

GEOG 170A – INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY
NATS 101
Summer 2012 - Session I

Course Instructor:

Lily House-Peters

Email: lilyhp@email.arizona.edu

Virtual Office Hours:

Tues, Thurs: 9-10:30am

Sundays: 6-7pm

(and by appointment)

COURSE DATES

June 4 – July 5, 2012

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Physical Geography! ***This course is completely web-based.*** The course provides an **introductory overview of physical geography** and is designed for students new to the subject. Physical geography is the study of natural environmental systems and emphasizes how these systems produce local and global patterns of weather and climate, vegetation, soils, and landforms. This semester we will explore the spatial connections between Earth's dynamic systems – including the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere. A key component of this course is to examine these physical systems of the Earth in relation to human life and contemporary environmental issues. As a student in this class, you will learn how geographers study the physical environment and interconnected linkages between physical and human systems. By gaining a deeper understanding of the physical processes that influence our planet, students will recognize how and why physical and human phenomena vary from place to place.

The main objective of this course is to introduce and illustrate major concepts related to the physical systems and processes on Earth. This course will prepare you for more advanced courses in physical geography and earth science, as well as social science courses dealing with environmental issues. The topics covered in the course are important for students interested in the physical (and earth) sciences, and those interested in exploring interactions between human-environment systems.

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook is REQUIRED!

Christopherson, Robert W. (2010). *Elemental Geosystems*, 6th edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

LECTURE NOTES

All lecture notes and supplemental readings will be provided in both HTML and PPT formats, unless otherwise specified. Lecture notes correspond to the book chapters and labs listed on the first slide of each lecture.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To succeed in this web-delivered course:

- Students need **regular access to an internet connection** (either on campus, at home, or at work) and a **computer** with a word processor, a pdf reader, and a web browser.
- Students must have **basic computer literacy**, including familiarity with Microsoft Word and Powerpoint and pdf readers.
- Students must be able to access the **D2L course management system** at UA.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. You will be able to analyze the fundamental natural processes of the world and the interactions of humans and their environment.
2. You will be able to explain spatial patterns in earth's physical environment and relationships between the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere.
3. You will be able to identify and distinguish among the intricate linkages between physical systems and human activities.
4. You will be able to use appropriate geographic skills and techniques to solve real-world problems.

COURSE APPROACH

This course is delivered fully online. You will be **expected to complete the same amount of work as you would in a regular semester in a three unit course meeting three hours a week.** Due to the compressed format of the Summer Session I, **we will cover approximately three weeks of material each week** in this summer course. This means that you should be prepared to dedicate approximately nine hours of "in class" time to review the readings and associated lecture powerpoints and additional "out of class" time to complete the course assignments.

To maximize your performance in this course, you should plan on performing the same tasks you would in a normal semester. It is your responsibility to read the assigned readings, review the lecture powerpoints, and complete course assignments and exams. The beauty of taking the course online is that you can do all of this on your own schedule just as long as you complete the required course activities (A&P discussion boards, labs, writing assignment, and exams) by their respective due dates. Please note that the instructor will make every effort to post the necessary course materials a minimum of a week in advance of the week in which they are assigned.

COURSE WEBSITE

This online course will be delivered on the following website: <http://d2l.arizona.edu>

All course materials will be provided on the website above (except for the required textbook), which you should keep by your side as you proceed through the course materials. Please visit the website every day, as it will serve as our primary means of communication for this online course. Thus, regular internet access is required for students enrolled in the course. All students at the University of Arizona have computer and internet access at the libraries and several computer labs across campus.

SPECIAL ONLINE INSTRUCTIONS

The instructor will hold virtual “office hours” on Tuesdays and Thursdays (9-10:30am) and Sundays (6-7pm) AZ time (*and by scheduled appointment*). During this time period, you can chat with the instructor on Catmail Chat. This internet chat service is free and included with your UA email account.

Please maintain regular contact with the instructor. If you have questions, send an email to lilyhp@email.arizona.edu. If a particular core concept is unclear, “visit” the instructor during office hours or request an “appointment” via email. The instructor will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours.

GRADING POLICY

The final grade is based on the total cumulative points you earn over the semester. Each course component is an opportunity to earn points toward your final grade. There are a total of 1,000 points available, divided as shown below:

<i>Course Component</i>	<i>Points</i>
Discussion	100
Final Exercise: The Hydrosphere	90
Lab Activities	360
Exam I	150
Exam II	150
Exam III	150

As all due dates and exam dates are provided in advance, final grades will be assigned using the following grading scale:

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Course Points Earned</i>
A	900 – 1,000
B	800 – 899
C	700– 799
D	600 – 699
E	< 600

DISCUSSIONS:

Although this course is delivered online, we will participate in discussions twice per week. **You will be required to make thoughtful written contributions to the D2L Discussion Board twice per week.** This will count for the participation component of the course.

With the exception of the first and last discussion posts, you will be expected to make at least two weekly postings to each discussion board. *Your initial posting should address the question or scenario posed to you on the discussion board, and should be no less than 400 words in*

length. Your second posting will be a response/reaction to one of your peer's postings comprised of no less than **100 words**.

For discussion boards requiring two postings, your postings are due by 11:59pm on their respective due dates. Remember to meet the minimum word requirements for each posting! **No late discussion board postings will be accepted.**

The discussion component of the course is worth 100 total points (or 10%) toward your final grade.

<i>Course Component</i>	<i>Due Date for Initial Posting</i>	<i>Due Date for Response</i>	<i>Point Value</i>
Discussion #1	07 June 2012	<i>n/a</i>	12.5
Discussion #2	11 June 2012	15 June 2012	25
Discussion #3	18 June 2012	22 June 2012	25
Discussion #4	25 June 2012	29 July 2012	25
Discussion #5	02 July 2012	<i>n/a</i>	12.5

LABS:

Over the course of the semester, you will complete **10 labs**. These ten labs will build on the concepts presented in the assigned readings and lecture powerpoints. *All labs are due on Sundays by 11:59pm. No late labs will be accepted. Your one lowest lab exercise score will be dropped when calculating your lab grade in the course.*

Labs are worth 360 total points (or 36%) of your final grade in the course.

<i>Course Component</i>	<i>Point Value</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Lab#1	40	10 June 2012
Lab#2	40	10 June 2012
Lab#3	40	17 June 2012
Lab#4	40	17 June 2012
Lab#5	40	17 June 2012
Lab#6	40	24 June 2012
Lab#7	40	24 June 2012
Lab#8	40	24 June 2012
Lab#9	40	01 July 2012
Lab#10	40	01 July 2012

EXAMS:

You will take **3 exams** during the duration of the course. Each exam will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short essay questions. Exams will cover only the topics specified on the attached course schedule. All material from the readings, lecture powerpoints, and labs is considered ‘fair game’ for the exams. Exams will be administered on D2L and will open three days before their official deadline. Once you begin the exam, you will have a 75-minute time limit for completing the exam.

Each exam is worth 150 points (or 15%) toward your final grade in the course.

<i>Course Component</i>	<i>Exam Opens on D2L</i>	<i>Deadline for Exam Completion</i>	<i>Point Value</i>
Exam I	12 June 2012	15 June 2012	150
Exam II	23 June 2012	26 June 2012	150
Exam II	02 July 2012	05 July 2012	150

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Assigned Reading</i>	<i>Lecture</i>
1. Foundations of Geography & Earth Systems	Chapter 1 (p. 1-27)	1
2. Solar Energy, Seasons, & the Atmosphere	Chapter 2 (p. 39-68)	2
3. Atmospheric Energy & Global Temperatures	Chapter 3 (p. 75-100)	3
4. Atmospheric & Ocean Circulation	Chapter 4 (p. 111-139)	4
5. Atmospheric Water & Weather	Chapter 5 (p. 144-188)	5
6. Earth’s Climate System & Its Classification	Chapter 7 (p. 221-251) <i>and Appendix B</i>	6
7. Global Climate Change	Chapter 7 (p. 251-259)	7
8. Earth as a Dynamic Planet	Chapter 8 (p. 264-292)	8
9. Maps, Projections, & Scale	<i>re-read</i> Chapter 1 (p. 16-27) <i>and Appendix A</i>	9
10. Tectonics, Earthquakes, & Volcanoes	Chapter 9 (p. 297-333)	10
11. Weathering & Mass Movement	Chapter 10 (p. 337-361)	11
12. River Systems, Fluvial Processes & Landforms	Chapter 11 (p. 365-396)	12
13. Wind Processes & Desert Landscapes	Chapter 12 (p. 401-426)	13
14. Oceans & Coastal Dynamics	Chapter 13 (p. 429-454)	14
15. Ecology, Biogeography, & Biodiversity	Chapter 16 (p. 525-572)	15

COURSE POLICIES

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic misconduct is treated very seriously in this class. Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that is deemed as compromising the academic integrity of the institution, or otherwise subverts the educational process. Academic misconduct includes:

- (1) Violation of course rules as outlined by the course syllabus;
- (2) Providing or receiving of information during exams;
- (3) Submitting plagiarized work for an academic requirement; and/or,
- (4) Serving as, or enlisting the assistance of, a ‘ringer’ or substitute for a student in the taking of exams.

The perpetrator of any of action deemed as academic misconduct will be placed in front of the Dean of Student with the possibility of suspension or, even more likely, expulsion. For further information, students should refer to the [University of Arizona’s Code of Academic Integrity](#).

ACCESS TO GRADES:

University of Arizona policy mandates that the *instructor is not permitted to provide students’ grades over the phone or via email.* You will have regular access to your grades on the D2L course website. The instructor will make every effort to *grade all course components within 72 hours* of their submission. *If grading is delayed for any reason, you will be notified on the announcements page* of the course website.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:

Above all else, students should conduct themselves as adults in this online classroom. This includes *being respectful when interacting with one another and the instructor* on discussion boards or via email. It is our shared goal is to maintain a safe learning environment in which ideas are exchanged freely and without undue criticism.

STUDENT HONESTY:

Plagiarism is reprehensible and punishable. According to the University of Arizona, “plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.” In fact, the mere presence of any directly quoted or paraphrased text in your writing that is not properly referenced is considered plagiarism. This includes turning in any lab exercises downloaded from the internet, submitting lab exercises completed by another student in a previous semester, getting someone else to write your lab answers, or writing someone else’s lab for them. All components of this course are to be completed with integrity. To ensure this integrity, *all your written work uploaded to the D2L dropboxes will be submitted automatically to TurnItIn.com, an online plagiarism prevention tool* used by the University of Arizona.

Each student is also expected to refrain from any other form of cheating. Cheating during exams—including taking online exams with another student and/or sharing questions & answers with other students enrolled in this online class—is considered a serious offence and will thus be treated as such.

Any case of possible plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade on that particular course component. In addition, the instructor reserves the right to file an official complaint with the Dean of Students against the student(s) involved. If you need further clarification, you can consult [the University of Arizona’s Code of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.

THREATENING BEHAVIOR

Threatening behavior in the classroom is prohibited. Threatening behavior is defined by the University of Arizona as:

Any statement, communication, conduct or gesture, including those in written form, directed toward any member of the University community that causes a reasonable apprehension of physical harm to a person or property. A student can be guilty of threatening behavior even if the person who is the object of the threat does not observe or receive it, so long as a reasonable person would interpret the maker's statement, communication, conduct or gesture as a serious expression of intent to physically harm.

Any display of such behavior will be handled as stipulated by the [University of Arizona's Policy on Threatening Behavior by Students](#).

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

OBSERVED ABSENCES:

All holidays or special events observed by organized religions will be honored for those students who show affiliation with that particular religion. A list of religious holidays recognized by the University of Arizona is included in the [Calendar of Religious Holidays](#).

In addition to the holidays described above, absences pre-approved by the University of Arizona's Dean of Students (or Dean's designee) will be honored in this course.

In either situation, all evidence for such absences needs to be arranged in advance of (not after) the date that an absence is anticipated.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

In compliance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), students who require special assistance will be suitably accommodated. If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. If you would like to discuss how the course's requirements and activities might impact your ability to fully engage with the material, please arrange for a virtual "appointment" by the end of the first week. The syllabus and other course materials, as they are distributed, are available in alternative formats upon request.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT

Finally, information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading policy, may be subject to change with advanced notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor. Any changes the instructor makes to this syllabus will be posted to the announcements section of the course website.