

**Physical Geography  
Common Course Syllabus**

**Department:** Social Sciences

**Discipline:** Geography

**Course Number:** GEOG 1301

**Course Title:** Physical Geography

**Credit:** 3 Lecture, 0 Lab

**Satisfied a core curriculum requirement?** Yes, Life and Physical Sciences Foundational Component Area (030)

**Prerequisites:** None

**Available Formats:** Conventional, INET

**Campus:** Reese, Lubbock Center, Dual Credit

**Textbook:** Living Physical Geography by Gervais ISBN: 9781464106644

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the processes that drive Earth's physical systems. Students will explore the relationships among these physical systems, with emphasis on weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes and land form development, and human interactions with the physical environment.

Course Objectives addressed:

1. Critical thinking: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication: to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
3. Empirical & Quantitative Skills: to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
4. Teamwork: to include the ability to consider different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
5. Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
6. Social Responsibility: to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

**Course Purpose:** To provide students a better understanding of the discipline of geography and use the techniques of spatial analysis to better understand natural science and human/environmental interactions.

**Course Evaluation:** See instructor's course information for specific grading criteria used in evaluating student performance.

**Attendance Policy:** Whenever absences become excessive and in the instructor's opinion, minimum course objectives cannot be met due to absences, the student will be withdrawn from the course. Each instructor will have additional information about attendance on his/her course information sheet.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students who complete this course will be expected have a better understanding of the discipline of Geography and be able to use techniques of spatial analysis to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of scientific investigation as they apply to Earth's physical systems and processes.
2. Describe and explain the processes of Earth's physical systems: weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes and landform development.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among the Earth's physical systems.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the modifications humans make to the environment through interactions with Earth's physical systems.

Section 200  
Spring 2020

Instructor: Kristin Sorensen  
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Office: AD 143 (Levelland)  
Tuesday: 11:30-1:30  
Wednesday: 1:00-3:00  
Thursday: 11:30-1:30  
Friday: 8:00-10:00  
Skype: sokkerfrk13

### **Course Requirements and Grades**

Grades will be based upon four exams, three map quizzes, one paper, 14 blogs (plus responses), and 15 twitter responses (current events). Exams will be essay and multiple choice questions from the text and reader. The final exam will be comprehensive multiple choice with one essay question. In the case of excused absence from an exam for illness, family emergency or other cause, a make-up examination will be substituted for the missed examination.

## Course Management:

1. Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office in the Student Health & Wellness Office, 806-716-2577.
2. Make-up examinations and extensions of course deadlines will be granted at the discretion of the instructor. However, a significant and verifiable reason must exist. If you miss an exam due to illness or an emergency, please attempt to contact me by phone or e-mail. If you wish to take a make-up exam or get an extension on the paper for any reason, you must contact me before the day the assignment is due.
3. Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Each student is expected to be familiar with SPC's policy on academic integrity. I will assume that you understand this policy, and will judge any case of academic misconduct accordingly. If you have any questions about this policy, please see me.
4. You are responsible for ensuring that you are registered for this course.
5. I reserve the right to change the syllabus if necessary. Any changes will be announced in class and are the responsibility of the student.
6. Please respect the rights of your classmates when attending class. Do not distract your classmates when attending class. Do not come to class late repeatedly. Do not distract your classmates by reading the newspaper, eating loudly, or talking to your neighbors. Turn your cell phone off or on vibrate before entering the classroom. I do not want to see cell phones out on the tables. I reserve the right to lower grades in the event of consistent problems.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS/POLICIES:

- † **Above all**, the classroom will be maintained as a respectful, mature, and courteous learning community in which all participants will conduct themselves in a way that is respectful to differing mannerisms, ideas, opinions, beliefs, cultures, etc.
- † Attending college is a privileged opportunity, not a right.
  - Every day, thousands of people dream of going to college, but are unable to because of things like finances and family constraints. Each semester, students request overrides into this course, but do not receive them.
  - It is expected that students and their behavior will reflect acknowledgement of and respect for the privileged opportunities available to them.
- † Learning is NOT a spectator sport.
  - You, as a student, are partially responsible for engaging yourself in your own active learning.
- † If a student has special needs and/or requires special accommodations to enhance his/her learning abilities please see the instructor.

## GRADING:

- ✚ Your final grade is based on your performance on papers, exams, map quizzes, blogs (plus responses), and twitter responses (current events).
- ✚ At the end of the semester, grades will be rounded up. For example, an 89.45% is an "A" but an 89.44% is a "B".
- ✚ The grading scale is the traditional 90, 80, 70, 60 etc.

Grades will not be curved. What goes on your transcript is what you earned.

**Late Assignments:**

Assignments will be accepted late with the following penalties: 15% off after the first week, 30% off after the second week, 50% off after the third week. Late assignments will not be accepted for credit after the third week.

Test 1	100
Test 2	100
Test 3	100
Test 4	100
Final	200
Map Quiz	25
Map Quiz	25
Map Quiz	25
Twitter	225
Blog	210
Blog Responses	75
Paper	200
Total	1385

**Grade Scale:**

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
<60	F

**You will have a 24 hour window to complete the exam on the day it is due. All Posts (Twitter and Blog) are due by midnight on Sunday.**

**Twitter Posts**

Each student is required to post 3 times to twitter per week. One of these posts must contain a picture. The twitter account to follow is **@geography\_411**. The topic will be posted on blackboard Sunday night. Please address the tweets as follows:

-start a Tweet with a period but I prefer when people rework their sentence so it doesn't seem so obvious. Something like "So @somebody and I were at dinner...." Or tag at the end of the comment.

If you do **NOT** have a twitter account, you may email me the responses.

## **Blog Posts**

Each student is required to have a blog and make a response to each of the questions that are posted. There will be one (1) question posted each week. The post must be a minimum of 250 words. I suggest using [wordpress.com](https://wordpress.com) to host your blog. It is free and easy to use. Once you have set up your blog, please send me the link to access it.

## **Blog Responses**

You must comment on three (3) posts from other students. Compare it to your blog or give some new insight. Responses must be a minimum of 100 words.

**Responses are due by midnight on Tuesday**

## TOPIC SCHEDULE:

### **Tentative schedule**

Jan. 14: Introduction

Jan. 16: Portrait of the Atmosphere

Jan. 22: Seasons and Solar Energy

Jan. 23: **Exam**

Jan. 28. 10: Water in the atmosphere

Jan. 30: Atmospheric Circulation

Feb. 4: The Restless Sky (**Map Quiz**)

Feb. 6: The changing climate

Feb. 11: Lab

Feb. 13: **Exam**

Feb. 18: Biogeography

Feb. 20: Biomes

Feb. 25: Soil and water resources

Feb. 27: Ocean ecosystems

Mar. 3: **Exam**

Mar. 5: Earth history

Mar. 10: Library Day

Mar. 12: Research Day (**Map Quiz**)

Mar. 24: Plate tectonics

Mar. 26: Lab

Mar. 31: Geohazards

Apr. 2: Weathering and Mass movement

Apr. 7: Lab

Apr. 9: **Exam**

Apr. 14: Fluvial systems

Apr. 16: The Cryosphere

Apr. 21: Lab

Apr. 23: Water, wind, and time (**Map Quiz**)

Apr. 28: The work of waves

Apr. 30: Lab

**Final Exam Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup> 1:00**

**Drops and Withdrawals:** From the SPC College Catalog page 21, “Any student withdrawing from all classes on the Levelland Campus must report in person to the Advising Center in the Student Services Building for a withdrawal form. Instructions for obtaining a clearance from some departments of the college will be given at this time. Students who wish to drop a course or withdraw from classes at the SPC Reese Center must report, in person, to the Advising Center at the SPC Reese Center building 8 for a withdrawal form. Students at the Byron Martin Advanced Technology Center should contact the advisor at the center for the withdrawal from. Students at the Plainview Extension Center must contact the Counseling Office in person for a withdrawal form.

Students who stop attending a class should go through the procedure for dropping a course; otherwise they may be administratively withdrawn for lack of attendance and their record will show an “X” or “F” instead of a “W.” Failure to follow college policy by withdrawing according to this procedure will be reflected on a student’s transcript by the presence of “X” or “F” marks, as determined by the instructor. It is the student’s responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through his or her student online account with Campus Connect.

A mark of “W” will be given for student-initiated drops or withdrawals that occur prior to and through “The Last Day to Drop” as indicated in the online academic calendar.

A student who quits attending class and is administratively withdrawn from class will receive a grade of “X” or “F” as determined by the instructor through “The Last Day to Drop” as indicated in the online academic calendar.

A student administratively dropped by the instructor may be reinstated, with the approval of the appropriate instructor. A student must initiate a request for reinstatement within seven (7) calendar days of the official date of drop by personally contacting the course instructor.”

### **Dropping the course**

- YOU must drop this course at the SPC registrar’s Office (there is **no on-line drop system** so on-line students must take care of this in person at the registrar’s office). This is an official procedure which is described in the SPC Catalog. No one but YOU can initiate the drop and it must conform to the procedure for dropping a course. Failure to initiate and finalize the drop procedure will result in an F grade on your transcript. The drop cannot be made retroactive. The drop date can be found on the SPC calendar.

**Cheating and Plagiarism: Plagiarism and Cheating:** Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
4. Missing in-text citations.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
5. Taking an examination for another;
6. Altering grade records;
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
8. Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's;
9. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

Secondly, plagiarism is the theft of another person's work. If you copy something from an internet source and present it as your own that is cheating, copying, and it is against the rules. **The consequence of plagiarism in my classes is: the offender(s) will be receive zero credit for the entire assignment or exam. If plagiarism occurs more than once, the offender will be dropped from the course with an "F."**

**Student Code of Conduct Policy:** Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

**SPC Policy regarding "standard English":** All written assignments should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in "academic English," a form of English that is typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and informal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing. Writing instructors and professors in courses across the campus expect all students to demonstrate proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays.

**Diversity Statement:** In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

**Students with disabilities:** Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Reese Center (Building 8) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:** South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

**Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement:** If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To [activate](#) accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Director of Health and Wellness. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Director of Health and Wellness at 806-716-2362 or [email cgilster@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:cgilster@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

**Campus Concealed Carry Statement:** Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php>



Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

**Blackboard Accessibility Standards:** Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). A third party conducts audits of our software releases to ensure the accessibility of the products. For Blackboard Learn 9.1's conformance with the accessibility standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act using the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template® (VPAT®) tool, see the VPAT for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1. For Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP11 conformance statement for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, Level AA see Learn Accessibility Conformance Statement. To learn more about Blackboard's commitment to accessibility, see <http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility>. (These resources are available in English only.)

### **Student Privacy**

South Plains College is bound by the Texas Open Records Law and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Information regarding these topics can be found in the South Plains College Catalog. As far as this class is concerned, I will NOT release or discuss your class performance, grades, averages, or attendance with anyone but you. This means that your parents, class counselors, principals, or any other interested party will not gain this information from me – if they need this sort of information they must ask you for it. This provision does not apply to student athletes or those for whom a grade check is part of their scholarship support.

**All** technological questions should be directed to the SPC technology center (their information is on the opening page of Blackboard). I do not solve technological/computer problems!

**Blackboard support and help:** *Blackboard tutorials* can be found on MySPC under Students>Distance Education. Once on the Distance Education page, click on Blackboard Learn 9 on menu to the right. Or access the tutorials at <http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm>. When you log in to Blackboard there is a module (or box) that has help information on the My Blackboard Tab. You can also **learn more about Blackboard Learn through the [On Demand Learning Center](#). The On Demand Learning Center includes short, interactive video lessons called Quick Tutorials and short documents, called Getting Started Guides, designed to get you familiar with a feature in 15 minutes.**

If you encounter technological problems *while you are taking a test*, YOU must contact Blackboard Technical Support [blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:blackboard@southplainscollege.edu). to report the problem. I cannot resolve grade disputes about computers not working, Blackboard not working, the internet not working UNLESS you have reported the problem when you encounter it.

**Students: email Breanne Figueroa at [bfigueroa@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:bfigueroa@southplainscollege.edu) or call 716-2180.**

For an email address that reaches everyone in the Instructional Technology department, please use [blackboard@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:blackboard@southplainscollege.edu).

**You may have had or will have trouble submitting your exams.** To prevent this or to solve it read the instructions below for clearing your browser if you are using Mozilla or Explorer.

**Mozilla Firefox – Clear Browsing History** While in Firefox, click on Tools located at the top of the screen in the menu bar.

1. From that menu, select Clear Recent History.
2. From the Time Range drop down menu, select Everything.
3. Make sure all boxes are checked – NOTE: this will delete any passwords saved by Firefox and all recent websites visited.
4. Click Delete
5. Close Firefox, reopen.

**Internet Explorer – Clear Browsing History**

1. While in Internet Explorer, click on Tools located at the top of the screen in the menu bar.
2. Select Internet Options at the bottom of the list.
3. In the middle of the pop up window under browsing history, click Delete.
4. Make sure all boxes are checked – NOTE: this will delete any passwords saved by IE and all recent websites visited.
5. Click Delete

Close Internet Explorer, reopen.