

Instructor

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Course Overview

The course mainly focuses on studying some of the essential elements of the physical world like climate and landform, which are examined in terms of their natural occurrences, distribution, and interrelationships. The class meets the General Education requirements of a Physical Science.

Objectives of the Course

The textbook and supplemental materials will assist in accomplishing the objectives below:

- Understanding the nature of solar energy reaching the surface of the earth and its temporal and global variability will help explain why there are seasons.
- To learn how the interactions of oceans, continents, and atmosphere transfer energy from places experiencing excess energy to those of deficit energy and how these give rise to the typical climate of a location.
- To understand the nature and origin of energy arriving at the surface of the Earth from within the planet, the mechanisms of this energy transfer, and their global distribution.
- How do the competing energy forces from the climate system and those within the earth interact to produce typical landscapes?
- To indicate how the above influences human behavior and our environmental interaction.

Office Hours

It is an online course, and most of the discussion will be online via email or zoom link. However, I will be available to meet you every Thursday on appointment between 2-4 pm at Turlington hall. I will try my best to answer email questions promptly within the next 24 hours, but if you do not receive a response within 48 hours, please follow up with me because I may not have received the email for various reasons. Moreover, I can arrange

zoom meetings based on your needs. However, without any urgency, try not to email on weekends.

Required Textbook

The *required* textbook for this class is "***Exploring Physical Geography (2nd edition). Stephen Reynolds, Robert V. Rohli, Julia Johnson, Peter Waylen, Mark Andrew Francek. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2014.***" There will also be McGraw-Hill Connect, which will be *optional*. This will provide an electronic version of the book to read and their system for self-testing the material. *Either the physical book or the ebook will work for this course.* The UF bookstore may have multiple textbook versions, like just the Connect key for their SmartBook (online textbook with optional self-testing) or hardcopy textbook. If you buy the textbook from other sources and want to use McGraw-Hill Connect, you will need to buy a connect key when you first register (there is a fee for this).

Evaluation and Grading

Assessments	No of Assignments	Points per Assignment	Total Points	Percentage
Syllabus Quiz	1	20	20	4
Homework	4	40	160	32
Missions	2	30	60	12
Group Assignment	1	60	60	12
Part I Exam	1	100	100	20
Part II Exam	1	100	100	20
Total			500	100

SYLLABUS QUIZ

You must pass a syllabus quiz at the start of the course. This quiz may be taken multiple times until you score 100%, and there is no time limit within the quiz. It is an open syllabus, and you must take this quiz to continue with the rest of the course.

HOMEWORKS

Each homework will consist of videos, tutorials, other materials, and questions to evaluate knowledge. Students have seven days during which the homework will be available. During these seven days, you will have unlimited time to complete it. You are welcome to review your notes, textbook, lecture videos, or outside sources during your breaks before returning to the homework.

MISSIONS

Missions are task-oriented assignments to be completed throughout the semester. Due dates for each mission will be throughout the semester; however, try to submit them early. You may pick topics that will be covered later in class, though reviewing those lectures and/or book sections is recommended before writing up your mission. Each student is expected to accrue 60 points, at 30 points per mission (i.e., two missions total during the semester). Each mission will be comprised of **a) proof of the completed task and b) a 300-word report** detailing what the task was and what physical geography process or phenomena was described utilizing the appropriate terminology and explanations used in class.

For example, if you were to make an emergency preparedness brochure about earthquakes, submitting a copy of your brochure would count as proof of completing the task. You must submit a **300-word report** describing your brochure and including something about earthquakes. This write-up will **demonstrate your scientific knowledge and understanding of the material/topic**.

You may choose from the following missions (repeats are accepted, except where noted below):

- A photograph of a physical geography event or feature related to climate.
- A photograph of a physical geography event or feature related to the Earth's surface.
- A photograph or proof of attending a museum exhibit that relates to physical geography.
- A photograph or proof of constructing a physical model depicting physical geography.
- An emergency preparedness brochure (or some other print media) related to physical geography (e.g., hurricane, earthquake, volcano, etc.).

- A newspaper article related to any part of physical geography covered in the lecture (NOTE: you are only allowed to pick a newspaper article ONCE during the semester).
- A video of 45-60 seconds explaining a physical geography phenomenon.
- Propose your mission (approval from the instructors is *required* before you proceed with your mission).

If your mission involves an **uncommon file type**, please check with the instructors in advance to ensure we can view it.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT

Shortly after dropping/adding, the remaining students will be divided into small groups (3-5 students per group). The group will self-select each of the following roles for the students.

- Group leader – this person's responsibility is to contact all other group members and organize meetings.
- Energizer – this person's responsibility is to keep the group on task.
- Goal setter – this person's responsibility is to set goals for each group meeting.
- Group recorder – this person's responsibility is to collect the slides at the end and organize them into a cohesive order. This person will also be responsible for submitting the final product to the TA.
- Critic – this person's responsibility is to create a slide or two that highlights the weaknesses of the proposed solution created by the group.

A series of short scenarios will be distributed to the various groups. The group will create a PowerPoint presentation detailing the problem presented in the scenario and how the group plans to solve the problem. All group members are expected to contribute to this project in addition to the extra assigned roles (group leader, critic). The Critic will create an additional slide that presents the limiting factors, challenges, and weaknesses of the proposed solution to the problem. The final product will be a single, cohesive set of slides with a logical order and flow and a slide containing citations. A cover slide should include each group member's name and the additional role they played. The final product will be assembled and submitted by the group recorder to the course TA. Students must put their initials at the bottom of each slide they produce or contribute. If two people co-produce a slide, both sets of initials should be placed at the bottom of the slide. Each student will receive an individual grade. Negligent or unresponsive students who contribute little or nothing to the project will receive a lower grade and will not impact the individual grades of those students who participate. This assignment will be due later in the semester to ensure plenty of time for the groups to organize and produce a quality presentation.

EXAMS

Examinations are an open book and will each consist of individual multiple-choice questions.

- Two hours are allocated for each test. You will be “timed out” after this. Having logged in to take the test once, you will not be permitted to re-enter the test site for that particular test.
- The two examinations will separately evaluate your knowledge of the two halves of the course, part I and part II. The **second examination** will, therefore, only evaluate material presented in part II.
- *Be advised that you only have until midnight on the due date for all tests and examinations to complete the questions. Please remember to sign in with adequate time to complete each evaluation.*

PLEASE NOTE:

- If you encounter any unexpected behavior (error messages, inability to log in, etc.,) take a screenshot of the problem [In Windows, (Print Scrn) and on a Mac, (Cmd-Shift-4)] and paste it into a program like Word or Paint. Save this file. This is important so that your instructor knows your problem is legitimate and to assist the UF Computing Help Desk in helping you fix the problem.
- If you encounter problems that prevent you from taking the exam, immediately call the **UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357**. Ask for and keep the ticket number for future reference.

Extra Credit

There will be one extra credit offering – a homework-like assignment near the end of the class. It can have questions from any topic in class (and may even go slightly beyond). The questions will be difficult or cover vital points from the course. The value will be ~5% of the total course grade, but it can fluctuate depending on the class average course grades. Do not bank on the extra credit, e.g., the homework is worth far more.

Grading

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
100%	<94.0	<90.0%	<87.0	<84.0	<80.0	<77.0	<74.0	<70.0	<67.0	<64.0	<61.0
to	% to	to	% to	% to	% to	% to	% to	% to	% to	% to	% to
94.0%	90.0%	87.0%	84.0%	80.0%	77.0%	74.0%	70.0%	67.0%	64.0%	61.0%	0.0%

Note: Under University regulations, a “C-“will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or College Basic Distribution credit.

You are responsible for knowing how well you are doing in the class.

There will be a Grades tab in Canvas for following your progress. Please use it to keep track of your score and contact me if there is a discrepancy. Suppose you are unsatisfied with the score you receive on an exam or quiz or feel an error has been made. In that case, you will be permitted **two weeks** from the time the score was posted for a review of the assessment (exception: Part II exam will have less than a week to review as it is near the end of term). After this time, the score will be entered as a permanent grade.

Please see the UF catalog grading policies for current guidelines, not the discussion here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

Late Policy

Semesters move quickly, and it is very easy to fall behind with video lectures. For assignments (homework/missions), I will accept them three days late with a **20% penalty per day. After that, it will not be accepted, and a grade of "0" will be assigned.** No exams will be accepted late.

If you cannot complete an assignment or an exam because of an excused reason (illness, family emergency, etc.), please contact me as soon as possible. For the assignment to be excused, **the instructor must provide official documentation.** Instructions on how to send me the documents will be handled at the time I am informed of the incident. Note that most of the assessments are open for multiple days. The valid reason must cover all of these days.

If you know of an event in advance that will conflict with an assignment or test date, it is your responsibility to contact me beforehand and let me know. I prefer to know sooner than later. Not all conflicts will be excused (e.g., you want to miss an exam to attend a rock concert). It is the instructor's discretion to determine what is excused and what is not.

Academic Honesty

[Accountability to Academic Honesty \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

You are all bound by the student academic honor code.

We, the University of Florida community members, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

In the Assessments, Canvas will shuffle the order of the questions and the order of the possible answers, generating a nearly unique assessment per student. **Plagiarism (must be below 25%) or cheating of any variety on any assignment will not be tolerated.** Suppose a student is suspected of cheating and sufficient evidence supports the allegation. In that case, the student will be reported to the appropriate student body, according to the University's Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution system.

Special Accommodations

Students requesting disability-related academic accommodations must first register with the **Disability Resource Center**. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/> (Links to an external site.)

- The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation to the student—each student requesting special accommodations must provide this documentation to the Instructor. I do not automatically receive this information, so the student is responsible for providing the DSO request to the Instructor.
- I will honor all requests. Please contact the instructor by e-mail to make an appointment so we can review these accommodations and sign the form.

Student Support Services

As a distance learning course or program student, you can access the same student support services that on-campus students have. For course content questions, contact your instructor(s).

- For any technical issues you encounter with your course, please contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 342-392-4357. For Help Desk hours, visit <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.).
- For a list of additional student support services links and information, please visit: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-services> (Links to an external site.)
- In some particular circumstances (when documentation is not available, for instance), we may ask you to contact the Dean of Students Office: **The Dean of Students Office**: 202 Peabody Hall, PO Box 114075, Phone: (352) 392-1261
- The Dean of Students is a resource available to all students when particular circumstances arise that disrupt students' abilities to maintain their academic standing. We encourage students to use this resource if necessary.
- Useful Links:

[Student Counseling by College](#) (Links to an external site.)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) (Links to an external site.)

Complaints

Should you have any complaints about your experience in this course, please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> (Links to an external site.) to submit a complaint.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on ten criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> (Links to an external site.). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results> (Links to an external site.).