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Disaster Analysis

Natural disasters happen around the world every day. In this course we have learned about earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanos, landslides, and avalanches, but there are many other types of natural disasters such as forest fires, flooding, tornadoes, hurricanes, sand storms to name a few. There are many great movies and books out there that are based on a natural disaster, but often facts about the disaster are not accurately described. In part one of this assignment you are required to watch any video or read any book that includes a natural disaster and critically examine the events that took place. Did the movie accurately describe the disaster? Why or why not? In part two of this assignment you will need to reflect on the transferrable skills (e.g., critical thinking, communication, problem solving, time management, and working with others) you have developed while completing this assignment. You will need to identify which skills you have developed and describe how they will be helpful in your future career.

Part 1: Movie or Book Critique (66%)

The first part of this assignment is worth 66% of this assignment. This assignment requires you to:

1. Formulate an opinion on the accuracy of information portrayed in the media
2. Locate, gather and organize evidence to support an opinion
3. Communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken, and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience.

Select a movie or book that is about a natural disaster that you are interested in. There are many different movies and books to choose from. Wikipedia has a list of disaster films that you may find helpful. As you read the book or watch the movie think critically about how the disaster is described or portrayed. **Summarize the natural disaster** and then **formulate an opinion on the accuracy of the book or movie.** Did the movie accurately describe the disaster? Why or why not? **Select two aspects of the disaster to focus on.** You may want to focus on the location, damage, rescue effort, mechanical processes or response rate to the disaster. For example, if you are watching a movie on earthquakes, you may want to critique the damage done by the earthquake and the time it took for help to arrive. If you are reading about a forest fire you may want to critique the speed of the fire and the tools used to fight the fire. **You will need at least two pieces of research to support your opinion on the accuracy of the book or movie.** Once you have thoroughly critiqued the book or movie you will need to **present your findings.** There are a number of different ways to do this.

Review the table below and choose which assignment suits you best. Five different options have been provided, including the opportunity for you to create your own assignment (Please note that if you make up your own assignment it must be approved by me - email me!). The table should be read from left to right. For example, you may choose to be a reporter writing a 2 page editorial for the general public, which summarizes and outlines your thoughts on the accuracy of the disaster used in the video/book.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Reporter or Critic	Public	2 page editorial double spaced	Summary and your reflection on the accuracy of the disaster used in the movie or book. ** Two pieces of research! Don't forget to reference where you got the information from!** See rubric!
Teacher	Gr. 7/8 students	Poster	
Scientist	Other scientists	7- 10 slides PowerPoint	
Disaster expert (eg. Forest ranger – forest fire expert)	College professor	2 page letter double spaced	
Other role approved by the instructor.	Other audience approved by the instructor.	Other format approved by the instructor.	

Please review the marking rubric below so you know exactly what is expected!

A few important notes about this assignment:

1. Plagiarism – please do NOT plagiarize – if you found it, I probably can too!
2. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP! Alexandra.Penn@durhamcollege.ca
3. DEADLINES: As in the workplace, failure to meet deadlines results in loss of credibility and grades. Assignments not submitted by deadline will receive a grade of zero. Reconsideration will be given at the discretion of the Faculty if proper notification and documentation is given.
4. ORIGINAL WORK: All material produced in or for class, whether text, image, or digital, must be original, or correctly cited. Plagiarism is a form of stealing. It includes, but is not limited to, failure to indicate the ideas, data, graphic elements, or language of another, without specific and proper acknowledgment. Students who plagiarize, or cheat in any way, will be cited and face disciplinary actions, according to Durham College's Academic Integrity Policy (ACAD – 101). Please make note that plagiarism includes taking the work of another student (or work downloaded from the internet) and submitting it as your own, even if you 'tweak' it. Giving your work to another student to submit, even if the other student 'tweaks' it is also plagiarism. If you are unclear on what constitutes 'reference material', please discuss it with your faculty.

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Part 2: Skills Reflection (34%)

NAME: _____

Students always ask me why they have to take general education courses. They tell me they are not going to be natural disaster specialists and will hopefully never be in a natural disaster. Although I love learning about our planet and the disasters that occur on it, it is the skills that you develop in this course that can be transferred to other courses or the workplace that are really important.

Critical thinking - You have been critically reflecting on news articles, case studies and online simulations.

Communication – You have been writing me emails, essays, letters, short summaries and more. Communicating effectively is a skill you need for any profession.

Problem solving – You have been experimenting with online simulations to determine which type of volcano is the most dangerous or what weather conditions create the most dangerous avalanche.

Time management – This course has so many weekly assignments. If you don't manage your time you can quickly fall behind.

Working with others – It is my hope that you have been helping each other on quizzes, assignments, readings... everything! In the workplace if you have a question or have to complete a difficult task you are encouraged to look to your coworkers for help. The same goes for this online course. If you don't have any friends in the class try posting on the general discussion board or send me an email.

This skills assessment is worth 34% of this assignment. I want you to think about this second assignment and the skills you have developed or are about to develop by completing it. **Write a 250 word self-reflection identifying two skills you have developed and describe how these skills will help you in your chosen career. Please review the rubric to see exactly what I am looking for.**

Completely lost and have no idea what to write? How about describing your work plan and how you managed your time to get this assignment completed on time. If you worked with somebody, why did you work well together? How did this assignment help you become a better communicator? Did you choose a new format (PowerPoint) that you don't usually use? Did you get somebody else to edit your work?

P.S. When you go to a job interview and they ask you about your skills, it is great to give examples like, "I am a great communicator. I can write persuasive letters, analyze case studies, write summaries and essays. In my natural disasters class I wrote..." When you give an example you seem way more credible! Plus people will be surprised that you took a course on natural disasters and are usually really impressed when you bring it up in an interview. It makes you unique and memorable!