



Physical Geography

GEO 131.I50

Fall 2019

Number of Credits: 3

Days Class Meets: Online

Instructor: Jen Kettle

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Course Description

The course begins with maps and grid systems. Map exercises are used all semester to enhance the textbook. Other topics include meteorology, vegetation, earth materials and a range of tectonic and landscape subjects.

Prerequisite(s)

ENG 085 and ENG 090

Course Goals

Students will develop a scientific skill-set to understand the four strands of scientific investigation, content, process, communication, and the nature of science. Students will use the critical thinking to evaluate scientific information, data, and current issues in physical geography. The foundation for physical geography will be constructed using the four strands of scientific investigation. The fundamental concepts in physical geography, like mapping, landform analysis, biogeography, and evolution are presented in context with current issues. The students will compare and contrast the content and process through communications with their peers and the instructor ultimately understanding the nature of science. The four strands will improve the student's scientific literacy which will support the enduring understanding of the building blocks of physical geography and biogeography. This course is designed for people interested in introductory science and geographical issues using their computational skills.

Upon completing this course students will retain a skill-set derived from critical thinking and physical geography methodology as it relates to spatiotemporal context. This skill-set can be used in classes following physical geography, and in problem solving needs through-out their lives. Although this course is an introductory class, introductory does not translate into easy. This course does not require background knowledge in physical geography. It will require effort to build the scientific foundation and the philosophical underpinnings of critical thinking and scientific thought. Students will have to spend time studying the material to succeed and there is a simple rule or algorithm for determining weekly studying habits.

Course Objectives

- Understand how the nature of science is a result of the content, process, and communication; and, how this process is self-correcting.
- Identify the big ideas in scientific discourse as they relate to physical geography.
- Integrate information of natural geological processes that govern the natural world.
- Understand the integrated nature of geological, physical, chemical, and biological systems.
- Understand the connection between landform, climate patterns, and the distribution of living organisms.
- Understand how the mechanisms of evolutionary change, geographic change, and climate change have on natural populations.
- Understand factors affecting global climate change and human impact on the environment as it relates to geography and living systems.

The course goals and objectives incorporate specific General Education Outcomes (GEOs) established by the JC Board of Trustees, administration, and faculty. These goals are in concert with four-year colleges and universities and reflect input from the professional communities we serve. GEOs guarantee students achieve goals necessary for graduation credit, transferability, and professional skills needed in many certification programs. The GEOs and course objectives addressed in this class include the following:

GEO 4: Scientific Reasoning. Students will be able to design and carry out valid experiments to assess a given hypothesis, and to draw appropriate conclusions based on the results.

Textbook

Physical Geography: The Global Environment, 5E; 2013. H. J. de Blij, Peter O. Muller, James E. Burt, and Joseph A. Mason (electronic copy acceptable)

Grading Procedure

Your grade will be based on the number of points you accumulate throughout the semester. There are ~500 possible points in this course. The breakdown of points is as follows:

Exams (400 Points): There are four exams in this course. Each exam is worth 100 points. **Except for final, all exams will open on Wednesday at 8am and will close the following Tuesday at 5pm. They are timed and are limited to one attempt. **All exams must be taken at an approved testing center. If you are not utilizing the Jackson College testing lab on main campus, it is your responsibility to find an approved testing lab and notify the instructor of your preferred location at least one week prior to the exam opening dates.**** The website for the Jackson College (main campus) testing lab is <https://www.jccmi.edu/testing-lab/>

Quizzes (60 Points): Each week there will be a quiz over the lecture material. Quizzes will be posted on JetNet and will consist of 10 multiple-choice questions.

Assignments and Forum Posts (~40 Points): Science is an interactive process. Throughout the semester there will be assignments and/or forum discussions posted on Jet Net. You will submit your responses to questions via JetNet by either responding to the forum posts or uploading a PDF file, which must include your name, by the due date assigned.

Extra Credit is not given in this course!

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
90 - 100%	4.0	75 – 79 %	2.5	60 – 64 %	1.0
85 – 89 %	3.5	70 – 74 %	2.0	55 – 59 %	0.5
80 – 84 %	3.0	65 – 69 %	1.5		

Incompletes - Consistent with JC policy, incompletes are granted with instructor permission only in situations where a student is **passing** the course with 90% of the curriculum covered and encounters an unusual emergency that prevents them from completing coursework.

Academic Honesty Policy

Academic Honesty is defined as ethical behavior that includes student production of their own work and not representing others' work as their own, by cheating or by helping others to do so.

Plagiarism is defined as the failure to give credit for the use of material from outside sources. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Submitting other's work as your own
- Using data, illustrations, pictures, quotations, or paraphrases from other sources without adequate documentation
- Reusing significant, identical or nearly identical portions of one's own prior work without acknowledging that one is doing so or without citing this original work (self-plagiarism)

Cheating is defined as obtaining answers/material from an outside source without authorization. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarizing in any form
- Using notes/books/electronic material without authorization
- Copying
- Submitting others' work as your own or submitting your work for others
- Altering graded work
- Falsifying data
- Exhibiting other behaviors generally considered unethical
- Allowing your work to be submitted by others

Consequences/Procedures

A faculty member who suspects a student of academic dishonesty may penalize the student by taking appropriate action up to and including assigning a failing grade for the paper, project,

report, exam or the course itself. Instructors should document instances of academic dishonesty in writing to the Dean of Faculty.

Student Appeal Process

In the event of a dispute, both students and faculty should follow the Conflict Resolution Policy. The policy is presented in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the student handbook. **The first step of this process is to set up a scheduled conference with the instructor to discuss the issues of concern.**

Calendar

Week of	Topic	Units
Sep 3	Introduction to Physical Geography / Mapping Earth's Surface / Quiz 1	1,2,3
Sep 9	Earth – Sun Relationships / Composition of the Atmosphere / Quiz 2 EXAM 1 opens Wednesday Sept 11 @ 8am; due Tuesday Sept 17 @5pm	4-7
Sep 16	Surface Weather Maps / Air Pressure, Winds, and Circulation / Quiz 3	8,9
Sep 23	Oceans, Moisture, and Water Balance / Precipitation, Air Masses, and Fronts / Weather Systems / Quiz 4 EXAM 2 opens Wednesday Sept 25 @ 8am; due Tuesday Oct 1 @5pm	10-13
Sep 30	Climate Classifications / Tropical, Arid, and Mesothermal Climates / Microthermal, Polar, and Highland Climates / Quiz 5 EXAM 3 opens Wednesday Oct 2 @8am; due Tuesday Oct 8 @5pm	14-17
Oct 7	Natural Climate Change / Biogeography / Zoogeography / Quiz 6	18,19, 24-26
Oct 14	Final Exam opens Friday Oct 11 @8am; due Saturday Oct 19 @5pm	

*****Instructor reserves the right to alter this syllabus, including exam dates.**

Important Dates: Fall 2019

DATE	EVENT
SEPT. 3, 2019	DAY AND EVENING CLASSES BEGIN – FIRST SEVEN WEEKS
SEPT. 17, 2019	IN-SERVICE DAY – NO CLASSES
OCT. 4, 2019	PATHWAY SHOWCASES DAY – NO CLASSES
OCT. 22, 2019	GRADES DUE

Student Responsibilities

Contribute to a courteous learning environment – Our class interactions are valuable because science is a social exercise. Please be polite, especially on discussion topics, to avoid confusion be positive in all communications. **Disrespectful behavior will be dealt with summarily** focusing on clarity and understanding.

Study - This is a difficult course that will take significant study time. You will need to use the text and other given resources, such as review notes, and do study questions to prep for exams.

Attendance Policy

I expect that you will do your best to attend every class. *Absence does not excuse you from work missed. Missing assignments or study time makes it very hard to do well. The school has a vested interested in making sure you are attending class. We, as instructors, must report your participation on two separate occasions during the semester. You will be reported as a “V” for Verified (meaning you are attending, participating and in addition passing), as an H for Help (meaning you are attending and participating, but not passing), or as “Q” for Quit (meaning you are no longer attending and/or participating in class). There are several reasons you may be listed as a Q, which I will address in a moment, but it is important to note that once you have been dropped from a class by an instructor you cannot be put back into the class without the instructor’s signature.

Possible Reasons for Being Assigned a Q;

- Failure to actively participate in the class during the first week **or** failing to complete the syllabus quiz by the due date
- Failure to complete two (2) exams
- Failure to complete two (2) consecutive assignments, forum posts, or quizzes

These conditions will result in an automatic Q during the next HQV reporting period and your dismissal from the course. **If you fail to participate after the final HQV reporting period (1 week after midterm) you will not be automatically dropped from the course but will receive a grade of 0.0 (E) for failing to participate in the course.**

Learning Contract – By completing the Syllabus Quiz on JetNet, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the content of this syllabus. This quiz is due by **Friday September 6th @ 5pm.**