

## Geography 621R: Water in the Wasatch and the West

Winter 2005

Instructor: Matt Bekker  
Office: 672C SWKT  
Phone: 422-1961  
Email: matthew\_bekker@byu.edu  
Office hrs: MW 1:00-3:00 P.M. or by arrangement

### Course Description

Utah is the second-driest state in the U.S. Nevertheless, even here water is sufficiently available and cheap that few, if any of us have a full appreciation of its importance. Six years of drought in the Intermountain West has raised awareness levels a bit, but examples of the overuse and abuse of water still abound. This course is about water in the Intermountain West, with a focus on Utah, and further focus on the Wasatch Front. We will discuss historic and paleo-records of water, policies and history of water use, and water quality issues.

### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should:

- have a greater appreciation of the importance of water to the Wasatch Front and the Intermountain West
- have a general understanding of how water availability has varied in this region in the past, and thus have a clearer picture of what the future holds
- have a better understanding of water quality issues facing the Wasatch Front
- have a deep understanding of a topic related to water resources that is of interest to them
- be able to make more informed decisions about human use of water resources

### Requirements

#### Attendance and Participation

Most of you probably know that graduate courses are very different from undergraduate courses with regards to attendance. If you miss class, you will miss a lot, and you will be missed. We only meet once per week, so missing a class is like missing a whole week of “normal” classes. Moreover, there is no way I am going to stand up and lecture for two and a half hours. The success of this class is *very* dependent on your attendance and participation in discussion

#### Readings

We will do a lot of reading in this course. Most of the reading will consist of journal articles, supplemented by some newspaper and/or other articles aimed at a more general audience. In addition, two books are required for this course. The first is Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water by Marc Reisner (1993 Revised Edition). Several copies of this book are available in the Lee and Law libraries. You can also order

it from Amazon for \$4-\$12, depending on condition (make sure you get the 1993 edition), or purchase it from local bookstores (e.g. Borders, Barnes & Noble) for about \$17. The second book is Utah Lake: Legacy, by Robert Carter. This book does not have a copyright date, but was published last year. All proceeds go to the June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program. Unfortunately, to my knowledge it is currently available only at Pioneer/Heritage Book, 135 W Center in Provo. The cost is about \$15. I will have at least one copy of this book on reserve in the Geography Dept. office, and I am working on getting a copy in the library.

### Term Papers

You will be required to complete a term paper on some topic related to water resources. Ideally, this paper would contribute your thesis. It can be an exploration of relevant literature, methods, history, politics, specific conflicts, environmental problems, etc. As long as it relates to the importance of water, the topic should be acceptable, but check with me before you begin. Part of our class discussion will be on the progress of your research.

### Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on: 1) attendance and participation; 2) the term paper (due the last day of class) and 3) a presentation of your paper to the class (during the final exam period). Each of these will be weighted equally in determining your grade.

### Blackboard

I will use Blackboard to post announcements, pdf files of some journal articles, and possibly some other course documents. This is also a convenient way to get in touch with other class members (or me) via email. If you have any questions about how to use Blackboard please let me know.

### Other Recommended Reading:

Martin, Russell. 1999. A Story That Stands like a Dam: Glen Canyon and the Struggle for the Soul of the West. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Sauder, Robert A. 1994. The Lost Frontier: Water Diversion in the Growth and Destruction of Owens Valley Agriculture. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Soffer, Arnon. 1999. Rivers of Fire: The Conflict over Water in the Middle East. Rowman & Littlefield, New York.

Hillel, Daniel. 1994. Rivers of Eden: The Struggle for Water and the Quest for Peace in the Middle East. Oxford University Press, New York.

Rogers, Peter and Peter Lydon, eds. 1994. Water in the Arab World: Perspectives and Prognoses. The Division of Applied Sciences, Harvard University.

### Expected Course Schedule

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<b>1-5 (1/5-2/2)</b>	<b>Overview: Water in the West</b>	<b>Cadillac Desert</b>
<b>6-10 (2/9-3/9)</b>	<b>Historic Data and Reconstructions of Water Resources</b>	<b>Journal Articles</b>
<b>9-12 (3/16-4/13)</b>	<b>Water Quality Issues</b>	<b>Utah Lake: Legacy</b>

**Final Exam: Monday, April 18, 11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. (in-class)**

## **General Policies**

### **Geography Department Statement on Academic Dishonesty**

The faculty of the Geography Department fully supports the Honor Code of Brigham Young University. You should know that in cases of academic dishonesty it is department policy to give an E on that part of the course (paper, homework, quiz, etc) in which academic dishonesty was involved. If the dishonesty involves a major portion of the course requirements, such as a midterm or final exam, the student may be given an E for the entire course. If the dishonesty involves copying someone else's work, unless they had no control over the situation, action will also be taken against the person allowing their work to be copied. Academic dishonesty of any type will be reported to the University Standards office. Please check the Internet site at <http://campuslife.byu.edu/honorcode/>

### **Preventing Sexual Harassment**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

### **Students With Disabilities**

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability that may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.