

GEOG 240: OUR DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE

FALL 2018

Term Paper Instructions

- This term paper will be completed INDIVIDUALLY by every student and consists of 3 submitted assignments that each build on the prior assignment.
- Objectives:
 - o Evaluate the outcomes and impacts of a landscape-changing event (natural disaster) by understanding the spatial, region, and historical context.
 - o Be able to communicate a synthesis of research on this area effectively in writing.
- Choose one major event of the following type: (examples are in parentheses, but you can pick any event you'd like beyond those listed here)
 - o Volcanic eruption (Mt. Pinatubo volcanic eruption, the Philippines, 1991; Chile-Puyehue volcano, 2011)
 - o Earthquake (Haiti 2010 or Japan 2011 earthquakes)
 - o Landslide/debris flow (Oso landslide, Washington State, 2014)
 - o Flood (Colorado Front Range Flooding, 2013)
 - o Forest fire (anywhere in the western US in the past 20 years)
 - o If you have a particular region of the world you are interested in and want ideas about events, come talk to me.
- Final Product: a 6-page research report (double-spaced)

Part 1: Due Monday, September 10, 9:00 AM

- Pick an event that you will focus on and outline your paper (see parts 2 and 3 below for what the full assignment will require)
- In your submission of part 1, include:
 - o A descriptive **title**
 - o Full citations for at least 5 sources. No more than 3 of these should be websites.
 - o **One short paragraph for each of these 5 sources**, briefly describing the source's main argument or facts and how this information can contribute to your paper. The reader should be able to see the quality of the source and how it's relevant to your paper.
 - o An **outline** (bullet or numbered list) of what every paragraph in the paper will eventually contain (this can change as you work on your paper later, but create a realistic plan).
 - o A **map** (made on Google Earth or GIS software) of the area affected by the natural disaster, with a descriptive caption.
- Information sources: **reliable** websites (e.g., USGS or university sources), news articles, scientific articles, textbooks, books.
- Feedback: I will provide feedback on D2L on these outlines within 1 week of submission so you can incorporate my comments into part 2 of the assignment.

Part 2: Due Wednesday, October 3, 9:00 AM

- Begin filling in your outline by writing **3 pages** that will be incorporated into your final paper
- Be sure to address the following aspects in essay form (in any order you wish):
 - o Describe the facts of the event, including
 - Type of event
 - Location
 - Magnitude (i.e. spatial area impact or volume of earth moved, etc.)

- Additional relevant supporting information
- What is the regional and/or geologic context of the event? (i.e. Why did it occur where it did?)
- Create a **table** that summarizes the information requested above (so a reader can quickly glance and your paper and know general information about the event). Provide a caption for this table.
- Summarize some human impacts, including
 - How many lives were affected?
 - What were the economic consequences?
- Feedback: we will have a peer review of this component, and I will provide you feedback that should be incorporated into the final draft.

Part 3. Due Wednesday, November 14, 9:00 AM

- Finish filling in your outline by writing **3 additional pages**, finalizing your paper (submit a total of 6 pages)
- Be sure to address the following aspects in essay form (in any order you wish)
 - What is the system for measuring the strength or severity of the event? (i.e. Richter scale, burn severity maps, etc.) How does your chosen event fall on this scale?
 - What is the historical context for the event in this region? (graphics might be helpful for this)
 - When did similar events occur in the past?
 - How frequently did past events occur?
 - How strong or severe were these past events?
 - How were the impacts of this event shaped by human actions? (i.e. Did early warning systems work? Did disaster response systems mobilize quickly? Did climate change possibly contribute to the event's severity? Were certain populations more vulnerable to impacts? Why?)
- The final submission should include the components that you submitted in parts 1 and 2:
 - A descriptive title (submitted with part 1)
 - A map with descriptive caption (submitted with part 1)
 - A table that summarizes the basic facts of the event, with a descriptive caption (submitted with part 2)
 - A reference list with at least 5 properly formatted citations (submitted with part 1)
 - The questions answered in essay form in parts 2 and 3

Detailed requirements:

Parts	Due Date	Points	% of final course grade
Part 1	Monday, September 10	30	3%
Part 2	Wednesday, October 3	100	10%
Part 3	Wednesday, November 14	100	10%

- All parts should be submitted to the appropriate folder on the “assignments” page of D2L by 9:00 AM on the due date
- Turn in your assignments as a .doc or .docx, NOT A PDF OR PAGES FILE
- Page length requirements are for double-spaced pages with 12-point font and 1-inch margins
- Bibliography should be in APA style

Evaluation criteria:

Content: to receive full credit for content, the paper must

- clearly explain the facts of the event, including the location and the impacts on the landscape.
The paper includes quantitative data, such as meters of fault movement, height of flood waters or spatial extent of impacted area.
- include the impacts on humans
- include the geologic/regional context clearly explaining *why* an event happened *where* it did
- explain the system for measuring the strength or severity of the event.
- provide some historical context for your event. What events have happened since, or happened before? How large/severe were they?
- include a table and map, with descriptive captions that explain the map and table as stand-alone objects
- clearly draw upon reliable scientific sources that are relevant to the paper's argument

Organization: to receive full credit for organization, the paper must

- include an introduction that outlines the argument and organization of the paper
- be clearly organized by topic
- have writing that is organized into separate paragraphs for each topic, without excessively long or short paragraphs
- include a conclusion

Writing, grammar, and technical requirements: to receive full credit, the paper must have

- Sentences that are clearly written and effectively convey the ideas of the paper.
- Sentences that are concise and have correct punctuation.
- No major grammatical errors.
- At least 5 references cited in APA style (including in-text citations and bibliography at the end)

Adapted from a similar assignment used in previous versions of this class taught by Noah Silber-Coats and Jesse Minor.