

Seminar course (Geol Sci 851) (3cr)

Environmental Sustainability: In the face of global change, global population growth, and limited natural resources

Lecture: Tuesdays 5-8 pm

Room: 291 ML (Mendenhall)

Academic Unit: School of Earth Sciences

Instructor: Dr. Andréa G. Grottoli, Assistant Professor

Required Textbook:

Diamond J (2005) Collapse: How societies choose to fail or succeed. Viking Penguin. Pp. 575.

Overall Course Goal:

This seminar will be centered around the book “Collapse” by Jarred Diamond. Two chapters will be covered per week and discussed. Students will research and present one chapter each in detail, seeking out relevant publications from the peer-reviewed literature and expanding the scope of each chapter beyond that presented by Diamond. Special guest faculty will be invited to attend and contribute their expertise to the discussion.

Grading:

Participation (including attendance): 50%

Student presentations: 50%

Course pre-requisites and expectations:

This is a graduate level course. Upper level undergraduates are welcome and will be required to complete all of the same coursework. When grading, expectations for graduate students will be higher than for undergraduates. Students must be either science majors, graduate students in any one of the sciences, or have permission of the instructor.

General Class Schedule

Week	Topic
1	-Intro to course, assign weekly presentations -Prologue and introduction to the Author
2	- Ch 1: Modern Montana (Under Montana's Big Sky) - Ch 2: Twilight at Easter
3	- Ch 3: The Last People Alive: Pitcairn and Henderson Islands - Ch 4: The Ancient Ones: The Anasazi and Their Neighbors
4	- Ch 5: The Maya Collapse - Ch 6: The Viking Prelude and Fugues
5	- Ch 7 & 8: Norse Greenland's Flowering & Norse Greenland's End - Ch 9: Opposite Paths to Success
6	- Ch 10: Malthus in Africa: Rwanda's Genocide - Ch 11: One Island, Two Peoples, Two Histories: The DR and Haiti
7	- Ch 12: China, Lurching Giant - Ch 13: "Mining" Australia
8	- Ch 14: Why do Some Societies Make Disastrous Decisions? - Ch 15: Big Businesses and the Environment
9	- Ch 16: The World as a Polder: What does it all Mean to Us Today?
10	- Capstone discussion