

OGLALA LAKOTA COLLEGE

Course Syllabus for

Sci 493 SPECIAL TOPICS Seminar “Climate and Drought on the Western Great Plains”

Instructor: Hannan E. LaGarry

E-mail: hlagarry@olc.edu

Cell: 308-430-4564

Fax: 605-455-2603

Office Hours: 9 am to 5 pm Fridays or by appointment

Sci 493 Special Topics

Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

Course Objectives: This course is an overview of climate and drought on the western Great Plains and its effects on flora, fauna, and the environment in western South Dakota. The course will be delivered in a seminar format consisting of weekly readings, student, faculty, and guest presentations, and written and oral discussion of the material presented each week. Topics covered will include, but not necessarily be limited to: 1) the history of drought in the Great Plains, 2) extreme weather phenomena, 3) climate proxies, 4) orbital precession and climate cycles, and 5) megadroughts.

Descriptive Reading Load: Grade14+ reading level. Students will be expected to read and comprehend scientific literature pertaining to their particular project.

Types and Amounts of Writing Expected: The nature of this course offering requires that a considerable amount of writing to be completed as weekly homework. Students will also be expected to produce presentation graphics (charts, tables, figures) to support their written work. For distance students homework can be submitted using email or fax. The fax number for homework submissions is 605-455-2603.

Homework is an opportunity to practice professionalism. All homework should be completed in paragraph form, which consists of: i) a topic sentence; ii) 3-5 body sentences; and iii) a conclusion or transition sentence. Professional ethics requires referencing the author of any text, pictures, or websites used in assignments. Plagiarism (i.e. passing off another author's work off as your own) will not be tolerated. Please refer to the Oglala Lakota College Student Handbook for the official policy on plagiarism. Please contact the Instructor if you have questions on plagiarism, or on how to site another person's work. Suspected cases of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be referred to the OLC Administration.

Lakota Perspective: This course stresses **Wolakotakiciyapi** or “learning Lakota ways of life in the community”. Understanding how the methods taught in the course apply to the 'real world' requires patience and quiet observation. Participants in this course are expected to practice respect for each other, the instructor, and for all living and natural things used during this course.

Course Requirements: This course is essentially an independent study supported by classroom discussion and interaction. Students are expected to complete weekly homework on time. Making up missed assignments is at the Instructor's discretion.

Class Attendance: Class attendance will be documented through attendance at either Piya Wiconi or He Sapa each week. In accordance with OLC policy, you will be dropped from the course if you miss more than three consecutive class periods. If you miss more than five class periods during the semester, you will also be dropped from the course.

Assignments: Each week we will have readings assigned by the next week's presenter. The presenter will prepare and present a powerpoint on a subject of their choosing. The rest of the class will write a reaction paper based on the presentation and follow-up discussions and submit copies to the presenter and me. The weekly reaction paper is worth approximately 5 % of the final grade. Handing in the assignment after the due date will result in an automatic **10 point deduction** for each week the assignment is late. The instructor is always available for help on homework via email or through a telephone interview (please email to set-up an interview time). At the end of the semester, each student presenter will submit their presentation and a written paper based on it. The paper should reflect improvements suggested in their classmates' reaction papers. The final presentation and paper will be used to assess the class.

Discussion: The discussion portion of the class is very important. This is an opportunity for us to share our perspectives with one another and to learn from one another. Please participate in the discussion forums as the discussions are worth 20% of your final grade for the semester.

Lecture Grade:

Reaction papers	70%
Discussion	20%
<u>Presentation/paper</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100 %

The following scale will be used:

- A = 90% - 100%
- B = 80% - 89.9%
- C = 70% - 79.9%
- D = 60% - 69.9%
- F = below 60%

Course Philosophy: You are not studying and learning for the instructor, but for yourself. Grades are important for your academic career; nevertheless, your professional life really begins after you graduate. Understanding the issues surrounding renewable energy will help you not only in your professional career, but also to understand and appreciate your surroundings and life itself. This is a continuing class in environmental science. This is your chance to start build onto your existing knowledge. What you take out of this course is up to you. You have to invest your time (at least 4 hours of reading and 2 hours of problem-solving per week aside from typing your homework for this course).

Tips to Succeed in this Course:

Homework will consist of essay questions. Be sure that you can define (in full, comprehensible sentences) any new concepts and key terms when reading through a website so that you can use these terms in a meaningful way in your homework. When you do your assignments, go back through the appropriate websites and read them carefully a second time to find the answers. Actively take part in the class using the discussions. This will help you solve problems in your homework in a collaborative fashion.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes. Students will be informed of any such change.