

GGR 101H1S: Ancient Civilizations and their Environments***A. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:***

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Instructor: Peter Bikoulis, Ph.D. Candidate

Office Location: SS 5060

Office hour(s): Thursday 4:30-5:30 PM

Contact details: [uoft.ggr101@gmail.com](mailto:uoft.ggr101@gmail.com) (official course email)

***B. COURSE INFORMATION:***

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Location: OI G162

Time: Thursday 2-4 PM

Distribution Requirement Status: This is a Science course

Breadth Requirement: Living Things and Their Environment (4)

***C. COURSE DESCRIPTION:***

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Climate change is the most pressing issue of our day. This course focuses on historical examples of how our earliest ancestors interacted and adapted to changing climatic and environmental pressures, some of which were self-created. The timing and tempo of climatic change is often credited with the dramatic cultural changes seen with the advent of the geological epoch known as the Holocene. The origins of agriculture, the rise of world civilizations, and the formation of the world as we know it. All of these are based on simple, physical drivers of climate. This course will focus on the processes that drive environmental change and how past societies have responded to the constraints that these impose. The emphasis is on the current interglacial, the Holocene, and how increasing population and technology has affected human-environment interactions.

***D. COURSE OBJECTIVES:***

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By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Summarize a general understanding of the history of climatic change on our planet, with special emphasis on the past 12,000 years.
2. Articulate a general understanding of the various methods researchers use to reconstruct environmental conditions in the past.
3. Describe in a broad manner the research program of Historical Ecology.

***E. COURSE EVALUATION:***

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Students will submit the following assignments for grading:

1. <u>Exams</u>	55%	
a. Mid-Term Exam	22%	Due: February 15, 2016
b. Final Exam (not cumulative)	33%	Due: Scheduled by Registrar
2. <u>Essay</u>	45%	
a. Annotated Bibliography	10%	Due: January 25, 2016
b. Rough Draft	15%	Due: March 1, 2016
c. Final Essay	20%	Due: March 29, 2016

**1. Exams:** students will write two (2) multiple choice exams. The mid-term will be in class, while the Registrar will schedule the final during the Spring 2018 Exam period. Exams will assess students to ensure that content from the lectures and readings have been assimilated and understood. Exam questions will be drawn from both Lectures and Readings.

**2. Essay:** Students will be required to complete a short essay addressing an instructor-supplied topic related to the course theme(s). Students who elect not to submit earlier assignments (e.g., annotated bibliography, rough draft) WILL NOT receive credit for later assignments (e.g., the final essay). Students will be provided with a “primer” article for each of the 5 topics available. Portable Document Files (PDFs) of the primer article will be posted to the Black Board page. The Final Essay must be 5 double-spaced pages (1,500 words, excluding references). Students must include at minimum 3 peer-reviewed scholarly articles, and the primer article is one of these; the course textbooks do not count towards this total. More details will be provided to students during the first class.

**NB: more about the Essay and Assignments**

*a. Plagiarism:* Students must familiarize themselves with the University policy concerning Plagiarism and Academic Honesty. Infractions of Academic Honesty will not be tolerated in this course; it’s about fairness and acknowledging your own and other peoples’ effort. Plagiarism can range from the unintentional omission of a reference to deliberate copying of other peoples’ work or cheating on a test/exam. Extensive resources exist to help students avoid this very serious transgression, and the penalties that will result, such as the Writing Centre (e.g., <http://writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>).

*b. Formatting:* All submitted work must have a separate title page that includes the student’s name, student ID number and topic number clearly indicated. Citation and reference list must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide, which is a standard social science format. Work must be in 12 point Times New Roman font with double spacing and 1-inch margins. Penalties of up to 10% off assignment grade will be given for work that is formatted in an unacceptable manner.

*c. Lateness:* Late assignments will be penalized by a ten percent (10%) reduction per day, including weekends (i.e., first day = \*0.9, second day = \*0.8, etc.). Work must be submitted by the beginning of the class (at 2 PM) it is due otherwise it is late (i.e., first day late penalty applied). No assignment will be accepted three (3) days after the due date without valid reason. Valid reasons for late submission will require proper original documentation (i.e., medical note, police report, etc.) to be submitted as per University regulations; include documentation with the assignment. A one (1) week extension from original due date will be given in those instances. Students with approved accommodations (i.e., letter from Accommodations’ Office) will also receive a one (1) week extension past the original due date. All written work must be submitted via Black Board; email submissions will **NOT** be accepted.

*d. Grading:* Graded work will be marked and returned within two (2) weeks after submission date; applies to regularly submitted assignments. Instructions and grading rubrics for each assignment will be communicated to students in advance. Challenge to assignment grade must be accompanied with a detailed written statement outlining areas that the student feels warrant a

grade increase. Re-grading will be carried out by the instructor and may increase, decrease or keep original grade. All decisions of re-grading are final.

*e. Email policy:* Email will be monitored and responded to during regular “business hours”, namely 9:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday from the official course email address (see above). Only official University of Toronto email addresses (i.e., “YOUR.NAME@mail.utoronto.ca”) will be acknowledged. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response. Emails should be limited to administrative issues, while questions related to course content will be dealt with during office hours.

## ***F. COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS***

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### **1. Required Textbooks:**

The following books are required for this course. They are available for purchase at the U of T Book store.

Anderson, D., A. Goudie, and A. Parker. 2013. *Global Environments through the Quaternary: exploring environmental change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Abbreviated as: **AGP 2013**

Roberts, N. 2014. *The Holocene: an environmental history*. Oxford and Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. Abbreviated as: **R 2014**

Other readings will be posted as portable document format (PDF) files on Blackboard.

### **2. Class Schedule at a Glance:**

<b>W</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Required Readings</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
1	Jan 4	<i>Course Overview, Principles of Historical Ecology, Choosing Peer-reviewed sources</i>		
2	Jan 11	<i>Drivers of Climate</i>	AGP 2013: 298-323	
3	Jan 18	<i>Methods of Environmental Reconstruction</i>	R 2014: 10-61	
4	Jan 25	<i>The Environmental Prequel: from our earliest ancestors to the Late Glacial Maximum</i>	R 2014: 83-96 AGP 2013: 267-279	<b>Annotated Bibliography Due</b>
5	Feb 1	<i>The Holocene: a 12,000 year history of climate change</i>	AGP 2013: 154-182	
6	Feb 8	<i>Origins of Agriculture and Settled Life: the material conditions</i>	R 2014: 235-239 AGP 2013: 281-291	
7	Feb 15	In Class Mid-Term Exam	None	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>
8	Feb 22	<b><i>READING WEEK – NO CLASSES</i></b>		

9	Mar 1	<i>Old World Civilizations and their changing environment: from Prehistory to the Classical Age</i>	R 2014: 235-239 AGP 2013: 281-291	<b>Rough Draft Due</b>
10	Mar 8	<i>New World Civilizations and their changing environment: from Beringia to the Inca</i>	R 2014: 186-189, 239-241 AGP 2013: 82-84, 87-90, 244-246	
11	Mar 15	<i>The Medieval World and the Little Ice Age</i>	R 2014: 280-300 AGP 2013: 291-294	
11	Mar 22	<i>Globalization: consequences of biological expansion</i>	AGP 2013: 276-279	
12	Mar 29	<i>The Anthropocene: our current condition</i>	R 2014: 278-279, 312-323 AGP 2013: 229-244	<b>Final Essay Due</b>