GEO 1200/L  Physical Geography

INSTRUCTOR: Chasidy Hobbs  PHONE: 850.474.2735  EMAIL: chobbs@uwf.edu

OFFICE HOURS: If you are on campus and would like to meet with me in my office please let me know. I am generally on campus 5 days a week and have a relatively flexible schedule (especially in the mornings). I am happy to set up appointments at your convenience. If this is not an option for you, or if you would simply prefer, I am available for office hours over the telephone. The times I am available for telephone conference is also flexible. Basically, all you need to do is email me some times you have available to meet, in person or on the phone, and we will work it out. Please feel free to contact me anytime throughout the semester!

DESCRIPTION: The objective of the course is to introduce the natural environment as an integrated system by discussing the relationships between the atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere and biosphere.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: At the end of the course, students may expect to have an:

1. Ability to recognize and evaluate physical systems and the interconnected components and processes at various temporal and spatial scales;
2. Understanding and ability to utilize the techniques and tools required for the interpretation and analysis of the physical environment;
3. Understanding of how the physical environment is the basis for, and is affected by, human activity.

REQUIRED TEXT: Christopherson, Geosystems, 8th Ed. ISBN: 0-321-70622-6

QUIZZES AND TESTS: You have the opportunity to take every quiz three times. Only your highest grade for quizzes counts and each quiz will be different, so it is HIGHLY recommend that you take every quiz three times as this will significantly help you with preparing for the tests. All quizzes are open the first day of class; you will have until 7pm on the date listed on the course schedule to complete each quiz. You will not be able to access the quizzes once they close, not even to study for the tests, so take detailed notes after every quiz. The tests are in the same format as the quizzes, although you are allowed only 1 attempt. Test 1 covers material from quizzes 1-4 and test 2 covers material from quizzes 5-9. YOU HAVE ONLY ONE ATTEMPT FOR THE TESTS!

I do not re-open quizzes or tests once they close. Should you miss a quiz or test 1 you have one (1) opportunity this semester to summarize the material which is covered on the missed quiz/test and submit it by email within one week of the missed quiz/test. I grade these make-ups for effort: more effort = more credit. This option is not available, however, for test 2. There is no opportunity for make-up of TEST 2!

EVALUATION: Labs 25%, Quizzes 20%, Test 1 12.5%, Test 2 12.5%, Class assignments 15%, Discussions 15%. The formula for grade calculation is:

\[((\text{Labs} \times .25) + (\text{Quizzes} \times .20) + (\text{Test 1} \times .125) + (\text{Test 2} \times .125) + (\text{Class Assignments} \times .15) + (\text{Discussions} \times .15)) \times 100\]

Physical Geography is designated as a General Studies course. The General Studies curriculum at the University of West Florida is designed to provide a cohesive program of study that promotes the development of a broadly educated person and provides the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in university studies. This course has been approved as meeting the requirement in the Natural Science area. The General Studies learning outcomes being assessed for this course are Analysis/Evaluation and Info Literacy.
LABS: All labs can be found in e-learning in each Module within the “content” tab. There is not a separate e-learning shell for the labs. Some labs will require you to scan pages and combine these pages into 1 file. Access to the software needed to combine several pages into 1 .pdf file is available through your Argus account under the “software” tab; you simply log in to the e-desktop. If you require assistance to access the e-desktop the ITS helpdesk folks are amazing! I call them at least once per week: 850.474.2075. You must have access to a scanner in order to complete this online class and lab (they cannot be taken separately). There are scanners available in the computer lab on campus and at most public libraries. All labs will be submitted into the provided dropbox in e-learning as 1 individual file (no credit will be given for submissions of multiple individually scanned pages). You may however upload 1 word file with typed responses and 1 pdf file with scanned pages if you like.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments need to be submitted in Microsoft Word format in the dropbox in e-learning. Both Case Study assignments will be graded according to the grading rubric provided in the “Physical Geography Requirements” section in content. Neither Field Excursion assignments will be graded according to grading rubric, rather for effort, creativity and word count.

#1 Case Study 1: NATIONAL PARKS DUE: January 20th
Length: at least 500 words

Choose a National Park from [http://www.nps.gov/](http://www.nps.gov/). Under ‘Parks and Recreation’ you can search for parks. Please explore the variety of parks that are available. You may NOT research Grand Canyon National Park or Yellowstone. Use at least 4 valid sources to research your park. Be sure to properly cite your sources and remember the Academic Integrity lesson. Check the grading rubric for how you will be assessed.

#2: Field Excursion 1: SENSES & SPHERES DUE: February 17th
Length: at least 500 words

Descriptions for Parts I and II may be in the form of organized lists, narrative paragraph, poem, etc, but you must be sure to specifically answer the questions asked. The grading rubric is not used for this assignment. Rather you will be assessed for effort, creativity and word count.

PART I: Spend about an hour outside. Describe where you are. Notice how each of your senses are involved in experiencing the four spheres of Earth’s systems. Describe everything that you experience during this time. What do you hear? see? smell? touch? taste? from each of the four spheres? Please choose a location in which you will be exposed to the natural system, i.e. sitting in a car in an empty parking lot is not a good option.

PART II: Notice specifics.

Landscape – what does the landscape look like? Is it flat? tilted? rolling? Does the landscape seem to be fairly natural or human constructed? What might have formed the bedrock beneath? Are there any identifiable land features that you can describe, e.g. river, lake, hill, valley, etc?
Rock – find a rock. Using as much detail as possible describe your rock. What is the color? texture? shape? size? where did you find it? Where do you think this rock came from? Do you think it was formed at this location, or transported from elsewhere? Why?

Soil – pick up a handful of soil. Using as much detail as possible describe your soil. What is the color? texture? What types of things are mixed in with your soil? How deep is the soil here?

Sky – describe the current sky conditions. Is it raining? Do you see clouds? Describe their shape, color and texture. In which direction do they seem to be moving? Can you see the sun? Where is the sun in the sky? What time is it now? What time was sunrise this morning? What phase of the moon are we in? What time will moonrise be?

Air – take a deep breath. Are there any specific smells or tastes on the air? What is the temperature (your best guess)? Do you think the air is humid or dry?

Vegetation – choose one specific plant at this location. What does it look like? Do you know what kind of plant it is? Are the edges of the leaves jagged or smooth? Describe the stem/trunk. How long do you think plants of this type have been growing in this location? 200 years? 1 million years? Why? In what location of the landscape is this plant located (near water, top of hill, north side of house, etc)? Animals – are there any animals in your landscape? Insects? How are they interacting with the other elements of the landscape?

#3 Case Study 2: SEVERE WEATHER DUE: March 30th
Length: at least 500 words

PART I Tell me about an experience that you have had with severe weather (100 words).

PART II Describe the physical geographic terms and processes behind such an event. Use your book, lecture notes, and at least 4 valid outside sources to help you explain the experience. Any severe weather story with a personal tie is acceptable, as long as you also explain the geographic situation using terms and concepts learned this semester. (400 words)

#4 Field Excursion 2 – OPTIONAL LOCATION DUE: April 20th
Length: at least 750 words
This is similar to Class Assignment #2 and will be assessed in the same way. You must choose a different location that Assignment #2. Location suggestions (not required):

Gulf Islands National Seashore
A great excuse to head to the beach. Try to find someone in class who wants to carpool. You may want to do a short study of websites that describe some of the processes important to the Gulf of Mexico and the shoreline of northwest Florida, so that you will know what you are looking at when you get there.

Holiday Travel / Other Nature Center
If you have travel plans for the holidays or spring break, a road trip weekend, or perhaps have a Nature Center or Preserve in your hometown, these are also allowable locations for you excursion. You may want to do a short study of websites that describe some of the landscape
processes important to your destination so that you will know what you are looking at when you arrive.

Spend at least 1 hour at your chosen location. The resulting paper should be in the form of a free-form journal describing your experiences. Although the journal should be typed for grading, I recommend that you actually journal while you are on location and make notes of all the information that you want to discuss.

Your discussion should cover (though is not limited to):

- Date, time, location
- Observable characteristics of the environment
  - This section can be similar to those types of things discussed in Case Study 1. Focus on the aspects of atmospheric processes, soil, geology, vegetation, landforms, etc that you can actually observe.
  - Are there specific shapes/ kinds/ types of wind, water, landscapes, vegetation that seem characteristic of this environment? Describe.
  - Are there several types of environments to compare and contrast?
  - Specifically list the species that you recognize in the environment. Describe at least 1 species that you do not recognize, draw pictures (will need to scan and paste into your word document or write detailed descriptions) and describe where you observed it.
- Compare and contrast
  - Compare and contrast the various microenvironments at this location. Are there observable differences in the characteristics you described above from one location to another?
  - Describe similarities and differences between this location and the location you examined during Field Excursion #1.
- ***** Unanswerable questions *****
  - What questions arise in your mind during this observation? They can be silly or immense. What puzzles you? What piques your curiosity?

CLASS DISCUSSIONS: There are two types of discussions in this class: informal (not graded) and formal (graded). There will be opportunities throughout the semester to participate in many informal discussions. There is a general class discussion forum which you post questions related to class structure. There is a lab forum for lab questions (be sure to put lab # and question # in subject line). Finally, there is a News/Quote of the week forum for dialogue about things I will post on the home page news section throughout the semester. This forum is also an opportunity for students to earn extra credit by providing excellent supplemental information related to class material. Remember, these are all informal discussion boards and are not graded; rather they are there for your benefit and to help create our online classroom.

There will also be formal class discussions. There is a forum for each module which the formal discussions will occur. I will assign “discussion leaders” for each module (starting with Module 3). The group leaders will submit an original post highlighting some of the lessons of the module, providing some supplemental information related to the subject, emphasizing main ideas, etc. It will also be the “discussion leaders” job to keep the discussion going by replying to other posts and answering questions when possible. You will be assessed in 2 ways. First, on how well you “lead” a discussion, answer questions, keep the discussion board active, etc. Secondly on how well you participate in each forum as a non-leader. I have created two grading rubrics so that you know exactly how these discussions will be assessed which can be found in the “Physical Geography Requirements” section in content. I suggest reviewing these rubrics often.

ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
The Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) at the University of West Florida supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos and podcasts, please notify the instructor or the SDRC as soon as possible. You may contact the SDRC office by e-mail at sdrc@uwf.edu or by phone at (850) 474-2387. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the individual.

**ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY AND VETERANS:**

The University of West Florida (UWF) is excited to have a center dedicated to supporting our military and veteran students. With the growing number of veterans returning to school, UWF will continue to grow support through additions such as this Military & Veteran Resource Center. The goal of this center is to provide a “one-stop” location for all military and veteran students to simplify the transition process from the military to an academic environment. You may contact the MVRC at 850.474.2550 or visit uwf.edu/mvrc.

**TurnItIn**

UWF maintains a university license agreement for an online text matching service called TurnItIn. At my discretion, I will use the TurnItIn service to determine the originality of student papers. If I submit your paper to TurnItIn, it will be stored in a TurnItIn database for as long as the service remains in existence. If you object to this storage of your paper:

1. You must let me know no later than two weeks after the start of this class.
2. I will utilize other services and techniques to evaluate your work for evidence of appropriate authorship practices.

**WEATHER EMERGENCY INFORMATION:**

In the case of severe weather or other emergency, the campus might be closed and classes cancelled. Official closures and delays are announced on the UWF website and broadcast on WUWF-FM.

- WUWF-FM (88.1MHz) is the official information source for the university. Any pertinent information regarding closings, cancellations, and the re-opening of campus will be broadcast.
- In the event that hurricane preparation procedures are initiated, the UWF Home Web Page and Argus will both provide current information regarding hurricane preparation procedures, the status of classes and the closing of the university.

Emergency plans for the University of West Florida related to weather or other emergencies are available on the following UWF web pages:

- Information about hurricane preparedness plans is available on the UWF web site: [http://uwfemergency.org/hurricaneprep.cfm](http://uwfemergency.org/hurricaneprep.cfm)
- Information about other emergency procedures is available on the UWF web site: [http://uwfemergency.org/](http://uwfemergency.org/)

**Special Technology Utilized by Students:** low-to-medium

**Expectations for Academic Conduct/Plagiarism Policy** will be followed as stated by:
## COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>Quiz and Assignment DUE DATE</th>
<th>Labs and Class Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Class Orientation</td>
<td>e-learning</td>
<td>1/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Geosystems</td>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
<td>1/20</td>
<td>Lab #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Class Assign. #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Geologic History and Framework</td>
<td>Ch. 11, 12</td>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>Lab #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Energy Balance</td>
<td>Ch. 2, 3, 4,5</td>
<td>2/17</td>
<td>Lab #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Class Assign. #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>Weather Systems</td>
<td>Ch. 6, 7, 8</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>Lab #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td><strong>MIDTERM:</strong> Test open 3/2 – 3/9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 7</td>
<td>Hydrologic System And Global Climates</td>
<td>Ch. 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>Lab #5 &amp; Class assign. #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 8</td>
<td>Weathering and Mass Movements</td>
<td>Ch. 13</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Lab #6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 9</td>
<td>Soils</td>
<td>Ch. 18</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Lab #7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 10</td>
<td>Fluvial Processes and Landforms</td>
<td>Ch. 14</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Class assign. #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 11</td>
<td>Biogeographic Systems</td>
<td>Ch. 19, 20</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Lab #8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 12</td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAM</strong> Test open 4/27 – 5/2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>