Ocean 235A – 2 credit: Arctic Change 2015 – Homework 8 Due 11:30am Friday 5th June 2015

A topical magazine article on some aspect of the Arctic or Arctic Change

Goals: - To research some aspect of the Arctic (mentioned in class) that interests you.
- To learn to extract key points from a larger amount of material, and to cite your sources.
- To develop the ability to communicate your knowledge to those unfamiliar with the Arctic.

You may discuss your ideas with others, but write up the article on your own.
The HW should be submitted electronically to the class canvas site: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/967656 as a .DOC, DOCX or .PDF file with filename Lastname_Firstname_HW8_ArcticChange15.doc .docx or .pdf

Instructions: This homework asks you to write a 1-page article suitable for a magazine on some aspect of the Arctic. Pick a topic that interests you. Using class notes, links on the class website, and sources which you find on your own, research your topic. Focus on aspects which you think will be accessible and of interest to those unfamiliar with the Arctic. Write up the topic in the manner of a popular science magazine article (e.g., Scientific American), being sure to be accurate in your facts. You may use up to 2 illustrations in your article (included in the 1-page limit), but if they are not your own original work, you must cite where they are from. The magazine article should be 1 page (12 pt font). On a second page, list the sources you used to research the article. You should list at least 2 sources (not including lecture notes). For each source, state in broad terms what information it provided to you (e.g., overview of changes in sea ice extent, details of getting ice thickness from satellite data) and (importantly) how accurate a source you think it is and your reasons for thinking that.

Grading (/35pts):
Title – 2pts. This should be eye-catching or informative – preferably both.
Sources – 10pts. For each of two sources - 1pt for source, 2pt for information provided, 2pt for correctly understanding the likely reliability. If less than 10pts, up to 2 alternative points for extra sources (1 per source).
Factual Content – 12pts. The article should contain at least 4 checkable facts, accurately and accessibly explained (3pts per fact), e.g., “Arctic sea ice extent in 2007 was less than climatological predictions” would get 1pt – it is true, but doesn’t really tell us much accurately, and neither is it easy for someone to visualize. Better (2pts) is “In 2007, the area of the Arctic Ocean covered by sea-ice in September was much less than typical for that month of the year” - ice extent has been explained, but the magnitude of the change is still a mystery to the reader. Still better (3pts) “In 2007, the area of the Arctic Ocean covered by sea-ice in September (usually the month with least sea-ice) was much less than typical for that month of the year. It was only ¾ of the 2006 value, and less than the value for 1980 by an area about 1/3rd of the area of the United States. (Source: NSIDC)”.
Message – 3pts. Does the article convey an interesting message? Does it cover the basic relevant facts?
First paragraph – 2pts. Does the first paragraph grab the reader’s interest and set the scene for the article?
Last paragraph – 2pts. Does the last paragraph leave the reader with a clear message?
Accessibility to those not familiar with the Arctic – 2pts. How well could a non-expert follow the article? Points will be given here for jargon that is well explained, or for avoiding jargon all together.
Style/layout – 2pts. Is the article easy and interesting to read? Does it flow (i.e., is it well constructed)?

The ability to write concisely, clearly and accurately is a skill that is very valuable in many walks of life. Very often it is helpful to plan out the document before writing whole sentences. For example, for this homework, you could jot down the ideas you wish to get over. Do some research (starting with the class notes, and moving onto sources as you find them) to flesh out these ideas. Then arrange them in a logical order. Mark any special terms you’ll need to explain. Consider the opening paragraph – this should try to grab your reader’s attention. Think about the final paragraph, which is much of what your reader will remember - what is the main point you wish to leave them thinking about? Consider if images are necessary/useful to make your point. Only start writing sentences when your outline has all the points you want to make. Make sure your wording and phrasing is your own. If you have just read the source, it’s often hard to think of a different way of phrasing some of the facts. (If you use their words, you MUST make that clear, with “” and citation.) Often it’s good to make notes from your sources and only use the notes, not the original source, as you are writing. Finally, review your article from the standpoint of someone who doesn’t know the Arctic. (Perhaps get someone else to read it.) Did you explain all jargon? Does the excitement you feel for the topic come over? If not, re-edit. Don’t be discouraged at the first draft - good writing can take time.

Version: 19th May 2015
Ocean 235A – 3 credit: Arctic Change 2015 – Homework 8 Due 11:30am Friday 5th June 2015

A topical magazine article on some aspect of the Arctic or Arctic Change

Goals:
- To research some aspect of the Arctic (mentioned in class) that interests you.
- To learn to extract key points from a larger amount of material, and to cite your sources.
- To develop the ability to communicate your knowledge to those unfamiliar with the Arctic.

You may discuss your ideas with others, but write up the article on your own. The HW should be submitted electronically to the class canvas site: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/967656 as a .DOC, DOCX or .PDF file with filename Lastname_Firstname_HW8_ArcticChange15.doc .docx or .pdf

Instructions: This homework asks you to write a 1-page article suitable for a magazine on some aspect of the Arctic. Pick a topic that interests you. Using class notes, links on the class website, and sources which you find on your own, research your topic. Focus on aspects which you think will be accessible and of interest to those unfamiliar with the Arctic. Write up the topic in the manner of a popular science magazine article (e.g., Scientific American), being sure to be accurate in your facts. You may use up to 2 illustrations in your article (included in the 1page limit), but if they are not your own original work, you must cite where they are from. The magazine article should be 1 page (12 pt font). On a second page, list the sources you used to research the article. You should list at least 3 sources (not including lecture notes). For each source, state in broad terms what information it provided to you (e.g., overview of changes in sea ice extent, details of getting ice thickness from satellite data) and (importantly) how accurate a source you think it is and your reasons for thinking that.

Grading (/50pts):
Title – 3pt. This should be eye-catching or informative – preferably both.
Sources – 15pts. For each of three sources - 1pt for source, 2pt for information provided, 2pt for correctly understanding the likely reliability. If less than 10pts, up to 2 alternative points for extra sources (1 per source).
Factual Content – 15pts. The article should contain at least 5 checkable facts, accurately and accessibly explained (3pts per fact), e.g., “Arctic sea ice extent in 2007 was less than climatological predictions” would get 1pt – it is true, but doesn’t really tell us much accurately, and neither is it easy for someone to visualize. Better (2pts) is “In 2007, the area of the Arctic Ocean covered by sea-ice in September was much less than typical for that month of the year” - ice extent has been explained, but the magnitude of the change is still a mystery to the reader. Still better (3pts) “In 2007, the area of the Arctic Ocean covered by sea-ice in September (usually the month with least sea-ice) was much less than typical for that month of the year. It was only ¾ of the 2006 value, and less than the value for 1980 by an area about 1/3rd of the area of the United States. (Source: NSIDC)”.
Message – 4pts. Does the article convey an interesting message? Does it cover all the main relevant facts?
First paragraph – 3pts. Does the first paragraph grab the reader’s interest and set the scene for the article?
Last paragraph – 3pts. Does the last paragraph leave the reader with a clear message?
Accessibility to those not familiar with the Arctic – 4pts. How well could a non-expert follow the article? Points will be given here for jargon that is well explained, or for avoiding jargon all together.
Style/layout – 3pts. Is the article easy and interesting to read? Does it flow (i.e., is it well constructed)?

The ability to write concisely, clearly and accurately is a skill that is very valuable in many walks of life. Very often it is helpful to plan out the document before writing whole sentences. For example, for this homework, you could jot down the ideas you wish to get over. Do some research (starting with the class notes, and moving onto sources as you find them) to flesh out these ideas. Then arrange them in a logical order. Mark any special terms you’ll need to explain. Consider the opening paragraph – this should try to grab your reader’s attention. Think about the final paragraph, which is much of what your reader will remember - what is the main point you wish to leave them thinking about? Consider if images are necessary/useful to make your point. Only start writing sentences when your outline has all the points you want to make. Make sure your wording and phrasing is your own. If you have just read the source, it’s often hard to think of a different way of phrasing some of the facts. (If you use their words, you MUST make that clear, with “” and citation.) Often it’s good to make notes from your sources and only use the notes, not the original source, as you are writing. Finally, review your article from the standpoint of someone who doesn’t know the Arctic. (Perhaps get someone else to read it.) Did you explain all jargon? Does the excitement you feel for the topic come over? If not, re-edit. Don’t be discouraged at the first draft - good writing can take time.

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