Geography 4075 - 01: Physical Geography

Fall 2017

Instructor: Dr. Ross Guida
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Office: LDB 336
Office Hours: M, T, Th 11-12; By Appt.

Lecture: T, Th 2-3:20 pm
LDB 321

"Labs:" While there are no formal labs, the last half of Thursday classes will be used mainly to get a start on homework exercises.

Objectives:
By the end of class, you should be able to:

- Describe basic climatological, geomorphological, geologic, geographic, and biogeography concepts
- Explain how physical and environmental processes shape the planet
- Apply computational and analytical skills to problems based on lecture concepts
- Calculate real-world distances and construct a topographic profile by interpreting a topo sheet
- Explain basic concepts to others on the following topics:
    - Climatic influences on the landscape; the importance of weathering; the rock cycle; plate tectonics, faults, and earthquakes; volcanoes; hydrology and fluvial systems; glaciers; coastal processes; eolian processes; biogeography; and climate change

Required Textbook:
De Blij, H.J., P.O Muller, J.E. Burt, and J.A. Mason. 2013. *Physical Geography, Fourth Edition*. Oxford University Press: New York, NY. ISBN: 9780199859610.

Other readings and assignments will be provided either in class or via Blackboard.

Course Website: Lecture notes, lab exercises, and supplemental readings will be made available via SHSU Online/Blackboard.

SHSU Email: Your SHSU email account is the official form of university communication. I will use it as a primary means of communication with you. Please make sure that you maintain a valid password and regularly check your SHSU email account for important announcements.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in this course is mandatory. Only documented absences will be excused in accordance with university policy. Students are allowed 4 unexcused absences. Additional undocumented absences will adversely impact your grade. Please see: http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/absence.html

If you do miss class, you must take the initiative to get lecture and/or discussion notes from classmates and/or go over the materials posted online. I am happy to meet during office hours to discuss questions from lectures, but my office hours are not meant for holding individual/one-on-one lectures unless there was a legitimate reason to miss class.

Should unusual circumstances arise during the semester (medical problem, death in the

family, etc.) please contact me ASAP and provide official documentation so I can work with you to accommodate the situation. Please do not wait until the end of the semester or until your grade has dropped as these are not sufficient reasons and may result in me not being able to make accommodations.

In addition to the above, please be on time to limit disruptions for your classmates.

Grading:

Scale: A=90-100%, **B**=80-90%, **C**=70-80%, **D**=60-70%, **F**<60%

Breakdown:

Quizzes (6)	15%
HW assignments (8 total)	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final exam (Comprehensive)	25%
	100%

Quizzes: Quizzes are short (< 20 mins) and will cover ~2 weeks worth of material, as well as related readings. The majority of questions will be multiple choice and true/false with some short answers and calculations. Make sure you bring a basic scientific calculator to class on quiz days.

Exams: There will be three exams: two midterm exams and a cumulative final. Content will include readings, lectures, homework assignment concepts, and previous quiz questions. Questions will be multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer. The final will be comprehensive meaning it will include questions from the first 10 weeks, as well as material we covered after. There will be an in-class review for the final. *Make-up exams will ONLY be given with proper documentation in the event of an illness or family emergency. Please see the link under the "attendance policy" section.*

** Make sure you bring a basic scientific calculator to class as well as pencils for the exams. Smartphones, tablets, etc. will not be allowed during exams. Sharing of devices will not be allowed under any circumstances. Please come prepared.**

Homework/lab exercises: Physical geography is a course that usually has extended lab periods. This course does not have a traditional lab component. As such, to make sure you understand the concepts and how to apply them beyond quizzes and exams, I will be giving you 8 homework exercises on Thursdays. It is my hope that a good portion of the material will be completed in class. However, some effort outside of class will be required. You will have at least one week to complete these basic exercises. *LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT VALID REASONS THAT MEET UNIVERSITY POLICIES.*

Each Thursday, please make sure you bring: The printed exercise and any related materials/readings provided for the week; a pencil; an eraser; a scientific calculator; the textbook; and scratch paper. For homework, you may use your phone calculators, but remember, you may not use your phones when we have quizzes.

You are responsible for reading the assignment, notes, and reviewing lectures related to the week's topic ahead of time. This will allow for efficient use of class time.

Answers should be written clearly and concisely, and all work must be shown. Points will be given for the correct answer, as well as following the correct methods where applicable. I encourage you to talk through issues with classmates, but be careful. Copying classmates' assignments (including text and/or calculations and answers) will result in a grade reduction up to being given a 0 depending on the severity. This goes for **all** parties involved. Assignments will be due at the start of class one week after they were assigned unless otherwise noted on the schedule.

SHSU Student Conduct Code: Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will be taken seriously. These issues may result in failing the assignment, quiz, or exam in question and/or the course. For more, please see the SHSU Student Conduct Code: http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/policies/documents/Student+Guidelines+2013-2016.pdf

Students with Disabilities: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf

Religious Holy Days: If a student desires to be excused from class, assignment, or a test to participate in activities associated with a religious holy day, then the student must notify the instructor ahead of time of each scheduled class that he/she will miss for religious reasons. In such cases, the student will be required to take the test or submit the assignment early—unless there are good reasons for not being able to do so and the instructor has agreed to those reasons.

Visitors in the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to the classroom must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. This policy is not intended to discourage occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons.

Course Schedule (*outline is subject to change*):

Week	Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
1	8/24	Course logistics and physical geography intro	Units 1,2; p.577
		Planet Earth and mapping its surface	Unit 3
2	8/29	Mapping the surface; Earth-sun and Atmosphere	Unit 4-7
	8/31	Air and ocean circulation *Lab/HW exercise 1: Maps and Topo Profile*	Units 8-10; 12-13
3	9/5	***Quiz 1***; Planet earth's interior; minerals, igneous rocks	
	9/7	Metamorphic and sedimentary rocks; *Lab/HW exercise 2: Rocks*	Units 27-28 HW 1 due
4	9/12	Plates, plate movements;	Unit 29
	9/14	***Quiz 2***; Earthquakes and landforms; faults	Units 30-31 HW 2 due
5	9/19	Volcanism and landforms	Unit 32
	9/21	**EXAM 1**	Unit 33
6	9/26	Soil formation and properties	Units 22-23
	9/28	Soil orders, nutrient cycles, and soil degradation; *Lab/HW exercise 3: Soils*	Units 22-23
7	10/3	***Quiz 3***; Hydrologic cycle; water balance;	Unit 11
	10/5	Groundwater; runoff; *Lab/HW exercise 4: Groundwater*	Unit 38 *HW 3 due*
8	10/10	Hydrology	Unit 39
	10/12	Fluvial systems I; *Lab/HW exercise 5: Flooding*	Unit 40 *HW 4 due*
9	10/17	***Quiz 4***; Fluvial systems II	Unit 40
	10/19	Stream erosion; fluvial landforms and landscapes; *Lab/HW exercise 6: Fluvial landforms and Sediment Transport*	Unit 41 *HW 5 due*
10	10/24	Weathering and Mass Wasting	Units 35-37
	10/26	**EXAM 2**	*HW 6 due*
11	10/31	Glacial processes	Unit 43

	11/2	Continental glaciers *Lab/HW exercise 7: Glacial landforms*	Unit 44
12	11/7	***Quiz 5*;** Mountain glaciers and Periglacial systems	Units 45-46
	11/9	Climate change: The science; *Lab/HW exercise 8: Climate change*	Units 18-19 *HW 7 due*
13	11/14	Karst processes and landforms	Unit 42
	11/16	***Quiz 6;*** Wind/Eolian processes and landforms	Unit 47 *HW 8 due*
14	11/21	Coastal processes and landforms	Units 48-49
	11/23	*Thanksgiving – no class*	
15	11/28	Biogeography and climate classification overview;	Units 24-26
	11/30	Physiographic regions**; *FINAL EXAM REVIEW***	Bring ?'s!
16		**Final Exam: Tues., Dec. 5th 15:30-17:30**	