Physical Geography

GEO 1200
Section 001
Spring 2019

Richard E. Tyre - Instructor
Department of Political Science
University of Central Florida
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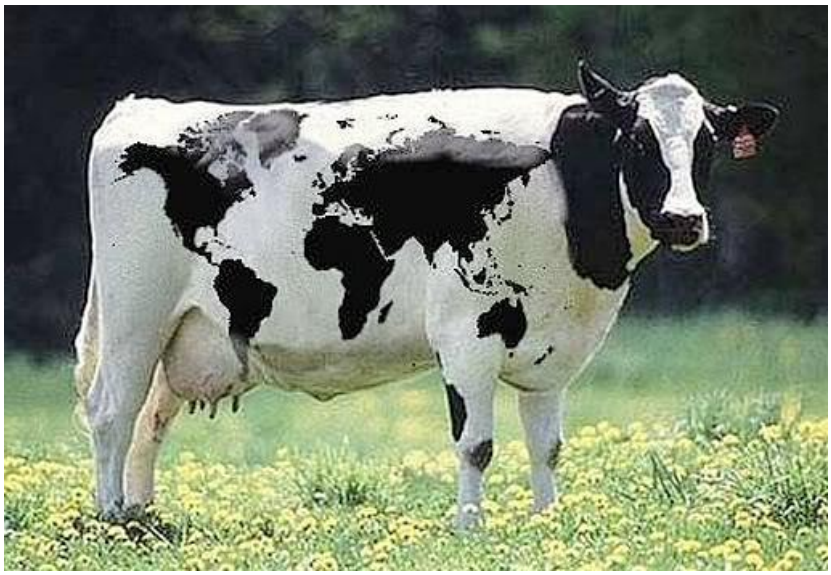

Course Focus

Physical geography is the study of the earth's dynamic systems: its air, water, weather climate, landforms, rocks, soils, plants, ecosystems and biomes and how humans interact with the earth's systems. Physical geography is the study of the world around you. It will help you to understand why afternoon rain showers and hurricanes frequent central Florida and what causes seasons. Everyone, every day, interacts with the earth's dynamic systems. I challenge you to join me on an exploration of the complex, and exciting world in which you live!

This is an introductory level college course in Physical Geography. It requires no prior experience with the subject.

Course Objectives

1. Use maps and graphs to analyze and interpret data and draw valid conclusions
2. Explain the causes of seasons and seasonal effects throughout the earth
3. Discuss the formation of major landforms, both domestic and international.
4. Discuss the composition, temperature profile, and function of the atmosphere.
5. Discuss the hydrologic cycle, and the distribution and allocation of water resources for humans.
6. Analyze patterns and consequences of human-environment interaction.
7. Analyze the geopolitical impact of the environment and environmental issues.
8. Appreciate the scientific method for its contributions to scientific inquiry.
9. Understand the complexity of the process that create the world in which we live.

Required Texts

Introducing Physical Geography, 5th or 6th Edition by Strahler

For students that do not need a hard copy of the text, an open source version of this text is available online and a link to the text is provided on Webcourses.

Supplementary Course Materials
Supplementary course materials will include readings from articles, newspapers or websites will be provided on Webcourses.

Final Grading Scale

A	> 93	B+	87 – 89.99	C+	77 – 79.99	D+	66 – 69.99
A-	90 – 92	B	83 – 86	C	72 - 76	D	62 – 65
		B-	80 – 82	C-	70 - 71	D-	60 – 61
						F	< 59.99

Grading Criteria**
Mid-Term Exam: 33%
Final Exam: 33% Wednesday April 24 at 1:00 PM
Pop Quizzes, Labs, and Assignments: 24%
National Parks Project: 10%

***Additional information regarding the exact dates of exams and assignments will post within the first few weeks of the semester.*

Attendance Policy:
I do not hold a formal attendance policy. Attendance, however, will help each student understand the materials from the course and analyze the readings for their value to the course. This is a freshman level course. We will simulate real-life work and examples in Physical Geography. Treat this course as a career. Throughout the semester, I will randomly take attendance and for each time you are not present, I will deduct 5% from your final grade. If you have a valid class excuse, I will exempt you from the deduction on a case-by-case basis.

Americans with Disabilities Act
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:
(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
(2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

General Education Program

This course fits into the University of Central Florida's General Education Program in the Science Foundations grouping. In this course, students will gain a deep understanding of scientific methods and learn to connect and apply them to challenges facing society. This part of the General Education Program is designed to help students learn to develop, assess, and apply models of systematic inquiry and to discover the relevance of such approaches to their lives in and beyond college. This course will help students learn to critically read and evaluate information, compile data, and analyze findings through application and experimentation.

Additionally, throughout this course, students will also find elements from the University of Central Florida's General Education Program's Interpretation and Evaluation grouping, in which students will learn to assess and decipher information in a world full of conflicting sources and to employ social science models to produce knowledge.

*All elements of this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor during the course with due notice. An effort will be made to avoid any changes but circumstances may necessitate potential alterations, particularly those related to course format, scheduling and content.