplinary actions will be taken for repeated offenses.

A more detailed description of expectations and accountability measures can be found here:

https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2020/07/safe_and_healthy_campus_expectations_accountability_measures_7.24.2020_website.pdf

Repeated or persistent failure to wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose to an in-person lecture will be reflected in your grade for this course.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the [Committee on Academic Misconduct](#) to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors **are obliged to report** all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487).

GE Statement

This course fulfills the requirements of a **Natural Science: Physical Science** GE course. The goal of the Natural Science GE is for students to understand the principles, theories, and methods of modern science, the relationship between science and technology, the implications of scientific discoveries and the potential for science and technology to address problems of the contemporary world.

There are four central learning objectives:

1. Students understand the basic facts, principles, theories and methods of modern science.
2. Students understand key events in the development of science and recognize that science is an evolving body of knowledge.
3. Students describe the inter-dependence of scientific and technological developments.
4. Students recognize social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and understand the potential of science and technology to address problems of the contemporary world.

This course meets these objectives by:

- reviewing physical science insights into contemporary environmental challenges;
- understanding how science is socially produced and contested
- emphasizing and applying different scientific methods;
- outlining the evolution of geographical and ecological science over time, and the ways in which some ideas about nature and society become dominant;
- critically discussing and writing about the role of technology in scientific discoveries, environmental management and adaptation;
- critically evaluating our relationship to the natural world using case studies, in-class activities and discussion, and hands-on field- and lab-based work;
- debating the social and ecological costs and benefits of different forms of environmental adaptation and mitigation.

Your Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614- 292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273- TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org

SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

The course is divided into modules, one per week. Students will attend class EITHER Monday or Wednesday, and only on 10 of the 14 weeks. The rest of the coursework will be done on students' own time (asynchronously), either online or through fieldwork-based lab assignments.

A more detailed schedule, with readings and assignments within each module, can be found on Carmen.

Week/ Module	Dates	Module Topic	Lab	Format (as of August 2020)
1	8/26-	Course Introduction	No lab	ALL MATERIAL ONLINE; no class meeting
2	8/31-	Why Geography? Framing Human-Environment Relationships	What's Natural?	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE & FIELDWORK
3	9/7-	(LABOR DAY) Environmental Crisis Narratives	No lab	ALL ASSIGNMENTS & MATERIAL ONLINE; no class meeting
4	9/14-	Political Ecology & Environmental Justice	Environmental Justice in Columbus, Ohio	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
5	9/21-	Climate Change I	Understanding Carbon	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
6	9/28-	Climate Change II	Seeing Methane in Ohio	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
7	10/5-	Mitigating Climate Change	Columbus 2050	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
8	10/12-	The U.S. Energy Mix Focus on: Transportation	How Columbus Became a Car City	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
9	10/19-	Post-carbon Transportation	Complete Streets	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE & FIELDWORK
10	10/26-	Urban Socioecologies	Cities as Foodscapes	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE & FIELDWORK
11	11/2-	The Human Right to Water: Patterns of Access & Quality	Columbus Water: a Tale of Two Cities	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
12	11/9-	(VETERAN'S DAY) Water Wars	Why are we Buying Dasani?	NO LECTURE; ALL MATERIALS ONLINE LAB: FIELDWORK
13	11/16-	Research Proposals: What/Why/How	Developing a Research Question	IN-PERSON LECTURE LAB: ONLINE
14	11/23-	(THANKSGIVING)	Draft skeleton proposal	VIRTUAL MEETINGS WITH INSTRUCTORS LAB: ONLINE
15	11/30-	No classes; work on final proposal	No lab	VIRTUAL MEETINGS WITH INSTRUCTORS (AS NECESSARY)
16	12/7-	Research Proposals Due		