

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

GEOG 1710.005: Earth Science, Spring 2013 Syllabus

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Course materials can be found at learn.unt.edu

[UNT Earth Science on Facebook](#)

Class: MWF 10:00 – 10:50 GAB 105

Office Hours: MWF 11am to noon.

Email Communication: direct all email communication through Blackboard.

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 for the course is essential for success. UNT has installed ID card-readers on the door

of GAB 105, which record attendance. I will use this record to determine your attendance grade for the semester.

- You will also be graded on your participation. I will record your name when you participate. You can participate:

- during class lectures:** by asking questions, providing comments and/or insights on material covered.
- 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;
- via blackboard:** by sending me an message 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%
 - 5 multiple choice Blackboard quizzes/assignments (lowest grade dropped) - 15%
 - 5 multiple choice exams – total 45%
- 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.

A	90-100
B	79.5-89.4
C	69.5-79.4
D	59.5-69.4
F	<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 University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

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.

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>Readings</u>
BLOCK 1		
Jan 14	Introduction – Why Geography?	Latitude & Longitude Reading Geographic Perspective
Jan 16&18	Essentials of Geography	Reading A1 Reading B1 Reading C1
Jan 18-23	Solar Radiation & Earth’s Modern Atmosphere	Reading D1 Reading E1 Blackboard Quiz 1 Reading F1
Jan 25-30	Atmosphere & Surface Energy Balance	Reading G1 Reading H1 Reading I1
Feb 1	Exam 1: Material from Block 1	
BLOCK 2		
Feb 4-13	Atmospheric Circulation	Reading A2 Reading B2 Reading C2
Feb 13-18	Oceanic Circulation/Weather Essentials	Reading D2 Reading E2 Blackboard Quiz 2 Reading F2 Reading G2
Feb 20	Exam 2: Material from Block 2	
BLOCK 3		
Feb 22-25	Weather, Climate Systems & Climate Change	Reading A3 Reading B3
Feb 27- Mar 4	The Dynamic Planet	Reading C3 Reading D3 Blackboard Quiz 3 Reading E3
Mar 6&8	Weathering & Soils	Reading F3 Reading G3 Reading H3
	Spring Break	
Mar 18	Exam 3: Material from Block 3	
BLOCK 4		
Mar 20-27	Water & Water Resources	Reading A4 Reading B4 Reading C4 Reading D4
Mar 29- Apr 5	Ecosystem Essentials	Reading E4 Reading F4 Blackboard Quiz 4 Reading G4 Reading H4 Reading I4
Apr 5-8	Biogeography	Reading J4
Apr 10	Exam 4: Material from Block 4	

BLOCK 5		
Apr 12	Terrestrial Biomes & Land Use Change	Reading A5 Reading B5 Reading C5
Apr 15-17	Tectonics, Earthquakes, Volcanism	Reading D5 Reading E5
Apr 19-22	River Systems & Fluvial Processes	Reading F5 Reading G5 Blackboard Quiz 6 Reading H5
Apr 24&26	Arid Landscapes	Reading I5 Reading J5
Apr 29	Glaciers	Reading K5 Reading L5
May 1	Coasts	

Final Exam

Friday May 10, 8 to 10 am in GAB 105.