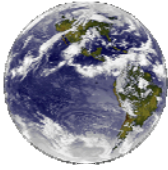


GEOGRAPHY 101: INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY
Spring 2006
M, W, F 10-10:50 / Sierra Hall 106



Instructor: Dr. Shawna Dark

Email/Phone: shawna.dark@csun.edu / (818) 677 - 3530

Office Location: 130J Sierra Hall **Office Hours:** W 3:30-4:30

Summary: What is physical geography? Physical geography is the study of the earth and the processes of the earth. In this class we will explore the fundamentals of the Earth's atmosphere, energy balance, oceanic circulation, hydrology, weather, internal structure, and ecology in an introductory synthesis emphasizing a systems approach to geoscience. We live on a large planet, but it is becoming smaller everyday as the human population grows and the exchange of information is almost instantaneous from one side of the planet to the other. Every culture is influenced by its physical environment. As such, it is critical for us to have an understanding of the physical environment in which ourselves and others live. My goal is to leave all of you with a better understanding and appreciation of the unlikely planet Earth.

Required Texts: *Geosystems, An Introduction to Physical Geography* by R.W. Christopherson, ©2003, Prentice-Hall, 660 pp.

Course Webpage: <http://www.csun.edu/~sd1229/> . Please check the course webpage on a regular basis. Study guides will be posted along with important announcements!

Course Objectives:

The three basic objectives of the course are:

1. To explore the spatial dimensions of the Earth's dynamic systems
2. To evaluate the human-Earth relations from a holistic perspective
3. To analyze the worldwide impact of environmental events by synthesizing physical factors into a complete picture Earth system operations

Learning Outcomes:

In this course, you will learn the following:

1. To define geography and physical geography
2. To describe the Earth's four spheres and the systems that create the physical environment
3. To analyze the general scientific basis of the physical environment in which you live
4. To appreciate the physical environment in which you and others live

Evaluation:

The achievement of these learning outcomes will be measured through three midterm exams, critical reviews of earth's systems (various written assignments), and three map quizzes. The midterm exams will not be cumulative. The final exam may have some cumulative material. I will give you a detailed study guide for each exam. The grade breakdown is as follows:

Midterm Exams (3)	60%
Critical Assessments	25%
Map Quizzes	<u>15%</u>
	100%

The following scale will be used for the exams as well as for your final grade:

A	90 - 100%	B	80 - 89%	C	68 - 79%
D	55 - 67%	F	54% and below		

Critical Assessments:

You will be given three written assignments during this course. These assignments are worth 25% of your grade, you should take them seriously! You will be given two essay questions about material presented in class. You will answer either one of the questions. The purpose of the review is to get you thinking about how the physical systems in your environment work and may influence the way you live. It is likely you will see the same questions you write about somewhere on your midterm exams.

Map Quizzes:

You will be given three map quizzes during the semester. Prior to each map quiz, you will be given a map of the physical features you will need to know. You will probably already know a lot of these features. However, some may be new to you. This is an opportunity to get some points, so don't take it lightly!

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be reduced by one point for each day they are late up to a week. After one week I will no longer accept your assignment and you will get a zero for your grade on the assignment.

Academic Conduct:

Please note, under no circumstances should you consider any form of cheating or plagiarizing in this course. **I ABSOLUTELY WILL NOT TOLERATE IT**, don't be fooled by congenial approach. If you are caught you will be given a failing grade for the course and you will be reported to the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences and also to the Dean of Academic Affairs for disciplinary measures.

Other:

Please do not turn in assignments via email. These often get lost or do not make to my Inbox. If you must turn in an assignment via email you will need to coordinate this with me. It is your responsibility to make sure you get a graded assignment back.

Tentative Exam Dates:

These dates are unlikely to change, but you never know what can happen during the course of the semester. Please ask if you are uncertain about exam dates at any point.

- Exam #1, March 1 (Wednesday)
- Exam #2, April 5 (Wednesday)
- Exam #3, May 22nd, 10:15-12:15(Monday)

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Keep in mind this schedule is tentative. It is your responsibility to come to class and check the course web page for any potential changes in this schedule.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	1/30	Introduction to Course Essentials of Geography	Chpt. 1
2	2/6	The Energy-Atmosphere System	Chpt. 2
3	2/13	Earth's Modern Atmosphere	Chpt. 3
4	2/20	Atmosphere and Surface Energy Balances	Chpt. 4
		Assn #1 Due 2/24	
5	2/27	Review	Chpts 1-4
		Exam #1\Map Quiz #1	
6	3/6	Global Temperatures	Chpts 5-6
		Atmospheric and Oceanic Temperature	
7	3/13	Water and Atmospheric Moisture	Chpt 7
8	3/20	Weather and Water	Chpts 8-9
9	3/27	Global Climate Systems	Chpt 10
		Assn #2 Due 3/29 3/31 CESAR CHAVEZ DAY!!!	
10	4/3	Review	Chpts 5-10
		Exam #2\Map Quiz #2	
11	4/10	SPRING BREAK	-
12	4/17	The Dynamic Planet	Chpt 11
13	4/24	Tectonics, Earthquakes, Volcanism	Chpt 12
14	5/1	Soils and Ecosystems	Chpt 18,19
15	5/8	Terrestrial Biomes	Chpt 20
16	5/15	Humans and the Environment	Chpt 21
		Review/Map Quiz #3	
Final Exam: Monday, May 22nd, 10:15-12:15 (Chpts. 11-21)			

Goal A: Building a Knowledge Base

- Students in this course will identify and define key terms and concepts central to understanding the operation of earth's physical systems and the construction -maintenance of the earth's physical landscapes.
- Students will be able to define and explain key terms such as: Coriolis Effect, albedo, Continentality, adiabatic lapse rate, Hadley cells, cold front, savanna, leaching, salinization, oxbows, aquifer, etc.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions

- Students will be able to identify on a map important local and worldwide physical and biological features, such as mountains, rivers, rainforests, deserts, etc.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments

- Students will be able to recognize, list and describe key ideas, facts and spatial conditions in the following categories: earth-sun relationships, weather, climate, species distribution, soils, rocks, plate tectonics, geomorphology.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions

Goal B: Acquiring Knowledge

- Students will develop skills for acquiring new knowledge.
- Students will recall information presented to them textually, cartographically and through numeric or graphic communication.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions.

- Students will demonstrate their ability to interpret non-textual information visible on the physical landscape.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions

Goal C: Problem Solving Skills

- Students will demonstrate their problem solving skills.
- Students will analyze non-textual messages in the landscape and from maps, graphics, etc.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions, Short Written Assignments

- Students will apply universalizing processes, such as Orographic precipitation or plate tectonics, to local conditions.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions

- Students will compare the similarities and differences between and among various physical locations and the physical processes that produce them.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions

- Students will explain physical processes by using spatially informed logic.
- Students will explain selected interactions between physical processes such as weather and climate, soils, plant geography.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessments, Exam Questions.

Goal D: Communicating Knowledge

- Students in this course will be able to communicate ideas by using words, numbers, maps and other graphic devices.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessment – map exercise

- Students will construct one or more legible maps.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessment – map exercise

- Students will effectively communicate facts, ideas and statistics using maps and graphic devices.

Assessment/Evaluation tool: Critical assessment – map exercise