

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS**  
**GEOG 1710.003: Earth Science, Fall 2012 Syllabus**

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**Course materials can be found at [learn.unt.edu](http://learn.unt.edu)**

[UNT Earth Science on Facebook](#)

**Class:** Tuesday/Thursday 11:00-12:20 GAB 104

**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 to 10:30, or by appointment. Please come to office hours for any questions or concerns.

**Email Communication:** REFER to this syllabus before you send me an email.

**Course Description**

The Earth is a **complex** and **interacting system** of air (atmosphere), water (hydrosphere), rock (lithosphere), and life (biosphere). This course will provide an introduction to the study of Earth and its components, and in particular to the physical and biological factors that create the biosphere in which we live. The goal of this class is to provide you with a basic, yet comprehensive, understanding of your physical environment.

**Course Objectives**

- To examine spatial patterns of landforms, water, vegetation, soils, and climate across the Earth's surface.
- To increase understanding of the processes that influence spatial patterns and interactions in the environment.
- To study the Earth as a complex and dynamic system, shaped by internal and external environmental processes and human activity.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Learn basic scientific concepts and theories from the various disciplines that make up the earth sciences (e.g., geology, geography, ecology, and hydrology).
- Identify physical features and landforms and understand the physical processes that give rise to those features.
- Understand the value and underpinnings of an Earth System Science approach
- Increase knowledge of current events shaping Earth's natural systems.

**Optional Text:** *Geosystems: Eighth Edition*, 2012, by Robert W. Christopherson. The only required readings are from weekly articles listed at the end of the syllabus. Quizzes and exams cover these articles and lecture material.

**PowerPoint presentations:** Condensed PowerPoint presentations will be available on Blackboard after the material has been covered in class, *and at my earliest convenience*.

**Course Expectations**

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Students are expected to attend and participate in class.

- Attendance will be taken on a random basis during normal class lectures and will be recorded during invited guest lectures.
- You will also be graded on your participation. I will record your name when you participate. You can participate:
  1. **during class lectures:** by asking questions, providing comments and/or insights on material covered.
  2. **during my office hours:** by talking to me directly about aspects you find interesting, concepts that are fuzzy, or anything else related to the class;
  3. **via email:** by sending me an email with questions, a cool news feature, video, photograph, or other snippet of information that I can use in an upcoming lecture.

**Required Videos:** We will watch short videos in class. Links to the videos are in the lecture presentations. The quizzes and exams will contain questions from the videos.

### **Grading:**

- The lecture is worth **70%** of your final grade. You must pass the lecture part of the class to pass the course.
- Your lecture grade is based on the following:
  - Attendance & class participation – 10%
  - 6 multiple choice Blackboard quizzes/assignments (lowest grade dropped) - 15%
  - 3 multiple choice exams – 10% each (total 30%)
  - 1 non-comprehensive final exam – 15%
- The lab is worth **30%** of your final grade. You must be registered for and pass the lab to pass the course. Refer all lab questions to your lab instructor.

<b>A</b>	90-100
<b>B</b>	79.5-89.4
<b>C</b>	69.5-79.4
<b>D</b>	59.5-69.4
<b>F</b>	<59.5

### **Policies**

**Laptop/I-phone Policy:** Only tabs directly related to the lecture (i.e., relevant PowerPoint lecture and a word document) should be open during class. Failure to follow these rules will result in the restriction of *all* laptop use in class. Students seen using their I-phones will receive a “0” for one day’s attendance.

**Exam Policy:** Exams are closed book. You cannot use laptop computers, iPads, iPhones, cell phones, or any other form of technology. Students will be asked to remove their caps and hats during exams.

**Make-up Exam Policy:** If a student must be absent from an exam to attend a religious holiday, or due to a family obligation, please contact me ***1 week in advance*** of the exam date. If you are ill, please let me know by phone or by e-mail. Make-up exams will be given *only* if a written request and supporting documentation is provided. Otherwise, you will be assigned a “0”. In addition, you must see me, in person, during my office hours (or make an appointment) before you may take a makeup exam. **NO make-ups will be given for Blackboard quizzes.**

**Extra Credit:** The Department of Geography **does not allow** extra credit assignments (work not specified on a course syllabus).

**Accommodations:** The Department of Geography, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request before the 12th class day.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: (a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; (d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or (e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Altering a returned test and claiming a grader or scanning machine made an error is also considered cheating. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** Remember that you have agreed to follow the UNT Code of Student Conduct. "Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc." Again, the Code of Student Conduct can be found at [http://conduct.unt.edu/student\\_conduct](http://conduct.unt.edu/student_conduct).

**Classroom Courtesy:** Please follow these guidelines to avoid disrupting the class.

- (1) Turn off cell phones before arriving and do not text in class.
- (2) Do not arrive late or leave early (except for a bathroom break or emergency).
- (3) Do not sleep during class.
- (4) Do not work on other assignments during class.
- (5) Do not talk or whisper to neighbors (except for formal class interaction).

**Tentative Course Schedule:** Lecture order is subject to change at any time during the semester. Links to the articles can be found in the table below.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading via Blackboard</u>
<b>BLOCK 1</b>		
Thu 8/30	Introduction – Why Geography?	Latitude & Longitude Reading Why Geography?
Week 1 Sept 4&6	Essentials of Geography	Week 1 Reading A Week 1 Reading B Week 1 Reading C
Weeks 1&2 Sept 6-13	Solar Radiation & Earth’s Modern Atmosphere	Week 1 Reading D Week 2 Reading A Week 2 Reading B
Week 3 Sept 18&20	Atmosphere & Surface Energy Balance	Week 3 Reading A Week 3 Reading B      Blackboard Quiz 1 Week 3 Reading C
Week 4 Sept 25&27	Surface Energy, Atmospheric Circulation	Week 4 Reading A
<b>Th Sept 27</b>	<b>Exam 1: Up through Week 4 (BLOCK 1)</b>	
<b>BLOCK 2</b>		
Oct 2	Atmospheric Circulation, Ocean Circulation	Week 5 Reading A Week 5 Reading B Week 5 Reading C
Oct 4	Oceanic Circulation/Weather Essentials	Week 5 Reading D Week 5 Reading E Week 5 Reading F
Oct 9	Weather, Climate Systems & Climate Change	Week 6 Reading A Week 6 Reading B      Blackboard Quiz 2 Week 6 Reading C
Oct 11	The Dynamic Planet	Week 6 Reading D Week 6 Reading E Week 6 Reading F
Oct 16	Weathering & Soils	Week 7 Reading A Week 7 Reading B
Oct 18	Weathering & Soils	Week 7 Reading C Week 7 Reading D
Oct 23	Water & Water Resources	Week 8 Reading A Week 8 Reading B      Blackboard Quiz 3 Week 8 Reading C
Oct 25	Water & Water Resources	Week 8 Reading D Week 8 Reading E Week 8 Reading F
<b>Tu Oct 30</b>	<b>Exam 2: Weeks 5 to 8 (BLOCK 2)</b>	
<b>BLOCK 3</b>		
Nov 1	Ecosystem Essentials	Week 9 Reading A Week 9 Reading B      Blackboard Quiz 4 Week 9 Reading C
Nov 6	Ecosystem Essentials	Week 10 Reading A Week 10 Reading B Week 10 Reading C

Nov 8	Biogeography	Week 10 Reading D Week 10 Reading E Week 10 Reading F Week 10 Reading G Blackboard Quiz 5
Nov 13	Terrestrial Biomes & Land Use Change	Week 11 Reading A Week 11 Reading B Week 11 Reading C
Th Nov 15	<b>Exam 3: Weeks 9 to 11 (BLOCK 3)</b>	
BLOCK 4		
Tu Nov 20	Tectonics, Earthquakes, Volcanism	Week 12 Reading A Week 12 Reading B Week 12 Reading C
Nov 27	River Systems & Fluvial Processes	Week 13 Reading A Week 13 Reading B Week 13 Reading C Blackboard Quiz 6
Nov 29	Arid Landscapes	Week 13 Reading D Week 13 Reading E Week 13 Reading F
Dec 4	Glaciers	Week 14 Reading A Week 14 Reading B
Dec 6	Coasts	Week 14 Reading C Week 14 Reading D

### **Final Exam**

Tuesday Dec 11, 10:30 to 12:30 pm in GAB 104.