GEOG1301.001: Physical Geography
Geographic Information Science Program
Spring 2017

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: GEOG1301
Class meeting time: Lecture: T/H 8am-9:15am
Class location: Lecture: O’Conner 115
Course Website: http://bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Seneca Holland
Office location: CBI 108
Office hours: W/F 8:30-11:30 or by appointment
Telephone: 361-825-3712
e-mail: Seneca.holland@tamucc.edu
Appointments: Email or call to make an appointment.

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description
The goal of this course is to encourage you to think geographically, examining the interactions between physical systems and human activities. Introduction to topics covered include elements of Physical Geography (studies of atmosphere, ocean and land surface environments), Geographic Information Systems (computer systems that capture, analysis, and display of geographic information), and human environmental interactions. (Students may not receive credit for both GEOG 1301 and GISC 1301).

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites
None
Corequisite
None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES

Required Textbook(s)
None

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a process used by instructors to help improve learning. Assessment is essential for effective learning because it provides feedback to both students and instructors. A critical step in this process is making clear the course’s student learning outcomes that
describe what students are expected to learn to be successful in the course. The student learning outcomes for this course are listed below. By collecting data and sharing it with students on how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes students can more efficiently and effectively focus their learning efforts. This information can also help instructors identify challenging areas for students and adjust their teaching approach to facilitate learning.

1. Be familiar with the concepts of Physical Geography
   a. Students will acquire the vocabulary and methods for conducting spatial analysis
   b. Students will have a working knowledge of earth sun geometry.
   c. Students will learn how the spheres (atmosphere, lithosphere, biosphere) interact.
   d. Students will be able to identify and interpret fluvial, volcanic, soil, glacial, and weathering (chemical, mechanical and biological) features.
2. Recognize and choose appropriate areas of application of Geographic Information Systems to solve spatial problems.
3. Apply software and hardware used to execute geospatial reasoning and analysis to develop and evaluate theories.
4. Learn how the physical environment impacts human activities and vice versa.

In addition to the content knowledge the course also provides you with basic core competencies such as:

1. Critical thinking: The study of patterns and processes within the physical world requires us to think critically about potential drivers of change. In this course we will approach landscape based studies using the scientific method. Students will also be presented with conflicting datasets and conclusions and learn to question methods, sources, and inputs.
2. Problem solving by working collaboratively in teams: Students will work in teams to develop theories on patterns of biogeographic disturbance, to examine positive and negative feedback in atmospheric change and El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO), and to geocache (GPS enabled searching).
3. Communication skills: students will be introduced to scientific communication skills through technical writing and presentation exercises. Students will have the ability to explore concepts by creating charts, maps, graphics and presenting orally to the class. Students will also improve communication skills by taking notes, extracting information from the internet, from class presentation and engaging in in-class discussions.
4. Empirical and quantitative skills when working with numeral data, reading graphs and maps etc: Students will learn how to read and develop using GIS software, general reference (contour maps) and thematic maps (choropleth maps), create graphics/diagram patterns and processes (i.e. treeline), and learn how to understand and evaluate models.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

In-person lectures

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
Student learning outcomes will be assessed through attendance at lectures and participation in class discussion and group activities, completion of assignments by scheduled due dates, and completion of exams by scheduled due dates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Quizzes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Class Activities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Skills</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course Overview and Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Essentials of Geography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Patterns and Processes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Earth/Sun Relationship</td>
<td>Location Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Energy and the Atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Weather Patterns/ENSO</td>
<td>Location Quiz 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hurricanes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Water Resource/Rivers</td>
<td>Location Quiz 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Weathering/Exam 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Journey to the Center of the Earth</td>
<td>Location Quiz 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Biogeography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>GPS Geocaching</td>
<td>Location Quiz 5 &amp; In Class Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class by the Instructor. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.
J. **COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance/Tardiness**
Students are expected to attend all lectures and labs.

**Late Work and Make-up Exams**
All assignments must be completed on time. Submission of an assignment after the due date is accepted, but with a penalty of 30% of the grade for the first 24 hours late, and 10% each additional 24 hours. Make-up presentation and reports are not permitted except for documented, exceptional reasons.

**Extra Credit**
No extra credit options are available for this course. No exceptions.

**Email**
Consider email as official correspondence warranting professional language. Professional emails include elements such as a short descriptive subject line, salutation, complete inquiry in the body of the message, your full name, and course and section number. Unprofessional emails will result in a non-response and request for proper correspondence.

**Prior Learning and Lecture Slides:**

The professor will assume that prior to class you have made an earnest effort to understand the material. This will allow you to be prepared to engage the material in more detail or address misunderstandings in class. The slides in class are primarily for visual learners who need to both hear words and see text as they are learning. They are not meant for students to copy as a substitute for prior studying and learning. As such, students should not frantically try to write down everything from the lecture slides. Lecture is simply another time and place to encounter the material again since repeat exposure helps with memory and understanding. As such, your in-class lecture notes do not need to be extremely lengthy. Additionally, please pay attention to what is not on the slides, that is, the extra examples and vocabulary the professor mentions that are related to the slides.

**Communication about Life Events**
It is your (student’s) responsibility to keep up with the course instruction, assignments, and examinations. Should a life event interrupt your ability to meet these responsibilities, you must inform the instructor about this as soon as possible and within a reasonable amount of time so that a course of action can be determined. Communicating with the instructor about these life events in an unreasonable time frame is not acceptable and will not change the outcome of missed work nor will it be a valid reason to receive an ‘Incomplete’ designation for the course.

**Originality of Work**
Every exam for this class must be your own work.
K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity (University)**
  University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade.

- **Classroom/Professional Behavior**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

- **Statement of Civility**
  Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

- **Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)**
  The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must submitted. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Please consult the Academic Calendar (http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/) for the last day to drop a course.

- **Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)**
  As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading,
may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to
demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade
is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details,
including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of
days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure
13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible
through the University Rules website at
http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science
and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at
http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the
grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate
department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the
Office of the Provost.

- **Disability Services**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that
provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other
things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning
environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you
believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call (361) 825-5816 or
visit Disability Services in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access
issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office
for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/

- **Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes
could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi;
this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition,
the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course.
Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be
operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However,
students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a
secondary means of contacting each student.

L. **OTHER INFORMATION**

- **Academic Advising**
The College of Science & Engineering requires that students meet with an Academic
Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set
up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the
department chair. Meetings are by appointment only; advisors do not take walk-ins. Please call or stop by the Advising Center to check availability and schedule an appointment. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction 350 or can be reached at (361) 825-3928.

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

I reserve the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. I will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods.