Syllabus

SUMMER 2020: “Water in Geography: An Interdisciplinary Survey”
Professor Allan Frei, Department of Geography and Environmental Science
(This syllabus is Preliminary and Subject to Change)

COURSE TITLE: Water in Geography: An Interdisciplinary Survey
COURSE NUMBER: GEOG385.21 / GEOG701.21
SEMESTER: Summer-I 2020 (6 weeks, twice per week)
TEACHING MODE: Online Synchronous
DAY/TIME: M/W 11:40AM – 2:48PM

OVERALL THEME: What is water, how do humans interact with it, and how does it shape the natural world?

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course students will learn about water from the perspective of the relationship between humans and their environment, including natural science, social science, and humanities. We conceive of the relationship of humans to water as a Coupled Natural-Human System, consistent with the traditional sub-discipline of Geography called Human-Environment Interaction. Such a course is by nature interdisciplinary, and lends itself to a wide range of possibilities in terms of student inquiry. The course is structured in four sections, beginning with a discussion of water in natural history, human pre-history, and water in antiquity and mythology. The second section will focus on water in the natural world, including the understanding of water in the natural sciences (e.g. Chemistry, Physics, Biology) as well as water in the earth system (e.g. the atmosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere). Section three focuses on the role of water in human control of nature and of other humans, including a selection of issues such as water supply and water conflict. Section four focuses on visual aspects of water including optical effects of water and their relationship to visualizations of water in art.

The course will be taught on line / synchronous using a combination of activities including lecture by the instructor, seminar style discussions on required readings which will sometimes be led by students, group and individual student presentations, and movies / documentaries. Students are required to complete all assignments on time.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
This course has three primary learning objectives.

1. Students will be able to identify and describe various ways in which water has influenced civilizations, and has been the subject of human control; the salient properties of water in the earth’s natural systems; and the optical effects of water, and how these affects are represented visually in art.
2. Students will be able to classify and interpret human interactions with water based on a number of values and paradigms.
3. Students will be able to investigate and analyze events based on human interactions with each other.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Reading summaries and responses will be due each class. Some readings will be read by the entire class; others will be read by sub-groups of students and shared with the class. Students will be responsible for participating in, and sometimes leading, discussions.
2. Presentations, both individual and group (details tbd)
3. One to two exams (details tbd)

PRELIMINARY COURSE OUTLINE

1. Water in Earth history, antiquity and mythology
2. Water in Natural Science and in the Earth System
3. Water Control and Conflict
4. Water Optics
Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity:

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

Hunter College’s Policy on Sexual Harassment:

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College’s Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College’s Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212-772-4857)/TTY (212-650-3230).