Course Description

Why study physical geography? For many, there is a natural curiosity about how Earth processes work and how different landscapes formed. This is what physical geographers do: investigate natural patterns and processes.

Geography lab is to support the concepts covered in the lecture portion, Geography 1301 and will give you hands-on activities to reinforce the concepts in physical geography and how it affects your everyday life. This course will deal with maps and data systems involving processes and spatial patterns in the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere. Our focus will be quantitative and analytical, producing and interpreting graphs and statistical relationships.

Catalog Description. Introduction to Physical Geography Laboratory (1-0) An introduction to features and processes of the atmosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and lithosphere, with emphasis on spatial (distribution) patterns, and interactions between the four Earth realms and human activities.

Course Objectives

- To understand the compilation of maps and to be able to demonstrate competence in extracting and interpreting geographic information from the types of maps most commonly used in physical geography, with special emphasis on topographic maps and weather maps.
- To understand and be able to compute and explain concepts of frequency and recurrence of events in physical geography.
- To explain how scientific methods, models, and theories are used to describe and explain environmental processes and patterns.
To provide successful experiences in identifying and acquiring data from maps and other sources, designing and executing analyze, and writing up findings.

Practice independent thinking. Students will critically evaluate the information they receive regarding environmental issues so they can make informed and independent decisions.

Enhance academic skills including the use of electronic resources.

Course Expectations

This course is a 100% on-line course. On-line learning is different than sitting in a classroom. On-line learning may require a more intensive effort on the part of the student because you will have to gather information on your own as directed by the instructor instead of listening to a lecture. On-line learning does give you the freedom to study when and how you want.

All work is laid out in Learning Modules and should be accessed via the Learning Module link. The Module page includes not only links to each individual module and graded work but also to the module introduction as well as additional instructions related to that particular module. Labs are to be submitted via each Module. You correspond with the instructor and with other students via the Inbox. Your e-mail message will only go to those people you designate. In contrast, postings using the Discussion link are posted so that everyone in the class can read the posting and respond. The Discussion tool will be used for some assignments. Feel free to initiate discussions if you have questions or see something of interest to the class as a whole. I may edit and organize discussion postings as needed. If you have questions, there are several means in which to get an answer: send the instructor a message, post a question in the CyberCafe portion of the Discussions, or, if you are having technical difficulties, contact the Help Desk.

For those who need additional time to complete their labs, please note that they are available several weeks before the due date. Each lab will take approximately 2 hours to complete, so plan your time accordingly. If you miss the due date you will have until the night before the next due date to turn it in. There will, however, be a late penalty applied. The availability for each lab are posted, take note of when they are due and when they will become unavailable.

We will be taking advantage of internet resources and software in this course, so expect to download and install needed software and to use programs such as Google Earth, Excel your computer imaging processing program (such as Paint or Preview) and take digital photographs. If you aren't comfortable with your computer please expect the activities to take extra time while you are learning. Don't hesitate to contact the Help Desk for technical assistance. They are trained in answering those types of questions. The computer labs in the library and UGLC have the latest software and browser plugins.

Assessment

Grades will be based on the following criteria and will be assigned using the scale:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = < 60%
Procedures

- Class work will be posted and should be accessed under the Learning Modules tab. Each Learning Module will include: an introduction to the topic and labs. Due dates are given on the schedule. **DO NOT MISS DUE DATES. It is important to keep up.**
- You should access each Learning Module as soon as you can and note what needs to be done and plan your work accordingly. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to ask.
- You may submit work at any time before the due date and the earlier the better. It is not wise to wait until the last minute because ‘technical difficulties’ are not a valid excuse for missing a deadline.
- If your work is submitted before 5 pm of the due date, I will make every effort to review your work and let you know if you need to revise it before it is officially graded. I may post a 0 for your grade and leave a comment as to what you are missing or have answered incorrectly.
- I will typically visit the electronic classroom daily and will try to acknowledge all e-mails within 2-4 hours during the workweek until 5pm. I am usually working online and I will get back to you right away. Questions and messages posted after 5 pm or over the weekend may not be acknowledged until the following day.
- Extra credit, if/when offered, is offered to the entire class, not to individuals and only if turned in by the due date.
- For technical difficulties please contact either the Help Desk.
- Do **NOT** submit work anywhere but the Lab dropbox. If the dropbox is not accepting your upload, email me and let me know to reset the folder. I may also ask you to contact the Help Desk for further assistance.
- **NO** work will be accepted after the last day of class. The last day of class is the last day of instruction, not the last day of finals. **NO** work is accepted during finals.
- I make every attempt to present this class free of errors, but they do happen. If you see an error (due date, quiz question, etc.) please email me and let me know so I can fix it ASAP.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Lab Description</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Module 1 Introduction to Class</td>
<td>Lab 1: Introduction to Blackboard, Unit Conversions</td>
<td>Lab 1 due: Aug. 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Module 2 Reading and Interpreting Data</td>
<td>Lab 2: Temperature Change Lab 3: Isarithmic Maps: Analysis and Profiles</td>
<td>Lab 2 due: Sept. 1 Lab 3 due: Sept. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Module 4 Weather</td>
<td>Lab 7: Clouds Lab 8: Reading Weather Maps</td>
<td>Lab 7 due: Oct. 6 Lab 8 due: Oct. 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Module 5 Water in Our Environment</td>
<td>Lab 9: Water Balance Lab 10: Streams</td>
<td>Lab 9 due: Oct. 20 Lab 10 due: Oct. 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Module 6 Climate Factors</td>
<td>Lab 11: Biomes Lab 12: Climate</td>
<td>Lab 11 due: Nov. 3 Lab 12 due: Nov. 10</td>
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Assessment and Grading Criteria

12 labs will be offered during the course of the term. You need to provide 11 completed labs for your grade. Each lab is worth 20 points. Your letter grade for the course will be based on your aggregate score from your 11 labs (maximum of 11 x 20 = 220 points)

- **A** = 90-100% (198-220 points)
- **B** = 80-89% (176-197 points)
- **C** = 70-79% (154-175 points)
- **D** = 60-69% (132-153 points)
- **F** = < 60% (<132 points)

Each Lab will have an accompanying activity. These activities are intended to provide examples of the concepts covered in the lecture and how scientists work.

- The labs will be linked to from within each Learning Module.
- The assignments are to be submitted via the same link.
- You will be provided with an Answer Sheet. Download it to your computer, fill in the answers, do a "Save As..." and upload it for grading. I especially appreciate it if your answers are in a different color than the text. It helps me when grading.
- The labs are to be submitted via the Lab link for each Learning Module.
- A comment box is available in the Lab dropbox where you may post any comments you want me to read concerning your work. If you have questions about the lab, ask via the Bb messaging so I can read them before grading. I, too, will use the comment box to post any comments I may have on your work as I was grading it. Please return to read the comments, especially if you do not receive a grade for a lab within a few days of the due date.
- If you upload your work early (by 5 pm of the due date) I will look it over and notify you if you have any errors/mistakes. I will post a 0 for your grade and leave you a comment. You will have until the due date/time to revise and resubmit your work.
- I prefer your work to be answered using your own words, not copied verbatim from the text, the internet, or a fellow student. Copying answers, especially if not referenced, is plagiarism.
- Labs will be graded on a 20 point scale. The grade will be based both on content and on completeness of the response.

Your labs will be graded as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>The lab 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>The lab is essentially complete. The learner shows understanding of the topic although there are minor errors they are not conceptual in nature.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>The lab is missing one or two answers or there are complete or there are errors in the work that reflect a misconception or lack of understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>The lab is lacking more than one answer. Work is poorly done or displayed and does not demonstrate understanding of topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 12</td>
<td>Does not effectively address the lab, major portions are missing.</td>
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**UTEP Policies for Students**

**Informed Consent:** Some individuals may choose to disclose personal information during class. Therefore, it is important that all classmates agree not to discuss or write about what others have discussed in class.

**Disability Statement:** Services for students with disabilities are provided through the Academic Support Center’s Disability Services Office. 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.

**Military Statement:** If you are a military student with the potential of being called into military service and/or training during the course of the semester you are encouraged to contact the instructor regarding these matters.

**Professionalism:** Students are learning professional skills and are expected to engage in classroom discussions, complete reading assignments and turn in assignments in a timely fashion as befitting professional behavior.

**Scholarly Writing:** Use clear college level writing with correct spelling and grammar for all assignments.

**Integrated Use of Technology:** Because this is an online course, I am making the assumption that you are comfortable utilizing a computer, and navigating various software programs like Microsoft Word, Powerpoint. If you have any questions about computer requirements see the Student Resources in Blackboard.

**Need Help?**

1. Post a question to the Discussion Board. There is no such thing as a dumb question.
2. Post a question as a Blackboard email to your instructor.
3. Click on the Help button in Blackboard.
4. If the Blackboard system goes down or you have other technical questions, contact the UTEP Help Desk

**Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures:** Each student shall observe standards of honesty and integrity in academic work completed at UTEP. Students may be penalized for violations of the Academic Integrity policy. Please refer to the Academic Integrity section in the current UTEP Catalog. (Clearly specify what you consider to be violations of academic honesty.)

**Caveats:** The schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.
Code of Civility: In order to promote a positive, professional atmosphere among students, faculty and staff, the following Code of Civility has been developed:

- **Respect:** Treat all students, faculty, staff and property with respect and in a courteous and professional manner. This includes all communications, whether verbal or written. Let your actions reflect pride in yourself, your university, and your profession.
- **Kindness:** A kind word and gentle voice go a long way. Refrain from using profanity, insulting slang remarks, or making disparaging comments. Consider another person's feelings. Be nice.
- **Truth:** Exhibit honesty and integrity in your dealings with fellow students, faculty and staff members. Don't lie, don't cheat, and don't steal.
- **Responsibility:** Take responsibility for your actions. This includes gracefully accepting the consequences of your behavior.
- **Cooperation:** Exhibit a cooperative manner when dealing with students, faculty and staff so we may all work towards our common goals and mission.
- **Acceptance:** Accept differences in others, as they accept differences in you. This includes diversity in opinions, beliefs and ideas and everything else that makes us unique individuals.
- **Professionalism:** Always conduct yourself in a manner that will bring pride to your profession, to the University of Texas at El Paso, and, most importantly, to yourself.

2014 Vicki Harder