Guided Independent Study Course:
Climate Change, Human Migration and Conflict

Course Overview and Introduction

Welcome to the UNI Online Course “Climate Change, Human Migration and Security.” This course is available for undergraduate credit in either Sociology or Anthropology and it will include theory, literature and perspectives from both of these disciplines and many more.

This course was developed largely in response to growing demand among UNI students and professionals working in disaster response, emergency planning, emergency medical, law enforcement and human services. Over the last several years, I have worked with and trained hundreds of students and professionals on demographic change in the United States and the World and on many occasions, I have received requests to explore the link between climate change and demographic shifts and, by extension, human security. The highly polarized political debate over “global warming” (Does it really exist? Who’s to blame? What to do about it.) has often confused or diminished the larger and more inclusive issue of climate change which may include aspects of warming, but also includes long- and short-term extreme weather events like cold spells, torrential rains, prolonged drought, hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis and mudslides. As we will discover in this course, there is now world-wide agreement that climate change is real and that climate change has very real impacts on demographic displacement, severity of disasters (both natural and human-made) and that there are serious near- and long-term implications for national and global security. It is not the point of this course to debate climate change but rather to examine the overwhelming evidence for how climate change is closely tied to major population movements, vulnerability of growing masses of people to disasters, war and famine, and how human security across the globe is threatened.

To that end, here are the major learning objectives for this course. (Learning objectives for each module are found in the modules themselves.)

Learning Objectives (Competencies)

Course Learning Objectives: After completing this course...

#1...students will be able to summarize and articulate the evidence backing global agreement about climate change.

#2...students will be able to describe global and local examples of how climate change has displaced or otherwise encouraged the movement of populations in several countries and regions of the world.

#3...students will summarize the linkages between climate change and vulnerability of specific populations to natural and human-made disasters.

#4...students will reflect on current and emerging forms of threats to nations and human communities that result—at least in part—from climate change.

About Your Instructor
2015 marks my 25th year on the faculty at the University of Northern Iowa. I received my Ph.D. in Applied Anthropology from the University of Colorado-Boulder where I studied with Dr. Robert Hackenberg, one of the world’s leading applied anthropologists and the person who most encouraged me to study global issues like climate change and their consequence for local communities. I have published extensively in academic and non-academic journals with recent articles in *Iowa Law Enforcement Magazine* and *Somatosphere*. My books include *New Americans, New Iowans, Postville USA: Surviving Diversity in Small-Town America* and *Health Matters: A Pocket Guide for Working with Diverse Cultures and Underserved Populations*. Many of my books and articles were co-authored with another UNI professor Dr. Michele Devlin.

I have won numerous awards for my activities, including the 2013 Friend of Iowa Civil Rights, the Iowan Immigrant Champion Award, One Iowa Award, Iowa Friends of Civil Rights Award, Iowa Council for International Understanding Vision Award, and the Iowa Regents Award for Faculty Excellence.

I am also an Iowa-licensed Emergency Medical Responder and a nationally certified Search and Rescue Technician. I volunteer for numerous state and local organizations including the American Red Cross, Star One Search and Rescue Team, several FEMA Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), the Iowa Mortuary Operational Response Team (I-MORT) and the Iowa Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Task Force. I serve as a consultant and trainer for the Iowa Departments of Public Safety, Public Health, and Human Services. I am also an instructor for the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and the Iowa Department of Public Safety Basic Academy. Recent technical assistance assignments have include the Pentagon, Iowa Department of Public Safety and the FBI.

**Required Instructional Materials**

The required text book for this course is:


This book is available for check out at the UNI Rod Library. It is also available as an e-book from different online sources but I highly recommend that students purchase a printed edition. This book is written very densely and introduces a number of concepts, terms and events and I recommend marking the chapters with a pencil and making notes in the margins. This will also facilitate preparing for two or three of the exams and writing the final paper.

There are several technical reports and articles all of which are currently available online at no cost. Some of these technical reports at rather long but I will direct you to specific chapters. Students may wish to try and read these materials online only, but I do recommend printing out many of them, or at least printing out the relevant pages to make notes or mark up the text. These technical reports and articles will be listed in each learning unit and here:

- United Nations/WHO Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, Human Security*

CNA Military Advisory Board entitled *National Security and the Accelerating Risks of Climate Change*.

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command: *Action Officer Staff Writing*.

There is also a video as listed in unit #4: *Extreme Realities: Severe Weather, Climate Change and Our National Security*

**Course Activities: Learning Module Topics**

Module 1: The Basics: Defining the Terminology of Climate Change and Disasters

Module 2: Global Scientific Consensus: Climate Change and Human Security

Module 3: Forced and Planned Climate Migration

Module 4: Severe Weather, Climate Change and Global Security

Module 5: Climate Change and Emerging Security Threats to the United States

Module 6: Climate Change and Security in a Littoral World

Module 7: Final Assignment

**Assessment and Measurement**

This course is very reading intensive. There is only one required text book but there are several technical reports and articles, all of which students will find online. There are also a good number of maps, charts, and statistical tables. Be prepared to learn and memorize several terms. There is also one required video in learning unit #4. Students will be assessed with six written assignments and one quiz. Please see below the breakdown for points available per assignment/quiz and the total number of points available. Since this is a Guided Independent Study (GIS) course, students may advance through the readings and learning units at their own pace. But I recommend that students carve out sufficient hours to address each learning unit in one or two sittings. Of course, students can take the quiz and write the required assignments at their own pace as well, but I recommend doing so within hours or a few days after the readings and/or video. All written assignments will be turned in via UNI eLearning.

**Assessment**

For each learning module there is a writing or creative assignment except Module 4 which provides a quiz. There is also a final, comprehensive assignment for the entire course in Module 7. Available points for each assignment/quiz are as follows:

Module 1 Assignment: 12 Term definitions/examples at 10 points per term for 120 total points

Module 2 Assignment: Three brief writing assignments at 25 points each or 75 total points
Module 3 Assignment: One Power Point Presentation (with at least 15 slides) for 100 points

Module 4 Quiz: Quiz with 14 questions at 5 points per correct answer for a total of 70 points

Module 5 Assignment: 3 short essays at 25 points for a total of 75 points

Module 6 Assignment: 13 Term definitions/examples at 10 points per term for a total of 130 points

Module 7 Final Assignment: A 5-10 point briefing statement for 100 points

**Total available points:** 670

**Grading**

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