



General Course Information

Meeting time, location: An asynchronous online course offered through Desire2Learn
Credits: 3
Open to: Majors and Non-majors in Forestry
Prerequisites: None
Professor: David L. Skole
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Department of Forestry
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Office Hours: By appointment, using Zoom, contact by email.

Course Description

This class introduces students from many majors and disciplines to forest ecosystems, with a focus on policy and science of climate change. We shall take a special interest in examining the role forest ecosystems play in the global climate system through emissions and sequestration of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide. Forest and other treed ecosystems cover most of the natural landscapes of the planet, from dry savannas to rainforests. They are an important natural resource and directly support the livelihoods of more than 1.6 billion people. They are also valuable for their ecosystem services that regulate the climate, maintain biodiversity, supply food

and fiber, provide important feedstocks and materials, keep water quality high, support cultural amenities and more.

Since 2015 forests have been highlighted as a significant component of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and strategies. Hence, the focus of this course will be on international aspects of forests, the services they provide, and their influence on global-scale environmental issues. We will explore how society's use of forest ecosystems can be both detrimental and beneficial. We shall also look at agroforestry systems and other systems of Trees Outside of Forests in agriculture because of their importance to economic development and linkages to issues such as poverty alleviation. We will focus on the basic underlying science and the relevant policy and economic aspects. The course covers the basic science of climate change as well as the emerging policy response including the international convention on climate change. In addition, the course introduces students to carbon markets, carbon finance and economics, and to concepts of environment and development.

Course Learning Approach

Most major problems in the world require an ability to think across disciplines. Outside of the classroom we rarely meet a problem or find a solution to a problem that is based on a single disciplinary body of knowledge. Thus, by focusing on a theme or problem through the lenses of multiple disciplines we can create a productive learning approach. In this course students are introduced to basic principles of forest ecology, which is elaborated with a focus on how these principles apply to climate change. Also, because many students enrolled in this course may come from the social sciences, we make sure that students understand the human dimensions of this global issue as well as the technical dimensions, but we shall approach the topic using empirical and quantitative evidence-based approaches.

An important part of the course is demonstrating methods for measuring carbon and greenhouse gases in forests, because emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are the second most important forcing of climate change. We will discuss large scale remote sensing methods and technologies, as well as field-based measurement methods. There will be an introduction to economic and finance analysis, especially through the lens of Carbon Financial Markets. Lastly, the course transcends just a focus on a problem, and delves into finding *solutions*, of which there are many, including policy measures (e.g. REDD+) to provide a positive and forward-looking framework for understanding global climate change.

Course Learning Objectives

This course is intended for both majors in Forestry and non-majors. Learners from across the university are welcome and the content is suitable for a range of students. There is some emphasis on conveying scientific methods and concepts, but the main aim is to expose all learners to the approach that science takes to describing, assessing, and understanding the world. The course also exposes all learners to interdisciplinary concepts, which includes the social sciences as well as biological/physical sciences.

The overall objective of this course is to provide learners with a fundamental understanding of human-cause climate change and the important role of forests and natural resources.

By the end of the course learners will be knowledgeable and literate about:

- The current status of global climate change, as well as its most likely future directions and impacts, and why this is important for you to know.
- How the climate system works in general terms, and how it can change naturally and by human actions.
- The important interactions between forests and the atmosphere, including effects of forests and forest disturbances such as deforestation on climate change through greenhouse gases and the global carbon cycle.
- The lines of empirical evidence for human caused climate change, and the factual scientific basis for understanding the causes and potential impacts.
- What science knows well about climate change and where the uncertainties are.
- The international policy frameworks and agreements that are relevant to forests and climate change.
- The range of possible solutions and policies that can be implemented, in technical, economic, and social dimensions.

Each weekly lesson, delivered as a Module, has its own learning objectives and outcomes that are provided at the beginning of the Module on the D2L page.

Course Format

This course is delivered entirely online through the course management system *Desire2Learn*. You should already be set up for D2L if you have registered for the course. In *Desire2Learn*, you will access online lessons, course materials, and additional resources. Activities will consist of background readings, online presentations and short writing assignments. *This course is asynchronous, meaning that there is not a set time when everyone needs to be online for course activities.* Please contact the instructor well ahead of time if you foresee any problems with the timing of course activities.

The course is set up in Modules, each lasting approximately one week in which the student needs to do the readings and view the online presentations. Overall, the Modules are grouped under three major course Sections: 1) Basics of Climate Change and Forests, 2) Moving to Solutions and Climate Change Policy, and 3) Forest Carbon Monitoring and Climate Change Mitigation. Each Section has 4-5 Modules on specific topics. The Sections are opened sequentially about every 5 weeks. At the time the Sections are opened, all of the weekly Modules are also opened.

For the first two Sections students are required to pass brief Quizzes at the end of each Module. There are five (5) Quizzes in Section 1 and three (3) Quizzes in Section 2. You must access all provided content in each Module to be able to access the Quiz (the system will not allow access to a Quiz until you access the course content). You can take the Quiz as many times as you want, until you get a passing grade. This grade is recorded, and you can then advance. Note: the system allows you to continue without a Quiz, but if you don't have a Quiz recorded you don't get credit.

The Completion Assignments (Very Important)

At the end of both Sections 2 and 3 students are expected to turn in a Completion Assignment (CA) for each before going to the next Section of modules. Each Completion Assignment is a ~10-slide Powerpoint presentation with embedded recorded voice-over audio based on the assignment given by the instructor. As an alternative format you can deliver a 5-page (approximate) white paper based on the same assignment given for the Powerpoint format. In the instructor's experience, the Powerpoint is more interesting and easier to deliver. Generally speaking, the CA at the end of each Section is an assignment to prepare a convincing case for some topic in climate science or climate change policy, as if you have been asked to make a briefing to a company CEO, or an elected official, or some other group of stakeholders or organization. You are to use the course materials. In fact, in preparing the CA you may only use course materials – no outside content from your own Google search or anything like that. Graphics, charts, example, facts and numbers, concepts, terminology etc that you use in you CA come almost exclusively from the course materials. You may use up to 15% from outside sources, but only for some critical element of the CA which you could not find in the course materials.

Accessing “Let's Get Started” Module

It is very important that everyone goes to the section of the course in D2L called “Lets Get Started”. There you shall find important information about the course and how it operates. After getting yourself familiar with the use of D2L go directly to that video and play it before doing anything else.

How to Complete the Course.

This is an asynchronous on-line course. This means that the course does not have a specified meeting time, and learners shall work mostly at your own pace. Approximately every week students work on a course Module, where they view presentations and access readings or other materials. There is also a video blog (Vlog) which is added for interest, where the instructor posts comments on matters related to Forests and Climate Change. Sometimes the Vlog is a current report from the field in different parts of the world by the Professor or his colleagues.

The Modules are listed in the Syllabus below. A new Module will be opened each week in sequence. After that, Modules will remain open for the entire course. At the end of the Modules for both Sections 2 and 3 of the course, there will be a Completion Assignment (CA), which is posted online. I will place the CA online just before you start the next Section. The CA is to be

completed independently by the student and turned in through a Drop Box also found online in the Section.

There are 8 Quizzes, with questions specifically related to the content of the Module (note: Module 7 and 8 have one combined Quiz). Students must take all 8 Quizzes. You can take and re-take the Quiz until you get a passing grade, which is 80%. Quizzes are randomized from a question bank so each time you attempt a Module's Quiz the questions will be different and in different order. The Quizzes are evaluated automatically. Students are expected to get a passing grade of 80% or higher on all 8 Quizzes. This P/F grade is recorded and contributes to your overall course grade (30% of the grade).

The instructor evaluates each CA after it is turned in. He will determine if it is satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on a assessment guide that will be posted at the time the CA is posted. If it is unsatisfactory the learner will be notified to re-work it according to instructor's suggestions. The CAs are not lengthy nor difficult; they are used to help learners evaluate their own progress and so the instructor can certify that learners have done the Module Assignments. Most conscientious students never have problems. Your CAs contribute to your overall course grade (40% of the grade). When learners have passed all Quizzes and satisfactorily completed both CAs they have completed bulk of the course (70% of the grade).

There is also a Discussion Forum, with occasional postings of thought questions posed by the professor for group discussion. Your participation in discussions contributes to the overall course grade (15% of the grade).

There are D2L tools that allows the instructor to evaluate student progress. Here student progress means accessing and doing all the assigned content in the Modules – online presentations, assigned readings, assigned links or videos, etc. The instructor can also evaluate your accessing and doing course content in the evaluation of the CAs. Your active accessing of course content contributes to the overall course grade (15% of the grade).

Note: Non-credit learners are not required to take Quizzes, turn in CAs, nor participate in discussions.

Assigned Materials

All materials that are posted in D2L with the label “Assigned”, as for example “Assigned Presentation”, are required content. When additional optional materials are posted, they are labeled as Additional Resources.

Textbooks

In past years we had a required textbook. This year there will not be a required textbook. A good one to use if you want, but it is out of print, is Michael Mann's *Dire Predictions*, which may be available to purchase online. The MSU Main Library has a copy on Reserve for this course.

Time and Effort Expectations

This is a 3-credit course. It has been set up so that you spend 3 hours per week “in class” viewing and accessing online presentations and an additional 6 hours “outside of class” doing assigned readings and other assigned materials. In this case each Module online is set up so that you should complete viewing all content in 3 hours or less. Some Modules can be completed in 1.5 hours, while others may require 4 hours. An additional 6 hours are required to do the assigned and optional readings or downloaded content, and preparation of the Completion Assignments.

Using the Checklist

Each Module contains a Checklist which you can access manually. Although weekly instructions are provided in the syllabus, the Checklists are provided online in D2L to be clear what content is required, and to provide a way for you to track your own progress. Once all items are checked you know that you have completed the Module. Note that you check off the items yourself, as a kind of honor system.

More About the Completion Assignment.

The Completion Assignment is a creative activity. Students are given a topic, such as a question or statement, for evaluation based on the content presented in the Section. The students then respond to the question using exclusively the online course materials from that Section. In rare occasions, students may need to obtain additional material from outside the course content, and there must be a clear reason why it is necessary. The CA response must demonstrate that 85% of the reference material comes from the course itself – figures, tables, evidence, data, examples, etc. Do not do your own Google search for materials to complete the assignment.

Students respond to the CA through a MS Powerpoint Presentation. The PPT should be about 10 slides. The PPT should have an audio “voice over” of the student’s presentation. The slides should have text, pictures, figures and diagrams as needed. It should be uploaded to the D2L Dropbox in the Section where it is assigned. There is a brief video on how to make a PPT video posted on D2L under the Getting Started section.

As an alternative to the PPT presentation, students may select to prepare a brief white paper, complete with citations and references and diagrams if desired. The paper should be at 5 pages (about 2500 words) single spaced. Figures do not count toward the page count (one page is about 500 words). The paper should have normal margins and be in 11 or 12 point font. The paper should be converted to PDF if possible, otherwise MS Word format will be acceptable. It should be uploaded to the D2L Dropbox in the Section where it is assigned.

How to Use the Online Content: Tips for easy access to content.

There are 14 Modules in this course, and they are listed below in the syllabus. Learners access the materials and content for each module through D2L. In each module learners are provided five types of content: 1) online presentations, 2) readings in documents 3) Multimedia, 4) Video Tutorials, and 5) a video blog entry. Learners are required to read, view and know all content.

The **Online Presentations** are provided in D2L as streaming videos. The streaming video is stored in the MSU Kaltura MediaSpace. Access to each streaming video is provided by a link (URL) that is on D2L. Click on the link and the video will play. You can control the video using slider bar. In addition, I have stored a copy of each online presentation in a Powerpoint Repository, so you can download them in PPT format on your computer. To get the full audio and video features in PPT format, learners must play it in Slide Show mode on their own computer. In Slide Show mode the presentation advances on its own. If one wishes to step through the presentation, take it out of Slide Show mode and access each slide manually. There is an embedded audio control which allows one to advance it as they wish. Occasionally there are problems or technical issues with devices or your version of software. If there are any playback issues, please do not hesitate to contact the professor directly.

All **Readings** are provided on D2L in digital formats, PDF for documents, Links for web sites, etc.

Multimedia is presented for a variety of content, which can be a documentary movie or other media presentations.

The **Video Tutorials** are short guidance on special topics which need elaboration from the basic content found in the online presentations. They are usually for specific instruction on a topic.

The **Video Blog (Vlog)** is an occasional “report from the field”, as a short video piece in which the professor discusses or presents a supplemental topic related to the course. This is only available in streaming video format and a link is provided in D2L. These occasional reports are meant to add topics that might be interesting for discussion. Thus, occasionally, the instructor may post a question for discussion in the Blog, for which there is a Discussion Forum where the learners can engage in “conversations”. Your participation is part of your grade.

The Completion Assignments (CA) are provided in D2L at the end of Sections 2 and 3. The CA is provided as a document. You turn your CA in using a Dropbox that is provided on D2L. Acceptable formats for CAs are only MS Word and PDF, or MS Powerpoint.

Accessing the “Welcome to Module” Videos

At the beginning of each Module, I have a brief Welcome that you should be sure to watch. This gives a brief overview of what is being discussed for that week’s class.

Module Specification of Main Ideas, Learning Objectives and Learning Outcomes

At the top of each Module there is a brief description of the Main Ideas presented in that Module, and an outline of the general take-home message in very brief terms. These will serve as a guide to help you navigate the concepts and why they are being presented. There are also stated Learning Objectives and Learning Outcomes specified in this area, which give you a foundation for approaching the concepts presented that week.

News and Announcements

The professor will regularly post Announcements in D2L on your main splash page, and it is important to check in with D2L regularly to stay current with any new announcements.

Communications Expectations

Although the course is being offered asynchronously, communications between professor and students and between students is encouraged. I expect you to give me advance notice if you are having difficulties by contacting me by email. All email correspondences are required to have 'FOR360' in the beginning of the Subject field of the email, so I can quickly see and respond to your request. I encourage Zoom meetings on an individual or group basis. A Zoom session can be used to address problems and issues, inquiries of any kind, and for discussion. I am open to holding an individual or group discussion if scheduled in advance. Communications between students is encouraged as long as academic integrity is maintained.

Instructor-Learner Interaction

Although this course is established to allow a large degree of independence, and accessed at your own pace progressing through lessons, there is an expectation of active interaction with the instructor. The instructor will actively post to the News and Announcements components of D2L, and from time to time the instructor will start up a Discussion Forum. It is the expectation that students will be active in reviewing Announcements, and, when applicable, participation in the Discussions. There may be optional sessions in when the class connects synchronously on Zoom for addressing questions about the course, including explanations of content or concepts, and broad topical discussions. It is completely appropriate to contact the instructor for any needs – please use email as the initial contact and then Zoom could be used thereafter. Any email correspondence should have 'FOR360' in the Subject line.

Exams and Grading

There are no Exams. There will not be a final Exam. There are 8 Quizzes in Section 1 and 2. There will be 2 Completion Assignments in Sections 2 and 3. The Quizzes are automated and multiple choice. They can be re-taken until you get a passing grade. They should only be accessed after accessing all content of the Module. Each CA is in the form of a presentation on a topic that is assigned, or alternatively a brief paper. Please note the Generative AI Policy in this syllabus. Quizzes contribute 35% of the course grade, each CA contributes 25% of the course grade. For reference, assuming you do all discussions and participate in/acces all Modules:

- Turning in 2 acceptable CAs and passing all Quizzes is a 4.0 grade for the course.
- Passing all Quizzes and turning in 1 CAs is a 2.0
- Passing all Quizzes and turning in 0 CAs is a 0.0.

I reserve an additional 15% for occasional miscellaneous assignments other than the CA.

Course Schedule

Course opens 8/25/2024, Module 1 starts 9/2/2024

| Week | Module | |
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| Section 1: Basics and Climate Change and Forests | | |
| 8/25/25 | Welcome to FOR360 | Getting started with the course. Getting familiar with the syllabus and D2L pages. An overview of the course and its content. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | View the videos on: Welcome, Navigating D2L, Guidance on quizzes, Guidance on Completion Assignments. Get familiar with Reference Materials. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | Syllabus, professor's bio |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Welcome video and D2L Guidance video. |
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| 9/2/25 | 1. Preface to the Course | A general overview of the current state of knowledge on climate change. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | View the video introduction to the course and the video introduction to the Section. View the Online Presentations. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Online presentations on Preface to the Course |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | View the Welcome video, located in the "Let's Get Started" module. |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 1 |
| 9/8/25 | 2. Lines of Evidence for Climate Change | An overview of how science knows climate change is happening and the role of humans. We use the booklet from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), and the associated video series. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Read the NAS booklet, which is placed in D2L. Watch the entire NAS video series, which is linked in D2L. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Online National Academies vide Lines of Evidence, Richard Alley, Interactive National Academies Booklet, Link to NASA Evidence Page, Article on New Cold War |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | Watch the video interview with Dr. Skole, link in D2L. |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Mod 2 |
| 9/15/25 | 3. The Climate System and Climate Change | An overview of the global climate system, how it works and how it is disrupted by Greenhouse Gases. The Greenhouse Effect. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Start the new module with online presentations focused on the climate system, impacts, and the climate change problem. This week we have Video Tutorials to view. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Online presentation and video tutorials on the climate system. Climate Impacts. The Climate Change Problem. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 3 |
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| 9/22/25 | 4. Forests and the Global Carbon Cycle | A review of forests of the world, some basic concepts on forest ecosystems, and the global carbon cycle with a focus on the biota |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | View the online presentations in D2L. We have important presentations. View the great documentary, Queen of Trees. There is a Vlog |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Online presentations on NPP, Global Carbon Cycle, and Forests of the World. View the Queen of Trees multimedia. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | Watch the video <i>Blog 2: Forests are Life, reporting from India</i> |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 4 |
| 9/29/25 | 5. Case Study: the Carbon2Markets Model at MSU | An overview of the MSU model that links climate change mitigation to poverty alleviation and economic development in forest-dependent countries. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | There are no new readings assigned. View the online presentations as case studies. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | Watch the video <i>Blog 3: Kenya Kasigau Corridor Project</i> |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 5 |
| Section 2: Moving to Solutions and Climate Change Policy | | |
| 10/6/25 | 6. Climate Change Policy | An overview of the international efforts to mitigate climate change, and the major activities related to forests. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Be sure to view the Section 2 Welcome video. Dive into the next set of online presentations. This week there are some important video tutorials. See the Comments on the Tutorials. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | Three online presentations on Climate Change Policy, Four Video Tutorials |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 6 |
| 10/13/25 | 7. Global Deforestation and Forest Degradation | An overview of the problem of tropical deforestation, its drivers and causes and its effects on climate change |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Continue to watch the Welcome videos, and Learning Objectives. Then view online presentations and a report on Drivers of Deforestation. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | Drivers of Deforestation document accessed online. |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View two online presentations about deforestation. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| 10/20-22/25 | Break Days | No Class |
| 10/20/25 | Completion Assignment 1 available on D2L | |
| 10/23/25 | 8. Reducing Deforestation and Forest Degradation | A look at the new international agreements on forests to reduce emissions from deforestation and halt tropical deforestation. Will include international protocols for measuring carbon. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Work on Completion Assignment 1. Continue with the online presentations. This week there are several online documents to access and read. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | On-line documents readings |

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| | <i>Online Content</i> | Online presentations about REDD Policy and REDD basics, parts 1-4. Access and read the Wikipedia entry, and the linked documents on the REDD Fact Sheet and Introduction to REDD. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz 6: Module 7 and Module 8 are combined in this Quiz |
| 10/27/25 | 9. Carbon Markets and Carbon Finance | A review of the basic concepts of reporting carbon offsets in forestry and creating market mechanisms for trading carbon credits. Reviews cap and trade mechanisms. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Finish Completion Assignment 1 and view the online lectures on Carbon Finance |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View online presentations on carbon and REDD finance, parts 1-4 |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| | <i>Quiz</i> | Quiz Module 9 |
| Section 3: Forest Carbon Monitoring and Climate Change Mitigation | | |
| 11/3/25 | 10. Monitoring Deforestation and Forest Cover | A review of technical methods for forest monitoring, using remote sensing and other approaches. Includes trees outside of forests in agriculture, and agroforestry systems. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | View the online presentations and other Assigned content. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View the links to online multimedia content on remote sensing |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| 11/10/25 | 11. Case Study: Implementing REDD+ in Malawi | A review of a complete REDD+ project in Africa. Here we see how the pieces fit together to mitigate and adapt to climate change using forest management systems. |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | This week we see a Case Study from Africa. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View online presentation on Malawi Case Study |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| 11/17/25 | Completion Assignment 2 available on D2L | |
| 11/17/25 | 12. Activity Data and Emissions Factors | A review of the basic methods for measuring carbon stocks in forests and woodlands |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Work on Completion Assignment 2. This week view online content on how we make forest carbon measurements. View the online presentations. |
| | <i>Readings</i> | None Assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View all online content in this Module – how to make measurements. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | None this week |
| 11/27-28/25 | Thanksgiving Break No Class | |
| 12/1/25 | 13. Social Data, Community Based Measurement, Mitigation Interventions | A broad review of the use of social data, engaging communities in the process of measuring their carbon, and forest landscape restoration |
| | <i>Instructions</i> | Work on Completion Assignment. Access the linked content on social carbon provided by the links in D2L. |

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| | <i>Readings</i> | None assigned |
| | <i>Online Content</i> | View online content given by links. |
| | <i>Blog Entry</i> | Watch the video Blog 4: Community based carbon monitoring in Indonesia |
| 12/7/25 | Classes End | |
| 12/8-9/25 | Module 14: Work on Completion Assignment | Use this time to finalize all Completion Assignments and remaining assignments. |
| 12/10/24 | All Assignments and Quizzes Due 12/10 | |

Technology Requirements.

You will need a desktop or lap top computer with access to the internet. We use a lot of video streaming so 4G is optimal, and a reliable bandwidth of 100Mbps download. A new computer running Windows 10, 2.3 Ghz and 8 Gb RAM. You can also access most content using a browser on your phone. If you plan to download presentations or other content on a regular basis you will need at least 50-100 Gbytes of mass storage.

Computer Skills and Digital Literacy Skills

Learners should have a basic understanding of personal computers and software, working in a web environment, and access to basic applications. You will need to be able to write text in a word processor and convert it to a PDF format file. You should also have access to new version of MS Powerpoint that can create videos. You should be able to send and receive email. Knowledge of the use of Zoom tele-meeting application will be needed.

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem you can:

Visit the [MSU Libraries Discovery Services Site](https://lib.msu.edu/dls/) (<https://lib.msu.edu/dls/>)

Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](https://help.d2l.msu.edu/) (<https://help.d2l.msu.edu/>)

Visit the MSU IT Help & Support Site (<https://tech.msu.edu/support/help/>), call (517) 432-6200 or toll free (844) 678-6200, or email ithelp@msu.edu

Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)

To make an appointment with a specialist, contact (517) 353-9642 or TTY: (517) 355-1293

- RCPD Get Started Info: <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/get-started>

Full Respect for Divergent Views and Expressions of Ideas

The class will strictly adhere to a policy of mutual respect for each other, each other's ideas, and views. You are encouraged to take issue with any content or ideas presented in class, but you are required to respect opposing viewpoints, ideas and preferences. I expect each student to consider him/herself as a member of an academic community and as such strive to push ideas and concepts as far as they might go but in a healthy and open mode of discourse.

Commit to Integrity: Academic Honesty

Article 2.3.3 of the [Academic Freedom Report](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Generative AI tools and services is encouraged, but limited to, aiding learning and enriching comprehension of subjects covered in this course. Using AI tools to complete quizzes or generate assignments intended for grading is not permitted, as (i) this cannot serve as a replacement for cultivating the necessary fundamental skills of this course, (ii) statements composed by the Generative AI and Generative AI responses may be incorrect/inappropriate. All graded assignments are expected to be completed without the assistance of Generative AIs. The CAs in the course are not particularly amenable to using Generative AIs, such as Chat GPT (Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer), i.e., AI chatbot software that can process natural human language and generate responses. Please note that the Professor use AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning in his own research so he understand the ins-and-outs of AI, and knows and can identify “signatures” of AI usage, especially in large classes.

Deviation from the Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy guideline will be considered in violation of [MSU’s Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

From the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting

the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

MSU Policies

The link to all MSU basic academic course policies can be found here:

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/academics/courses/policies>

Office of Institutional Equity (OIE): <https://oie.msu.edu/>

The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) review concerns related to discrimination and harassment based on age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, and weight under the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy (ADP: <https://oie.msu.edu/resources/adp-resources.html>) and Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM: <https://oie.msu.edu/resources/rvsm-resources.html>). OIE staff is available to provide information on the policies, connect MSU community members to resources, investigate complaints, and provide training.

Mandatory Reporting Policy

"Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website at www.titleix.msu.edu."

Trigger Warning

During this semester, we may discuss historical or current events that may be disturbing or even traumatizing to some students. If you suspect that the material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, please discuss your concerns with me prior to the class in which the subject comes up. Similarly, if we are discussing something in class and you feel the need to step outside during a class discussion, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will be responsible for getting the material from a classmate or see me individually to discuss the situation.

Limits to Confidentiality

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me:

- 1) Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- 2) Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- 3) Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

The Spartan Code of Honor: Academic Pledge

Michigan State University affirms the principle that all individuals associated with the academic community have a responsibility for establishing, maintaining, and fostering an understanding and appreciation for academic integrity. Academic integrity is the foundation for university success. Learning how to express original ideas, cite works, work independently, and report results accurately and honestly are skills that carry students beyond their academic career. The Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge embodies the principles of academic integrity through a personal commitment to ethical behavior in a student's studies and research. All undergraduate students are expected to uphold the academic pledge throughout their enrollment at MSU. Student conduct that is inconsistent with the academic pledge is addressed through existing policies, regulations, and ordinances governing academic honesty and integrity. Those policies include:

- [Integrity of Scholarships and Grades Policy](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [General Student Regulations \(includes Protection of Scholarship and Grades\)](#)
- [Ordinance 17.00 Examinations](#)

Students are encouraged to review the following websites to learn more about academic integrity, student rights and responsibilities, and the Spartan Code of Honor:

- Spartan Life Handbook (Student Affairs)
- [University Ombudsperson](#)
- [ASMSU](#)

The Spartan Code of Honor was adopted by ASMSU on March 3, 2016, endorsed by Academic Governance on March 22, 2016, and recognized by the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees on April 15, 2016.

The Spartan Code of Honor Academic Pledge:

“As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor in ownership is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do.”

Plagiarism Policy

“Plagiarism is copying another person's text or ideas and passing the copied material as your own work. You must both delineate (i.e., separate and identify) the copied text from your text and give credit to (i.e., cite the source) the source of the copied text to avoid accusations of

plagiarism. Plagiarism is considered fraud and has potentially harsh consequences including loss of job, loss of reputation, and the assignment of reduced or failing grade in the course”. See web site for definition and helpful links regarding what constitutes plagiarism:

<https://ombud.msu.edu/academic-integrity/plagiarism-policy.html>