

**DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY**

**ANTHROPOLOGY 399 – 01  
DISASTER STUDIES**

Web-based section taught asynchronously

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Saulesh Yessenova

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**PREREQUISITE:** Anthropology 203

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course examines technological disasters in recent history with the goal of assessing human and environmental vulnerability, risk perception, and risk mitigation across cultures and political realms. The focus is on ethnographic methods of documenting post-disaster situations involving multiple parties, such as states, publics, corporations, environmentalists, and communities of survivors. The goal of this course is to enhance students' awareness and critical comprehension of some and often neglected consequences of technological achievements and progress in modern history.

**COURSE FORMAT:** The course will include lecture notes, films, readings, and written assignments. Lecture notes will be posted on D2L weekly and will not simply repeat the material in the required readings but will contain additional material that may be included in formal assessment. This course is designed to enhance students' critical thinking and sharpen writing and reading skills.

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

- ✦ Think anthropologically about man-made disasters.
- ✦ Provide informed commentary on global inequalities and environmental racism.
- ✦ Discuss intelligently the connection between politics, culture, and identity.
- ✦ Ask good questions concerning humanity's nuclear past, present, and future.
- ✦ Understand moral and political dilemmas involved in scientific and technological progress.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Brown, Kate. *Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future*. Penguin UK, 2019.

Fortun, Kim. *Advocacy after Bhopal: Environmentalism, Disaster, New Global Orders*. University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Both of these texts are available at the university bookstore in paper back and electronic format. Additional required readings are indicated on the course outline below and are available online through the library. Required films and videos will be included in power point presentations and some of the titles maybe listed on the course outline as well.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION:**

Course assignments are designed to assess student's knowledge and critical understanding of the material covered in this course. For written assignments, late submission penalty: 2 points/a day, incl. weekends and holidays. Final paper will be due after the lecture period on the date to be specified.

First essay assignment is due **Thursday, 26 February** **40%**

Second assignment is due **Thursday, 11 March** **20%**

Final comparative book review is due **TBC** **40%**

Further details on course assignments will be provided at the time assignments are given. All course work will be graded on a 100-point system. At the end of the course, the total number of marks will be converted to the official university letter grade system according to the following equivalences:

<b>A+</b>	100 - 94.9%	<b>B+</b>	84.8 – 79.9%	<b>C+</b>	70.8– 66.9%	<b>D+</b>	58.8 – 54.9%
<b>A</b>	94.8 - 89.9%	<b>B</b>	79.8 - 74.9%	<b>C</b>	66.8 – 62.9%	<b>D</b>	54.8 – 49.9%
<b>A-</b>	89.8 - 84.9%	<b>B-</b>	74.8 – 70.9%	<b>C-</b>	62.8 – 58.9%	<b>F</b>	49.8% and below

### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

My name is Saulesh Yessenova, and I am a settler, living as an uninvited guest on the traditional territory of the people of Treaty 7. This land, belonging to the Niitsitapi (including the Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Iyethka Nakoda (which includes the Wesley, Bears paw and Chiniki First Nations), also hosts the University of Calgary. Calgary is situated on the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers, the Niitsitapi name for this place is Mohkinstsis, the Iyethka call it Wicispa Oyade, and the Tsuut’ina call this area Gutsistsi. Calgary is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. It is important to acknowledge that Canadian universities and scholars have benefited greatly from the dispossession of Indigenous people. Land acknowledgement is about my accountability as an individual, an immigrant, and a professional to ongoing processes of colonialism.

### **STATEMENT OF INCLUSION:**

The topics in this class can sometimes be difficult topics – we talk about race, gender, class, our place in society, and the painful histories and ideas that anthropology and other disciplines in the Euro-American academia have held. These topics are discussed based on a common belief that we as a society or the world can never move forward in a good way without critical review and understanding of the past. This course, just like many other courses in our faculty, is part of liberal arts that has historically encouraged critical and creative thinking as well as tolerance and mutual respect among students and professors.

For weekly schedule of lecture topics, films & required readings see page 5 of this document.

### **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

**INSTRUCTOR’S OFFICE HOURS:** Instructor will not hold regular office hours via zoom. However, zoom session maybe individually requested.

**EMAILING TO INSTRUCTOR OR TEACHING ASSISTANT:** Students are welcome to forward their questions and comments to the instructor or TA’s email indicated at the top of this document.

### **COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE VIA EMAIL:**

- ✚ Please use your university account.
- ✚ Use a clear subject line that includes the course name and the topic of the email, such as: “ANTH 393. Question about my schedule.”
- ✚ Please be respectful (i.e., not too casual) when addressing either myself or your TA in an email.
- ✚ Keep in mind that answers to the questions concerning the matters clearly stated on the course outline will not be provided.
- ✚ Keep question(s) short and to the point. Show that you have made an effort to find the answer first in the text and lecture material (or even an outside source). State what you know in relation to what you are having a difficult time understanding.
- ✚ Include your full name in the signature of your email.
- ✚ Allow 48 hours for a response, excluding weekends and holidays.
- ✚ Please note: we may choose not to respond to emails that do not follow the format outlined above.

## Learning Technologies and Requirements

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology.

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates
- A current and updates web browser
- Webcam (built in or external)
- Microphone and speaker (built in or external) or headset with microphone
- Broadband internet connection

## WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, instructors can and may use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.

### Academic misconduct

The University expects Students to conduct Academic Activities with integrity and intellectual honesty and to recognize the importance of pursuing and transmitting knowledge ethically. “Academic Misconduct” includes such things as Cheating, Falsification; Plagiarism, Unauthorized Assistance and failure to comply with exam regulations or an Instructor’s expectations regarding conduct required of Students completing academic assessments. Academic Misconduct is a serious form of intellectual dishonesty with significant consequences. Students who participate in, or encourage the commission of, Academic Misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action which could include Probation, Suspension, or Expulsion from the University. For more information see the Student Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-policy>)

### Instructor intellectual property

Lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor includes copyright protected works under the Copyright Act and all forms of electronic or mechanical recording of lectures, laboratories, tutorials, presentations, performances, electronic (computer) information, the duplication of course material, and to the translation of recordings or transcriptions of any of these materials to another form by electronic or mechanical means by students is not permitted, except.

- As a formal accommodation as assessed by the Student Accessibility Services and only for individual private study and only at the discretion of the instructor.
- With the permission of the instructor, students without a formal accommodation may audio record lectures, provided that the student and instructor sign a release form available from departmental and faculty offices. A copy of the Release form shall be retained by the instructor and by the department in which the course is offered. Any audio recording by students is permitted only for the purposes of private study by the individual student. Students may not distribute, email or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person.
- For any other use, whether by duplication, transcription, publication, sale or transfer of recordings, written approval must be obtained from the instructor for the specific use proposed.
- Any use other than that described above (e.g. distributing, emailing or otherwise communicating these materials to any other person, constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion.
- Students are encouraged to make notes of classroom discussions, lectures, demonstrations etc.

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:** The University of Calgary is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who work and study at the University or who otherwise interact with the University in accordance with the standards set out in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The Department of Anthropology and Archaeology keeps exams and any term work not picked up for a minimum of one year after

which it is destroyed. Please refer to the following link for detailed information:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip>

**Academic Accommodations:** It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies. Students requesting an Accommodation on the basis of Disability are required to register with Student Accommodation Services (SAS) by submitting a Request for Accommodation in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/accommodation-students-disabilities-procedure>). SAS will issue a Letter of Accommodation which must be presented to either designated contact person within the Department or the appropriate Instructors within 10 days of the beginning of term. Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

**Copyright:** All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

**Student support and Resources:** Non-course-specific related information can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS, FILMS & REQUIRED READINGS

DAYS	Topics/film titles/exams	Readings
1	Jan 11-15 Introduction to the course and key concepts: political ecology, environment racism, technological progress, Cold War, high modernism, the anthropocene. <i>Film: Planet of the Humans</i> by Jeff Gibbs, available on Crave, 1h 39 min; associated resources <a href="https://planetofthehumans.com/">https://planetofthehumans.com/</a>	Rob Nixon (2011) <i>Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor</i> , Chapter 1: Slow Violence, pp. 45-67.
2	Jan 18-22 Cold War and the nuclear age. <i>Manual for Survival: in the wake of Chernobyl's catastrophe.</i>	Brown, "Introduction" and Part I: 1 – 80.
3	Jan 25-29 Nuclear disasters in memory, chronicles, and global imagination. TV series: <i>Chernobyl</i> by Johan Renck, HBO, 2019 and <i>Chernobyl Diaries</i> by Brad Parker, STARZ, 2012. Both films are available on Crave TV. In addition, I highly recommend the film: <i>White Light, Black Rain: The Destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki</i> by Steven Okazaki, also available on Crave.	Brown, "Learning to Read the Great Chernobyl Acceleration: literacy in the more-than-human landscapes" <i>Current Anthropology</i> 50.S 20 (2019): S198-S208.
4	Feb 1-5 Radiation, science, and globalization of the environment. Glossary relating to radiation measurement is posted on D2L.	Brown, Part II: 81 – 118. Møller, Pape, and Timothy Mousseau. "Biological consequences of Chernobyl: 20 years on." <i>Trends in ecology &amp; evolution</i> 21.4 (2006): 200-207.
5	Feb 8-12 Reinvention of nature. Interview with Dr. Sonja Schmid, 58 min. Nuclear Fallout: Science and Society in Eurasia. The Soviet Nuclear Industry. <a href="https://soundcloud.com/srbpodcast/nf01">https://soundcloud.com/srbpodcast/nf01</a>	Brown, Part III: 119 – 144.
6	Feb 15-19 Term break, no new material is posted on D2L during this week.	
7	Feb 22-26 <b>First essay assignment is due this week.</b> Knowledge and embodied suffering. Nuclear politics of post-apocalypse. Films: <i>Pandora's Promise</i> by Robert Stone, 2013 (87 min). <i>Meltdown at the Three Mile Island: 40 years later</i> (PBS, 26 min.) <a href="https://www.pbs.org/video/meltdown-at-three-mile-island-40-years-later-yj2jx2/">https://www.pbs.org/video/meltdown-at-three-mile-island-40-years-later-yj2jx2/</a> <i>Chernobyl: 33 years later</i> (World Wide Entertainment, 2011, 25 min). <a href="https://video-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/watch/chernobyl">https://video-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/watch/chernobyl</a>	Brown, Part IV: 145 – 162 and Part V: 163 – 210.
8	March 1-5 Science across the Iron Curtain.	Brown, Part VI: 211 – 287 and Part VII and Conclusion: 287 – 312. Novikau, A. "What is "Chernobyl Syndrome?" The use of radiophobia in nuclear communications." <i>Environmental</i>

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			<i>Communication</i> 11.6 (2017): 800-809.
<b>9</b>	March 8-12	<b>Second written assignment is due this week.</b> Post-Disaster advocacy and ethnography.	Fortun, Introduction and Chapters 1 and 2, pp. 1-86
<b>10</b>	March 15-19	Corporate response to disaster and communities of stakeholders.	Fortun, Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 87 – 119.
<b>11</b>	March 22-26	The state of India and situational peculiarities.	Fortun, Chapters 5 and 6, pp. 220 – 176.
<b>12</b>	March 29 - April 2	Corporations and gender.	Fortun, Chapters 7 and 8, pp. 177 – 250.
<b>13</b>	April 5-9	What are the complex systems within the anthropocene?	Fortun, Chapters 9,10, and 11, pp. 251 – 348.
<b>14</b>	April 12-13	No class.	

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