PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

GEO 1200
Fall 2023

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School of Politics, Security & International Affairs
University of Central Florida
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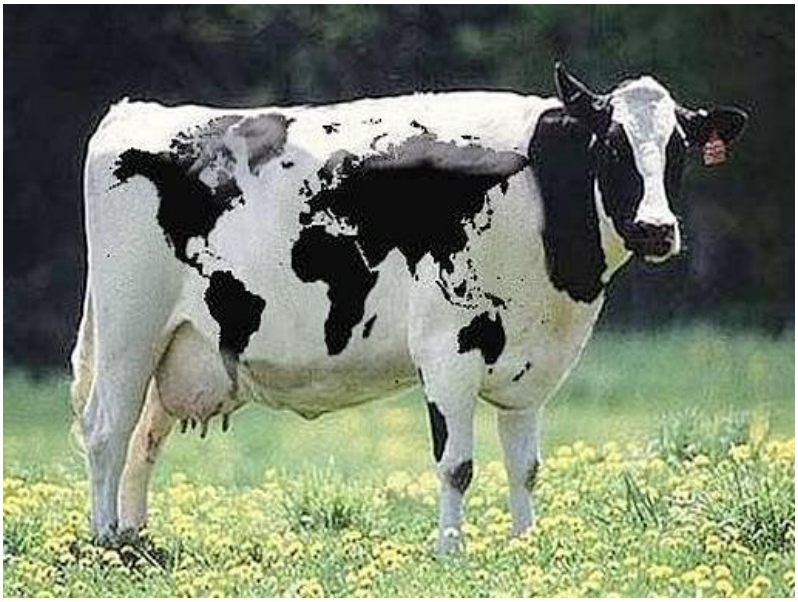

Course Focus

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.

Required Texts

Introducing Physical Geography, 5th or 6th Edition by Strahler
Please visit the first class prior to purchasing the textbook.

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: 25%
Final Exam: 25%
Quizzes: 25%
Assignments: 25%

***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.

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.

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.

Course Schedule

Week of:
August 21: Introduction to the Course & Chapter 1
August 28: Chapters 2 & 3
September 4: No Class Monday, September 4 & Chapter 4
September 11: Chapters 5 & 6
September 18: Chapter 7 & Review
September 25: Online Mid-Term Exam Week
October 2: Chapters 8 & 9
October 9: Chapter 10
October 16: Chapter 11
October 23: Chapter 12 & 13
October 30: Chapters 14 & 15
November 6: Chapter 16
November 13: Chapter 17
November 20: Thanksgiving Break, No Class
November 27: Review for Final Exam
December 4: Online Final Exam

*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.