

University of Texas at El Paso
College of Science
Department of Earth, Environmental and Resource Sciences
Face-to-Face Course Syllabus with the Integration of UTEP Edge Practices

LABORATORY FOR PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY - GEOG1106-2 Spring 2024 Syllabus

Course Information

GEOG1106-2: Laboratory for GEOG1306
CRN: 21641
Term: Spring 2024
Delivery Method: In-person
Meeting Day and Time: Wednesdays 8:30 am- 10:20 am
Location: Geology Building Room 216

Instructor Information



Instructor: Laura V. Alvarez, Ph.D
Email: alvarez@utep.edu
Office: GEOL321
Instructor TA: Stephanie Marquez
Email: snmarquez@miners.utep.edu
Written Communication: Email. Please CC both the instructor and the TA on all emails.
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:20 AM- 11:00 AM at GEOL216 face-to-face OR by appointment




Course Description and Objectives

This course is the laboratory portion of Physical Geography GEOG1306. The course provides exercises and hands-on activities to reinforce the concepts from the theoretical counterpart. The lab also provides an opportunity to learn basic geographic techniques and concepts, including the interpretation of physical geography data and field experiences. In addition, this laboratory provides a forum for continued discussion of lecture material in a small group format. Attendance in the theoretical section of this Lab course (GEOG1306-1 Physical Geography, 3 credit hours) is highly recommended, as the theory will reinforce and provide a deeper understanding of the material in this Lab section. However, some previously-recorded lectures that support the Lab material will be made available within each module on our UTEP virtual platform Blackboard.

Course Objectives and University Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Student Learning Objective	Outcome
Demonstrate the ability to interact with peers during the lab, exchange ideas and come up with a consensus solution to problems.	 Teamwork Skills
Draw on existing knowledge bases provided on the readers and recorded lectures to create “new” or “transformed” knowledge	 Critical Thinking Skills

Express scientific ideas and solutions in verbal and writing mode during and after lab sessions	 Communication Skills
Interiorize the mechanics of our planetary atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, cryosphere and biosphere for a holistic understanding of the physical functioning of our world	 Global Awareness
Extrapolate and apply the knowledge gathered during the laboratory sessions to the day-to-day life in relation to the environment and the changes that affect our health and wellbeing.	 Social Responsibility

Reference Textbook & Course Materials

- The recommended, but not mandatory, book is Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography (10th Edition). Robert Christopherson and Ginger Birkeland. Prentice Hall.
- You will find lab presentations, weekly readers, laboratory handouts, lecture video recordings and additional information in our UTEP GEOG 1106 Blackboard course. If you encounter any problems accessing this course within Blackboard, please contact the UTEP helpdesk (helpdesk@utep.edu).

Assignments and Grading

Assignments for this course are assessed according to rubrics whose points are found before each of the question items on the laboratory handouts. You can also find these rubrics by clicking on the appropriate assignment link in Blackboard and choosing to “View Rubric” from the button beneath the Points Possible for the assignment. Following a short lecture, the assigned labs must be completed and turned in before the end of lab that day (or according to the instructor’s submission extension). Twelve labs will be assigned over the semester. The grade value of each lab is 100/12 or 8.3333%. A perfect score for the twelve labs will add up to 100%.

Percent grades will be rounded to one decimal place and letter grades will have the following equivalence:

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Percentage (%)
A	4.0	89.5 to 100
B	3.0	79.5 to 89.4
C	2.0	69.5 to 79.4
D	1.0	59.5 to 69.4
F	0.0	59.4 to 0

Technology Requirements

- Course content (i.e. Lab readers and handouts) is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and you can access the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

- You will need access to a computer/laptop and a printer. You must download or software: Microsoft Office and Excel, Adobe Acrobat Reader and Google Earth. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.
- If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal.
- **IMPORTANT:** If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

Course Communication

Here are the ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- **Office Hours:** The instructor TA will have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. Office hours are in-person, however, you can request a virtual meeting with the instructor TA or instructor and we will send you a Zoom link. Please see the days and times at the top of this syllabus.
- **Email:** UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact us. When sending emails always CC both the instructor and instructor TA. We will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours of receipt. When emailing us, be sure to email from your UTEP student e-mail account, and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name and your university identification number.
- **Announcements:** Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

Attendance, Lab Development and Submission Deadlines

- This lab section is structured in 110-minute presential sessions. **Students not attending the presential sessions or leaving before the Lab session ends will immediately get a zero (0) grade on that day's Lab** unless a previous, officially supported excuse is presented.
- Students are tasked with previously going over the lab reader, watching recorded lectures, and preparing the lab materials before each of the 12 weekly sessions. The reader will be made available through the GEOG 1106 Blackboard lab page at least one week in advance. Handouts will be distributed by the TA at the beginning of each session (printed and PDF). Students are not allowed to complete any portion of the lab before class. Should any portion of the lab be completed, the instructor TA will confiscate the copy, and the student will be required to print out a new copy for in-class work. Students are encouraged to bring their laptops, lecture notes, textbooks, rulers, and a scientific calculator to the lab sessions, as they could be useful when answering lab questions.
- At the beginning of each session, the Lab TA will provide a brief (5 min) overview of the lab topics and explain the dynamics of the activities to develop with the corresponding

expectations.

- Students will then work during the next 105 minutes to fully complete the laboratory activity and submit individual answers. There are two ways of submitting your work: (1) **The same day of the Lab** by end of the session on paper and hand-written manner to the instructor TA. Students submitting their complete Lab work (all questions must be answered) by the end of each Lab session, will obtain an additional 10% of the Lab grade as extra-credit bonus. (2) **by 1:00 PM of the day following the Lab** through the Blackboard submission tool opened for each Lab module. Online submissions must be typed or scanned and then converted to PDF. **All online submissions need to be in PDF format.**
- Students may use the help of the textbook and lecture notes during each lab session but are also encouraged to ask questions to the instructor when necessary. Please do use complete sentences and make sure instructors can read your answers!
- **If lab responses are illegible, they will be marked as incorrect (if the instructor cannot read it, they cannot grade it).** Additionally, you will not be allowed to read your answer or re-write it for credit. It would be beneficial to you if you are careful to write your answers.
- **Any lab not received by the submission deadline period will be marked as a 0, unless you have an excused absence. NO LATE LABS WILL BE ACCEPTED**
- **LABORATORY ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY!** students are required to attend every lab for the full allotted time. The student must be present in the lab classroom for the entire portion of the day's lab lecture until the lab is completed to be counted as present. All students are required to sign a mandatory attendance list with the instructor.
- If a student misses a lab session without an approved excuse, they will not be allowed to receive credit for the assignments associated with that session. Excused absences will be given only for documented emergencies. Vacations, other exams, and work conflicts **are not** considered valid emergencies. Documentation (doctor's note, police report, etc.) for emergencies relating to lab absences must be submitted to the instructor for approval, no later than one week after a particular missed lab session. It is your responsibility to obtain valid documentation and deliver it to the instructor **within 1 week of the absence**. Documentation not received within this period will not be considered.

Illness Precautions

Please stay home if you have symptoms of a communicable illness. If you are feeling unwell, please let both the instructor and the TA instructor know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations.

Excused Absences and/or Course Drop Policy

We will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let us know and then contact the Registrar's Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

Alternative Means of Submitting Work in Case of Technical Issues

We strongly suggest that, if you elect to submit your Lab answers via Blackboard, you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. We also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate document as a backup. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through Blackboard, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email us your backup document as a last resort.

Incomplete Grade Policy

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to the instructor immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines

Accommodations Policy

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Scholastic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

- **Student conduct:** A major component of learning process in this lab involves discussion, and therefore we strongly encourage you to participate in the classroom dialogue. However, we do insist that you be respectful of your fellow classmates at all times. Please be aware that other students come from different backgrounds and may hold different beliefs. We ask that you be sensitive to these issues and behave in an inclusive manner. In addition, in the interest of fostering a productive learning environment, disruptive behavior of any kind will not be permitted. Exercise common sense at absolutely every opportunity and act accordingly.

- **Cell phones:** No cell phone use during lab (including text messaging). Cell phones ringing during labs are disruptive and distracting, so please turn your phone to “silent” during lab time. If you must use your cell phone, please leave the classroom; however, an extended leave may result in an absence for the day.
- After a courteous warning, if you fail to adhere to the policies above, you will be asked to leave the classroom. Leaving the classroom means that you will be absent and will receive a “0” for that lab. If you choose to stay, but fail to adhere to the policies, you will still be considered absent and receive a “0” for that lab.
- The instructor has the right to institute new policies during the semester to ensure safety and positive learning environment for all students.

Guidance on Artificial Intelligence

AI prohibited

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is not allowed for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

Course Resources

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources or visit https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html.



Tentative Schedule (subject to slight changes)

Lab #	Date	Topic
0	Jan. 17 th	Welcome, Syllabus and Rules
1	Jan. 24 th	Orientation, scale and maps
2	Jan. 31 st	Location and seasons
3	Feb. 7 th	Global temperatures and precipitation
4	Feb. 14 th	Atmospheric circulation
5	Feb. 21 st	Moisture and atmospheric stability
6	Feb. 28 th	Air masses and weather
7	Mar. 6 th	Water budget
No Lab	Mar. 13 th	SPRING BREAK - No Lab
8	Mar. 20 th	Earth interior and the rock cycle
9	Mar. 27 th	Plate tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes
10	Apr. 3 rd	Mass movements and karst
11	Apr. 10 th	Fluvial processes and landforms
12	Apr. 17 th	Desert processes and landforms
No Lab	Apr. 24 th	No Lab -
No Lab	May. 1 st	No Lab -