

# GEOGRAPHY 4451: GEOGRAPHY OF RISK AND HAZARD

## ESSAY TOPICS – Fall 2013

**Write an essay on one of the following topics.  
Be careful to follow the *Guidelines for Geography Essays***

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***Essays must be handed in by 2013 December 5 (Wednesday) 5:30 pm. Put them in the workbox on the second floor of the Regional Centre – do not hand them to the instructor.***

*Five marks (out of 100) will be removed from the essay mark for every day it is late.*

*If you hand in a draft of your essay **at least** two weeks in advance of the deadline (November 20) it will be read and any suggestions for improvement made.*

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- 1 Discuss and illustrate the importance of *attachment to place* in response and reaction to disaster.
- 2 Discuss the relationship between economic development – regional, local and personal – and vulnerability to risk and hazard.
- 3 Discuss the geography of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in terms of vulnerability and response.
- 4 What methods are there available to reduce the incidence and/or impact of disasters. Which are more often applied, and which are more likely to be effective?
- 5† What are the problems involved in mapping risk? Discuss, with reference to at least three different types of risk.
- 6† What kinds of risks and hazards are especially significant for urban areas? Describe at least two major examples of urban disasters in terms of preparation, impact and response.
- 7† Examine **one** major (minimum 100 deaths) natural **or** technological disaster. Discuss the extent to which the magnitude of the disaster was a result of inadequate foresight or precautions and whether the response to the disaster was appropriate.

- 8† “Often, society reexamines the application of new technology only after it is too late, after the device is thoroughly integrated into social institutions, after the device has produced a series of undesirable second- and third-order consequences, or worse, after the device has caused a disaster and a body count ...” (Reich 1991). Discuss this comment, with reference to at least three different types of new technology; suggesting in each case how the situation could have been better handled.
- 9† Discuss at least three major earthquakes in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary damage. To what extent were differences between the events a result of the physical geographical setting, and to what extent a result of human occupation?
- 10† What kinds of risks and hazards are especially significant for mountain areas? Describe at least two major examples of mountain disasters in terms of preparation, impact and response.

**† Students attempting any of topics 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 must contact the Instructor with specifics of the particular disasters/risks/technologies to be studied, to ensure that two students do not choose the same ones.**