

SYLLABUS
GEOG 1306-2 Physical Geography
Fall 2017 CRN 18201
Tuesday and Thursday 12:00-1:20, UGLC 346

Instructor: Dr. Deana Pennington
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Course Description:

Physical geography is the branch of geography dealing with natural features and processes that interact on the surface of the Earth, emphasizing the spatial variations that occur. We will study the Earth's atmosphere, weather, and climate; and its surface features – focusing upon water, landforms, and biotic systems. We will study these as complex environmental systems that are subject to change over several time scales. Our focus will be geographical and spatial: where things are, why they are there, and how place and spatial relationships make a difference. Lastly, we will examine the interactions between humans and our natural environment.

You are surrounded with a remarkable earth system that supports every aspect of your life; provides unending opportunities for exploration; and brings the opportunity to observe a host of interesting phenomena. The goal of this course is to make you better able to understand and appreciate the world around you.

Course Objectives:

1. To describe the Earth's atmosphere and surface as interacting systems;
2. To describe how properties of the Earth's atmosphere and surface are displayed on maps;
3. To explain how technologies such as geographic information systems and remote sensing are used to analyze location and spatial relationships;
4. To describe the Earth's energy balance and relate this to radiation and temperature;
5. To describe atmosphere and ocean circulations and relate these to weather systems;
6. To explain the global hydrologic cycle and distribution of water resources;
7. To describe how landscapes are formed and shaped by tectonics, mass movements, wind, water, and ice;
8. To describe how biotic communities develop and are structured relative to the landscape and environments in which they persist;
9. To describe how humans interact with the landscape, effecting environmental and climate change.

Text:

“McKnight's Physical Geography: A Landscape Appreciation” by Darrel Hess and Dennis Tasa, 12th edition (2017). Published by Pearson Prentice Hall. 688 pages.

The text is available in several versions, including hardback, a loose-leaf printed copy, and an electronic textbook. Any version of the 12th edition is fine but do not get an earlier edition. The 12th edition has numerous new additions that we will be using. You do not need access to the Pearson MasteringGeography learning system.

Other Required Resources:

Blackboard: I will use Blackboard for assignments and to send announcements to the entire class. I rarely check my email in Blackboard, so please do not attempt to contact me through the system. Email me directly at ddpennington@utep.edu.

Packback Questions: This is a new online discussion system I am trying this semester, described in more detail below. It is \$18 per student for the entire semester, and you register here: <https://www.packback.co/>. You will get an email with instructions on August 30.

Accommodations and Support Services:

Students with disabilities are referred to the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS; <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>) who will work with the instructor to identify appropriate adaptations to better foster a positive teaching and learning experience. Some examples of the assistance provided are: audio materials for the blind or dyslexic, note takers, readers, campus guides, audio recorders, a quiet testing area, and undergraduate academic tutors. In order to qualify for these services, documentation must be provided by qualified professionals on an annual basis. Disability Services forms are available in the Academic Support Center.

Drop Deadline:

The deadline to drop this class is November 3. No requests for a withdrawal will be approved by the College of Science after that date.

Academic Dishonesty

A student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. Any outside assistance should be acknowledged. While cooperation during class is expected, assignments must be constructed and written by each individual student unless a collaborative approach is specifically assigned.

Grades:

Participation	20%
Quizzes	40%
Homework	40%

Grades will be earned as follows:

A	>= 90%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	< 60%

Participation

The participation grade will be based on Packback discussion. Details about Packback are given later in this syllabus.

Quizzes

There will be five units – each lasting 3-4 weeks, and a quiz will be given at the end of each unit. The quiz on the last unit will replace a final exam – there will not be a comprehensive final. There are no makeup quizzes; however, the lowest score will be dropped.

The quiz will be electronic, administered in Blackboard, and will consist of 30 multiple choice and true/false questions, each worth 1 point. Quizzes are open book, randomized, and are to be taken individually. You will have 90 minutes to complete the quiz. A timer will show you how much time remains. At the end of 90 minutes it will automatically submit. Every 5-10 seconds Blackboard automatically records your answers in case of a computer crash or internet outage. The time continues while you are re-entering the system, however. You should also save each answer manually.

Availability: The quiz will be posted at noon on Friday the day after the unit ends and will be available for completion until noon on Tuesday. You must submit your answers before the deadline to receive credit. There will be no other assignment the week of a quiz (no homework assignment nor Packback posting).

The first quiz will be posted in Blackboard on September 15 (Friday of the third week), and will cover the materials from lecture and homework. Those without a textbook can refer to the lecture slides available in Blackboard and their notes. The last quiz will be posted the Friday before finals and is due Tuesday of finals week. It will cover the content from the last unit. No comprehensive final exam will be required.

Homework

Homework assignments will be of two kinds: 1) given to prepare you for activities in the next class; and 2) given on Thursday to have you respond to the activities in class that week. For some of these activities, you will work with partners or small groups. Homework assignments are to be completed by each individual student, NOT in collaboration with others who may have been in your group. Homework assignments are due Sunday night at midnight. 20% will be deducted each day an assignment is late. No credit will be given for any homework turned in after Friday the following week at midnight. To be clear:

Class on Tuesday and Thursday will have hands-on activities

Thursday a homework assignment will be given regarding activities on either/both days

The homework assignment is due three days later, on Sunday night at 11:59 pm

If turned in:

Monday 12:00 am – midnight: subtract 2 points (maximum score 8/10)

Tuesday 12:00 am – midnight: subtract 4 points (maximum score 6/10)

Wednesday 12:00 am – midnight: subtract 6 points (maximum score 4/10)

Thursday 12:00 am – midnight: subtract 8 points (maximum score 2/10)

After Friday 12:00 am, score = 0

Each homework will be graded on a 10 point scale. The grade will be based on the content and completeness of the response:

9-10	The work is complete and correct. It shows insight and careful reflection on the topic. It is well written with complete sentences that respond to the questions.
8-9	The work is essentially complete and correct. The learner shows understanding of the topic although there are minor errors.
7-8	The work is missing one or two items or there are errors in the work that reflect a misconception or lack of understanding.
6-7	The work is lacking more than one answer. Work is poorly done and does not demonstrate understanding of the topic.
<6	Does not effectively address the work; major portions are missing.

Extra Credit

Extra credit may be earned in two ways:

1. Participate in one or more Geoventures Field Trips. These trips are open to the public, and led by a geoscience instructor at El Paso Community College. This semester five trips are being offered: September 17, October 11, October 21, November 11, and December 3. See the flyer in Blackboard for more information. To receive credit, write one paragraph about the field trip and include a picture of yourself with the instructor somewhere on the field trip that will confirm that you attended.
2. Packback Questions: Demonstrate outstanding contributions to this discussion system, as described below.

Additional extra credit, when/if given, will be given to the entire class and not to an individual student.

Attendance and Make-up Policy

We will be conducting hands-on and group activities during class that cannot be made up; homework assignments will be based on the in-class activities. Hence, missing a class can impact your homework grade. There are no make-ups for any of the assignments. If you do miss a class, in most cases you can download the activities from Blackboard and do them yourself, so that you can complete the homework.

Do's and Don'ts:

Cheating, collusion or plagiarism = Academic dishonesty. Do not do this.

There is a NO FOOD OR DRINK policy for all the UGLC auditoriums, classroom, and computer classrooms.

Do keep up with the reading and assignments. Don't fall behind.

Do have fun with the class activities and Packback discussion! These are designed to engage you with something more than a long, boring lecture twice a week!

Class protocol

- Please be on time
- Bring a laptop or mobile device
- Do not use your mobile device for anything other than class interactions. Conducting telephone conversations or texting friends is distracting for everyone else and is not acceptable. You will be dismissed from class if this occurs.
- Give your full attention to the classroom activities.

How to succeed in this course

- *Before Tuesday each week:* Read the assigned text, even if you just skim over the main terms and figures. Check Blackboard to download any materials available for class, including presentations or handouts. Complete any homework assignment given to prepare for class activities. This will be posted as the first item in the folder for that day.
- *During class:* Take notes. Contribute your thoughts and ideas freely to the discussion – this makes the class more interesting for everyone. Be prepared to work with real data in class.
- *After Thursday each week:* Complete any post-activities homework assignment. This will be posted as the last item in the folder for the week. Ask intriguing questions on Packback that are related to the content for the week, that will inspire deep, thoughtful discussion. Contribute deep, thoughtful comments to questions posted by others.
- *Quiz time:* Complete the textbook reading assignments. Go over the Learning Review section at the end of the chapter. Quizzes are open book.

Blackboard Instructions

Here is a quick reminder. For more information contact the help desk (help@utep.edu).

Start with the UTEP Home Page

Click on My.UTEP.edu

Login

Click on Blackboard

In the My Courses box (upper right), click on this course: Physical Geography

Expand the Home Page area in the box at the upper left.

You should see:

On the Home page: weekly class folders – includes weekly quiz, homework assignments, slides, and resources needed for class activities.

In the menu bar on the left side links to:

- Syllabus
- Instructor/TA contact information
- Announcements
- My Grades

Below these are links to technical support for the various technologies we are using.

Your quiz scores will automatically post and display in the My Grades area. TAs will try to grade all homework within one week of its due date but sometimes it may be two weeks. Packback scores will be updated every few weeks. If you receive extra credit, you will see that here as well.

Packback Questions Instructions

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online curiosity community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask BIG questions about how what we're studying relates to life and the real world. It has been developed by university students in Chicago. For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

Your participation on Packback will count towards **10 percent of your final grade**.

In order to receive your points each week, you must post 1 Question and 2 Answers per week relevant to our class subject matter. During the **first week I have already posted two questions and you only need to respond to one of those. You do not need to post your own question in week 1. Starting in week 2, 1 Question and 2 Answers are required each week.** This is most easily accomplished by looking at the world around you, observing things in the landscape that are related to class topics, and ask questions about how you can better understand the world through physical geography. Read other students' postings and comment on those that interest you. Note that answers you post on your own question do not count towards the required 2 answers.

Before you start posting, be sure to read the [Community Guidelines](#) found in the tutorial on Packback. If your post doesn't follow the Packback Community Guidelines, there is a chance it will be removed and you won't receive points for that post.

There will be a **Sunday 11:59 PM deadline** for submissions in your community each week.

Each week, we will spend time in class highlighting discussions from Packback, encouraging feedback and recognizing top participants in Packback! Early each week I will post key discussions from the prior week in the Featured Posts area. If you posted a question that is Featured, congratulations! You get one point of extra credit. In addition, one point of extra credit will be awarded each week to the three students awarded the highest curiosity points in their postings that week. The three students with the highest curiosity points at the end of the semester will receive an additional extra credit point.

To start posting on Packback Questions:

You will receive an email on August 30 with these instructions from Packback, but you do not need to wait on the email to register.

Navigate to <https://Packback.co/questions> and click "Register as a new student".

Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can login with your credentials.

Make sure to register with your SCHOOL email address and real first name and last name.

Enter our class community's access code into the "Join a new Community" module on your dashboard.
 Our Community access code: 14F01C36-BBB4-966E-1608-2D0F7CB30BB2

Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

Cheating in Packback

I consider submitting questions and/or answers for a fellow student to be cheating and a violation of the University Honor Code. If you are caught posting for another student, you will forfeit all Packback points for that week and may face additional disciplinary action.

Schedule – Subject to change:

Date – Tues, Thurs	Week #	Quiz	Unit	Topics	Text Chapters
Aug 29, 31	1		Intro	Geography, location, Earth systems, Earth-Sun, seasons, time	1
Sep 5, 7	2		Intro	Maps, remote sensing, GIS	2
Sep 12, 14	3		ATM	Atmospheric composition and structure, weather and climate	3
Sep 19, 21	4	1	ATM	Solar energy, temperature, atmospheric processes and patterns	4
Sep 26, 28	5		ATM	Atmospheric pressure and wind, circulation patterns, wind systems	5
Oct 3, 5	6	2	ATM	Climate zones, climate change	8
Oct 10, 12	7		HYD	Hydrologic cycle; fluvial processes	9
Oct 17, 19	8		HYD	Surface and groundwater; karst	17
Oct 24, 26	9	3	HYD	Oceans; glaciers	19
Oct 31, Nov 2	10		LITH	Plate tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, wildfire	14
Nov 7, 9	11			No class	
Nov 14, 16	12		LITH	Arid lands	18
Nov 21	13	4	LITH	Coastal processes	20
Nov 28, 30	14		BIO	Biosphere, Terrestrial flora and fauna	10
Dec 5, 7	15		BIO	Geographic change, Sustainability	11
Dec 12		5		Finals week	