

GEOG3211 Climate Change and Social Responses (6 credits)

Course Teacher: Prof David Zhang

Objectives

The course provides a systematic description and analysis of past climate changes during human history, particularly in the last two thousand years.

Course Synopsis

The impacts of these changes on human society would be studied based on the analysis of historical records, which include population changes, armed conflicts, harvest levels, diseases and political transitions. The course will discuss the current issues on global warming and its possible impacts on the future society and the human adaptive choices to the change.

Lecture Topics

- Introduction and methodology
- Climate change since Quaternary and human evolution
- The studies on climate change during the historical time
- Impacts of climate change on agriculture and other ecological resources
- Population and social stability
- Global warming and human adaptations

Assessment

Coursework 100%. Two essay assignments (50% + 50%)

Learning Outcomes

Knowledge:

- Methodology on climate change studies
- Historical social changes in China and around the world
- Human social evolution and adaptations
- Climate variations in different scales

Skills:

- Analytical skills for different temporal and spatial scales
- Geographical analysis
- Field skills in historical geography

Recommended Reading List

1. W.J. Burroughs, Climate Change: A multidisciplinary Approach, Cambridge University Press, 2001. (E-book)
2. N. Brown, History and Climate Change: A Eurocentric Perspective, Routledge, 2001. (E-book).