

GEO 160 Introduction to Physical Geography



Billow clouds showing a Kelvin-Helmholtz instability at the top of a stable atmospheric layer. Some billows can become large enough that more dense air overlies less dense air. Then the billows collapse into turbulence.
Photography copyright Brooks Martner,
NOAA Environmental Technology Laboratory.

DETAILS

Spring 20XX
Mondays & Wednesdays 15:30 - 16:45
Room D 204

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The best way to contact me is to email me.
Title your email GEO 1XX

DESCRIPTION

Translated from Greek, geography means writing about the Earth, or simply earth writing. In less poetic terms, geography is an academic field that includes the study of the spatial patterns of both human and physical phenomena. By foregrounding physical geography, this course provides a general introduction to the field of geography. Physical geographers study patterns of climates, landforms, vegetation, soils, and water. The topics included in this course nest in many other disciplines, including geology, meteorology, climatology, biology, and oceanography. The primary concern of this course is the exploration of ways which phenomena associated with these disciplines

interact with one another. The secondary concern of this course is to gain insight into how, where, and when Earth's physical systems intersect with human systems. The tertiary concern of this course is to explore how physical systems influence human systems and conversely how human systems influence physical systems.

Field trips are an important component of this course. During field trips students will gain firsthand insight into human environment interaction.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Have a working knowledge of geography as an academic discipline.
2. Have gained a deeper understanding of Earth and its physical systems.
3. Be able to think spatially about natural systems such as weather, erosion, river flows, ocean currents, earthquakes, and volcanic activity.
4. Have developed a skill-set enabling them to understand the often violent intersections between natural systems and patterns of human land use and habitation.
5. Be able to think spatially about human environment interactions including resiliency planning, natural disaster mitigation, pollution, and climate change.
6. Be comfortable using geographical terminology in written communication.

READING

Required

Exploring Physical Geography - (2018 Second Edition); Stephen Reynolds et. al.
(Available as an eTextbook (purchase or rent) on amazon.com)

ASSESSMENT

Quizzes	30
Reading Responses	26
Midterm Exam	20
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>24</u>

Total Points Possible 100

Reading Responses

Each week I will assign a question or discussion topic relevant to the assigned reading. Response questions assess your ability to synthesize material presented in class and in the textbook with history, current events and possible human futures; in other words, they allow me to see you think. Responses should not exceed 250 words. There are a total of thirteen (13) questions throughout the semester. Reading responses will be assessed as very good (2 points), adequate (1.25 points), and insufficient (.5 points). Reading responses must be posted on AIMS by 12:00 each Monday, unless otherwise noted.

Quizzes

There will be a total of fifteen (15) quizzes, each worth two (2) points. The quizzes cover lecture and reading material. They will comprise multiple-choice, short answer and true/false questions.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments. It will cover *terms, concepts and theories* as well as *regional specifics* presented during the first part

of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions.

Final Exam

The final will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments during the entire semester. It will cover *terms, concepts and theories* covered during the entire semester and *regional specifics* presented during the second part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions.

ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Format Requirements

All written assignments must include the following in the upper left corner of the first page: Student's name, student ID number, assignment name, and due date. All assignments must be formatted in the following manner: double spaced, font size of 11 or 12 point, standard margins, and an indented first line for each paragraph.

Submission Requirements

Unless otherwise instructed, students are expected to submit written assignments on the AIMS platform. I will only accept PDF (.pdf) documents. I expect assignments to be submitted on time. Assignments due in class must be turned in at the beginning of class. I reserve the right to deduct points for late submissions and I reserve the right to determine the percentage to be deducted.

Makeup Work

Aside from exceptional situations, there will be no chance to make up missed exams or quizzes or turn assignments in past their due day/time. Proof of an exceptional situation must be submitted to me in writing and signed by the appropriate authority within 24 hours of the beginning of the missed exam. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submission of the same work, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in the academic dishonesty other others. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

In accord with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty will result in the failure of the course at a minimum. An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.

Attendance

This course is not an online or distance course—being in class matters! Learning is an ongoing process; one that builds upon previously acquired insights and skills. Consistent and engaged attendance is vital for success in this and all college courses. I will sanction attendance by tracking assignments and random roll calls. I reserve the right to deal with or exceptional or extended absences, on a case-by-case basis.

Special Needs

If you require accommodations, please alert me of your needs on the first day of class so that I can work within Akita International University policies to adequately provide them.

Civility & Classroom Decorum

Silence all cell phones, beepers, etc. during class. Speaking on cell phones, texting, or using electronic equipment in any way that is not directly related to class (i.e. taking notes, using a translation program during lectures, etc.) is strictly prohibited.

Student Participation

Learning is a participatory process; therefore student contribution to class is important. This course is based in large measure on critical thinking and class discussion. Disagreement is part of these processes. Colleagues can disagree *and* maintain respect for each other and one another's views. I insist that we strive to learn from the differences that manifest while debating the merit of theoretical and empirical evidence by maintaining an atmosphere of civility during discussion. I will sanction participation by tracking of individual student contribution to the in-class learning environment.

SCHEDULE

Week 1	What is Physical Geography
April xx	NO CLASS
April xx	Lecture - The Nature of Physical Geography
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 2	Atmosphere
April xx	Lecture - Energy & Matter in the Atmosphere
April xx	Lecture - Weather Systems & Severe Weather
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 3	Atmosphere, Hydrosphere, Cryosphere
April xx	Lecture - Atmosphere- Ocean - Cryosphere Interactions
April xx	Lecture - Atmosphere- Ocean - Cryosphere Interactions
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 4	Golden Week
April xx	NO CLASS
May xx	NO CLASS
Week 5	Atmosphere, Hydrosphere, Cryosphere
May xx	Lecture - Climates Around the World
May xx	Lecture - Climates Around the World
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 6	Hydrosphere
May xx	Lecture - Water Resources
May xx	Lecture - Water Resources
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 7	Lithosphere
May xx	Lecture - Understanding Landscapes
May xx	Lecture - Understanding Landscapes
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)

Week 8	Lithosphere
May xx	Lecture - Plate Tectonics & Regional Features
May xx	Lecture - Volcanoes, Deformation & Earthquakes
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 9	Lithosphere
June xx	MIDTERM EXAM
June xx	Lecture - Resiliency Planning & Disaster Mitigation
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 10	Lithosphere
June xx	Lecture - Weathering & Mass Wasting
June xx	Lecture - Weathering & Mass Wasting
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 11	Hydrosphere
June xx	Lecture - Streams & Flooding
June xx	Field Trip - Omonogawa Levee Project
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 12	Cryosphere
June xx	Lecture - Glaciers & Glacial Landforms
June xx	Lecture - Glaciers & Glacial Landforms
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 13	Lithosphere, Hydrosphere & Atmosphere
July xx	Lecture - Coasts & Changing Sea Levels
July xx	Field Trip - Futago Beach Cleanup
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 14	Lithosphere
July xx	Lecture - Soils
July xx	Lecture - Soils
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 15	Biosphere
July xx	Lecture - Biomes
July xx	Lecture - Biomes
Reading	<i>Exploring Physical Geography</i> (pages TBD)
Week 16	
July xx	FINAL EXAM (Room D204 15:30-16:45)