University of Texas at El Paso
College of Science
Department of Geological Sciences

LABORATORY FOR PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY - GEOG1106-4 (1 credit hour)
Spring 2021 Syllabus

Part 1: Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Andrew Zitnik
Learning Management Site: UTEP blackboard
Classroom: Virtual sessions in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
Lectures: Fridays 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM
Virtual Office: Blackboard Collaborate Ultra
Office Hours: Thursdays 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Course Communication: Course Messages in Blackboard
Supervisor: Prof. Hernan Moreno

Course Objective

This lab section serves to complement the lecture portion of Physical Geography GEOG1306 by presenting the lecture material in a more personal, hands-on manner. 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 to the theoretical course (GEOG1306-1 Physical Geography, 3 credit hour) is highly recommended as the lectures of this course will reinforce and provide a deeper understanding of the material in this Lab section.

Reference Textbook & Course Materials

- Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography (10th Edition). Robert Christopherson and Ginger Birkeland. Prentice Hall.
- You will find lab presentations, weekly readers, laboratory handouts 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).
- The class materials (e.g. lecture slides and supplementary material) of the theoretical part of Physical Geography (i.e. GEOG1306, 3 credit course) will significantly help to the development of the lab sessions. Simultaneously taking the theoretical part of this class (GEOG1306 Physical Geography) is highly encouraged so that the exercises of the laboratory sessions can be developed with the necessary background and theoretical concepts explained during the theoretical class.

Laboratory Structure and Attendance

- This course is structured in 120 minute, synchronous virtual sessions.

- Students are tasked with previously reading over and preparing the lab materials before each of the weekly 12 lab sessions. All labs are made available through the GEOG 1106 Blackboard lab page, at least one week in advance. Each lab packet must be printed out before class. Note that no hard copies will be provided in class, so don't forget to print out your lab every week! Students are not allowed to complete any portion of the lab before class. Should any portion of the lab be completed, the instructor will confiscate the copy and the student will be required to print out a new copy in class. You are encouraged to bring your lecture notes, textbook and a scientific calculator to the lab sessions as they could be useful when answering lab questions.

- At the beginning of each session, the instructor will provide a brief (15 min) overview of the lab topics and explain the dynamics of the activities to develop with the expectations.

- Students will then work during the next 105 mins to fully complete the laboratory activity and submit individual answers through Blackboard by the end of each session. 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. All answers need to be hand-written and scanned to PDF format. PDF documents with the lab responses need to be uploaded through blackboard within the corresponding GEOG1106 assignment slot. Please do use complete sentences and make sure instructors can read your answers!

- If lab responses are written in an illegible manner, they will be marked as incorrect (if the instructor cannot read it, she or he cannot grade it). Additionally, you will not be allowed to read your answer or rewrite it for credit. It would, therefore, be beneficial to you, if you are careful to write your answers clearly.

- Any lab not received by the end of the lab period will be marked as a 0 unless you have an excused absence. NO LATE LABS WILL BE ACCEPTED

- **LABORATORY ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY!** and students are required to attend every lab for the full allotted time. The student must be present in the lab classroom (i.e. Blackboard virtual session) for the entire portion of the day's lab lecture and until she or he completes the lab in order 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, she or he 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 turned in 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.

Course Policies

- **Academic integrity**: You are encouraged to discuss and collaborate during lab exercises; however, you must formulate your own answers and the work you turn in must be your own, i.e. you may not simply copy someone else's answers and turn them in as your own! Cheating will absolutely not be tolerated. Students are expected to adhere to the University Student Academic Integrity Policy. University procedures and policies will be followed if cheating, plagiarism, or tampering is suspected.

- **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.

- Should you decide to drop this course for whatever reason, you must submit the relevant forms to the Office of the Registrar by the appropriate date. Failing to do so will result in an F grade for the course. If at the time you withdraw from the course you are scoring a failing grade, you will receive an F grade. If not, you will receive a W for withdrawn.
- Anything that appears to be cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Apparent misconduct will be dealt with by immediate referral of the circumstances through the regular university channels.
- The instructor has the right to institute new policies during the semester to ensure safety and positive learning environment for all students.

Technology Requirements

- Course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to 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 to have access to a computer/laptop, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader. 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!

Part 2: Tentative Schedule (subject to slight changes)

Lab #	Date	Laboratory Topic
0	Jan. 22nd	Introduction to the course
1	Jan. 29th	Orientation, scale and maps
2	Feb. 5th	Location and seasons
3	Feb. 12th	Global temperatures and precipitation
4	Feb. 19th	Atmospheric circulation
5	Feb. 26th	Moisture & atmospheric stability
6	Mar. 5th	Air masses and weather

Lab #	Date	Laboratory Topic
7	Mar 12th	Water budget
8	Mar. 19th	No Lab. - Spring Break
9	Mar. 26th	No Lab
10	Apr. 2nd	Earth interior and the rock cycle
11	Apr. 9th	Plate tectonics
12	Apr. 16th	No Lab
13	Apr. 23rd	River systems
14	Apr. 30th	Glacial Processes
15	May 7th	Soils

Part 3: Grading Policy

Following a short lecture, the assigned labs must be completed and turned in before the END of lab that day. Twelve labs will be assigned over the course of the semester. The grade value of each lab is 25/3 or 8.3333%. A perfect score for the twelve labs will add up 100%.

Final grade table

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

Part 4: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

We must treat every individual with respect. We are diverse in many ways, and this diversity is fundamental to building and maintaining an equitable and inclusive campus community.

Diversity can refer to multiple ways that we identify ourselves, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, language, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, ancestry, belief, veteran status, or genetic information. Each of these diverse identities, along with many others not mentioned here, shape the perspectives our students, faculty, and staff bring to our campus. We, at UTEP, will work to promote diversity, equity and inclusion not only because diversity fuels excellence and innovation, but because we want to pursue justice. We acknowledge our imperfections while we also fully commit to the work, inside and outside of our classrooms, of building and sustaining a campus community that increasingly embraces these core values.

Each of us is responsible for creating a safer, more inclusive environment. Unfortunately, incidents of bias or discrimination do occur, whether intentional or unintentional. They contribute to creating an unwelcoming environment for individuals and groups at the university. Therefore, the university encourages anyone who experiences or observes unfair or hostile treatment on the basis of identity to speak out for justice and support, within the moment of the incident or after the incident has passed. Anyone can share these experiences using the resources listed in UTEP's diversity and inclusion initiative https://www.utep.edu/provost/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/index.html