Course Outline
GEOG/ENVIR SC 4HH3
Environment and Health

School of Geography and Earth Sciences
McMaster University
Fall 2017

Instructor: Niko Yiannakoulias
Office: GSB 204
Phone: X20117
Email: yiannan@mcmaster.ca

1. Course objectives

In this class students will:

● Enhance their understanding about the history, impact and science of environment and human health
● Learn about the methods used in environmental health research and practice
● Learn about communication in environment and health by writing reports and making an excellent presentation

2. Course readings

Readings are available in a custom course ware pack available from the bookstore.

3. Course assessment

● Assignment 1 (General health risk assessment report) (25%)
● Assignment 2 (Site specific health risk assessment report) (25%)
● Seminar presentation (25%)
● Final exam (25%)

3.1 General health risk assessment report (25%)

This is a 1000-1500 word report on the relationship between exposure to an environmental hazard and a specific health concern. In this report you must do research to describe 1) the origin, source and properties of a hazard 2) the route of exposure, 3) the concentration of exposure thought to be harmful to humans, 4) a specific health outcome thought to be related to exposure to hazard and 5) the association (in terms of relative risk) between exposure to hazard and the specific health outcome. Research must be based on peer reviewed journal articles and official government reports (from Health Canada, the CDC and other major agencies).

3.2 Site specific health risk assessment report (25%)

This is a site-specific assessment of the risks of a specific hazard (the same one identified and described in assignment one) in a specific community. The community must be a neighbourhood in a Canadian city. This assignment must include 1) a relevant and comprehensive description of the community, 2) an assessment of exposure to hazard in the community and 3) a conclusion about the health risks attributable to exposure to hazard in the community.

Please note: the University reserves the right to change any aspect of this course outline
The final report should be between **1000-1500** words in total length. The final report should also include a map of the study area and a final risk assessment table. Students are encouraged to also include useful graphical elements (up to three graphs and/or tables) in their report, ideally all of which are created by the student. Research must be based on peer reviewed journal articles and official government reports (from Health Canada, the CDC and other major agencies).

### 3.3 Seminar presentation (25%)

Each student will deliver a short, engaging and thoughtful presentation. There will be multiple presentations each seminar, all within a thematic area. You will be graded on presentation style and substance. Because the presentation is short, you should rehearse your presentation ahead of time.

In addition to preparing a presentation, each student must create **two** powerpoint slides, as well as a **one** page summary of their argument to hand into your TA for grading. Both of these **must be emailed to your TA at least 24 hours prior** to the seminar. If handed in late, the student will receive a mark penalty, and will not be allowed to use the slides for their presentation.

### 3.4 Final exam (25%)

There is a final exam in this course. Details will be discussed in class prior to the end of term.

### 4. Avenue 2 Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue 2 Learn. Students should be aware that when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names associated with McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. **Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure.** If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Questions related to course content (for example, about lectures and reading material) should be posted online. All students registered in this course should have access to the online system. Speak to the instructor if you have difficulties with access.

### 5. Classroom civics

1. Attendance in this course is considered mandatory. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to get notes / details about missed material from your classmates.
2. Electronic submissions of assignments, papers, etc. are not accepted unless otherwise stated.
3. The instructor puts notes on Avenue to Learn at his discretion, and has the right to stop posting notes at any time throughout the term.
4. Students are **not permitted** to use an audio and/or video recording device to record lectures. Students who do so will be reported to the academic integrity office.

### 6. Policy on late/missed assignments

- **All late assignments receive a 15%/day late penalty.**
- For late assignments up to 3 days late that are worth less than 25% of mark:
  (definition of days late includes weekend days)
  - Use the McMaster student absence form (MSAF) on-line, self-reporting tool. Undergraduate students may report absences lasting up to 3 days and may also request relief for missed academic work provided the work is worth less than 25% of grade. The submission of medical or other types of supporting documentation is normally not required. Students may use this tool to submit a maximum of one request for relief of missed academic work per term. Students must immediately (within 5 days) follow up with me via email regarding the nature of the relief. Failure to do so will negate the opportunity for relief. Using the MSAF system does not guarantee relief for missed or late work.

- For absences from classes lasting more than three days or assignments/exams worth 25% or more of final mark:
  - Students who hand in an assignment more than 3 days late, or for an assignment/exam worth 25% or more of their final grade late cannot use the on-line, self-reporting tool to request relief. On these occasions, students MUST report to their Faculty Office to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation.

7. Policy regarding academic dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (where notation reads “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the University.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at: http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/policy/AcademicIntegrity.pdf

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:
1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Instructors in this course will be using software designed to identify instances of plagiarism.

8. Appealing Marks

If you wish to appeal an assignment mark, the appeal must be issued to the instructor within seven days (inclusive) of the assignment hand-back.

Re-marking of assignments due to addition errors will be considered without an official re-grade of the assignment. For such re-marking, simply hand in the assignment to the drop box with a note indicating the addition error.
If students want material in their assignment re-graded, they must submit their appeal in written form along with the original marked version of the assignment/exam into the course drop box. It is at the discretion of the instructor to have any assignment re-graded. If the assignment is re-graded, it will be re-graded in its entirety. Marks may go up or down after re-grading. To be eligible for a re-grade, students must also ensure that they have not discussed any details of their specific assignment with the TAs or instructor between when the assignment was handed back, and the time when it is handed in for a re-grade. This is to ensure the integrity of the re-grading process. If a student wants feedback on grading, they are welcome to seek it, but doing so will automatically exclude them from having their assignment re-graded.

9. Changes to the course outline

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

10. Topics to be covered

1. History and background of environmental health
2. Health and disease
3. Study design
4. Quantifying risk
5. Pathology and toxicology
6. Exposure
7. Risk analysis and policy