

Syllabus for Physical Geography Fall 2018

GEOG 1306 - CRN 16337

Monday & Wednesday: Physical Science Bldg. 208; 1:30-2:50 pm

Instructor:

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Office Hours: by appointment

TA:

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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description: During the course we will study the different layers composing the Earth's surface, looking into detail the atmosphere, weather, and climate; the Earth's geologic structure and surface features – focusing upon landforms, soil, and ecological systems. We will examine the interactions between humans and our natural environment. For this, we will draw examples from North America, but we will also look globally. We will begin to understand concepts of balance and equilibrium in complex environmental systems that are subject to change over several time scales. Our focus will be geographical and spatial: where things are, why and how they got there, and how place and spatial relationships modify the landscapes that we observe on our planet.

Text:

Required eBook: McKnight's Physical Geography: A Landscape Appreciation, 12th Edition

Modified Mastering Access Card w/ E-book
ISBN: 9780134326191

Course Objectives:

1. to describe how locations and spatial relationships of properties of the earth's atmosphere and surface are displayed on maps;
2. to explain the Earth's radiation energy balances and their relationships to temperatures;
3. to describe the circulations of the lower atmosphere and upper oceans, and relate them to associated weather systems;
4. to explain the global hydrologic cycles and the distribution of global and US water resources;
5. to describe how soils and ecological communities develop and are structured;
6. to describe how the gross topography of the Earth is related to its plate tectonic framework;
7. to explain how landscapes are shaped by rivers, wind, ice, and coastal ocean waters;
8. to identify how human activity is affecting environmental change;
9. to explain how scientific methods, models, and theories are used to describe and explain environmental processes and patterns; and
10. to understand the framework for the scientific consensus on global climate change.

Examinations: The examinations for this course consist entirely of **fifteen (15) weekly Tests**. Each of them will have 10 to 14 questions but will always be worth 20 points, meaning some questions will be

worth more than point. The total number of points for the course is thus **300 points**.

There is **no mid-term** and there are **no cumulative or comprehensive final exams**. The last week of lecture will be Week 15 on **December 3 and 5**. The test on the last week's lectures will be Test 15 and that will take place in the Final Exam Week (Monday, December 10). There is **no other final examination** requirement.

The weekly Tests will take place in the first 20 minutes of each Wednesday class, and will address the material and assigned readings that we dealt with in **the previous week's lecture classes**. That means the first test, **Test #1, will take place on Wednesday, 5th of Sept.** (Week 2). Test #1 will cover the material we studied in Week 1.

The format of the tests will be mostly multiple-choice questions and possibly short answers. Diagrams are very important in science and some questions will ask you to label or interpret diagrams – but no artistic or drawing skills will be required.

Grades:

Grades will be earned as follows:

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

270-300 points 240-269 210-239 180-209 and 179 or less

Academic dishonesty

A student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. Cooperation during the lab is encouraged, however, homework and all assignments must be done and written by each individual student.

Cellular and electronic devices

Cell phones and tablets are not only allowed during lab time, they will be essential for your lab exercises. However, you should not use them for any other reason than working on your lab. This means you cannot make calls, send text messages, or use social media during class. The inappropriate use of your devices will not be allowed.

Attendance

Attendance is very important for your success on this class. Attendance will be recorded by your TA, and no more than 2 missed classes will be allowed. If you need to miss the class for any justifiable reason you need to notify me at least a day in advance. It will be at my discretion to grant you permission to miss the class. More than 2 unjustified absences will drop you from the class.

Make-up tests

If you have a legitimate, unavoidable reason to miss a test you may take a **Make-Up**. We will try to make up the test during the following week or two. Please send me an email to schedule an appointment at my office – 227A Geological Sciences Building.

Re-Takes tests

Re-Takes (for tests you took and made a low score that you believe you can improve): You may re-take **up to two** of the weekly tests **during the Final Exam Week meeting**. If you improve your score, you

may substitute the points you earn in the Re-Takes for those you earned in the original tests. I will ask you to sign up for Re-Takes in the last week (Week 15). These are entirely your choice.

Accommodations & Support Services:

I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 915-747-5148. They're located in Union Building East Rm. 106 or you can reach them by e-mail at cass@utep.edu. All discussions and documentation are kept confidential.

Assignments, Homeworks and Blackboard:

We will use Blackboard for the class Homeworks and Assignments and also to post materials for reading and studying for your weekly tests. We will link our Blackboard class to your Pearson e-book material and the Assignments and Homeworks will be made available electronically. You will also submit those electronically. Details on how to link your Pearson to Blackboard will be provided during the second class. Assignments and Homeworks will count as 20% of your total grade.

Recapping

Test = 20 point weekly test at the beginning of the Wednesday class **every week**.

Assignments & Homeworks = Provided through Blackboard, will count as 20% of the final

Make-Up Test = when you missed a regular weekly test (for a legitimate, unavoidable reason).

Re-Take = to improve your score on 1 or 2 tests where you did poorly; your choice; these are taken at our Final Exam Week meeting.

Last Weekly Exam meeting and time to be defined

Final Grade:

Your final grade for the class will be obtained as follows:

- Final grade from weekly exams = 80%
- Final grade from Homeworks and Assignments = 20%

**Tentative Course Schedule for Physical Geography
Fall 2018 – (subject to change)**

Reading assignments	Topics	Text chapters
Aug. 27, 29	Geography, Science, Location, Earth-Sun, Seasons, Maps	1, 2
Sept. 5	Remote Sensing, GIS, Atmospheric Composition	2, 3
Sept. 10, 12	Air Pollution, Energy, Heating & Cooling, Global Energy	3, 4
Sept. 17, 19	Temperature Patterns, Pressure & Wind, General Circulation of the Atmosphere	4, 5
Sept. 24, 26	El Niño, Atmospheric Moisture, Clouds, Precipitation	5, 6
Oct. 1, 3	Air Masses and Fronts, Atmospheric Disturbances, Storms	7, 8
Oct. 8, 10	Past Climates, Global Climate Change, Hydrosphere	8, 9
Oct. 15, 17	Biosphere, Terrestrial Flora and Fauna	10, 11
Oct. 22, 24	Soil Formation & Types, Lithosphere, Earth Structure, Rocks, Geomorphology	12, 13
Oct. 29, 31	Plate Tectonics, Volcanism, Earthquakes	14
Nov. 5, 7	Weathering, Mass Wasting, Desert Landscapes & Desertification	15, 16
Nov. 12, 14	Groundwater & Karst, Hydrothermal Processes	16, 9, 17
Nov. 19, 21	Fluvial Processes, Rivers & Valleys, Theories of Landform Development	18
Nov. 26, 28	Glacial Modification of the Landscapes & Ice Ages	19
Dec. 3, 5	Coastal Landscapes, Waves & Currents, Tsunamis	20
Dec. 10-14	Exam Week: Last Weekly Test (#15) and up to 2 Re-takes	Finals