

Geography 101
Survey of Physical Geography
Fall 2010

(Meeting Time & Place: MWF 11:00 PM - 11:50 AM in Faraday 143)

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Office Hours: **F 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM** or by appointment. The best way to reach me is by e-mail.

Text: Arbogast, A. F., *Discovering Physical Geography*. Wiley & Sons (customized for NIU). This is also used in GEOG 102.

CPS (Clikier): Classroom Performance System (CPS or clicker) is **required** for this course and in-class quizzes using CPS account for 10% of your grade. See more details below.

Web site: <http://webcourses.niu.edu> You will need to use this web site frequently to download lecture notes, take practicing quiz, obtain announcement, check your grades, communicate with your classmates and me, and much more. ***Be sure to check the site often.*** If you haven't used this before, please visit the above website and click on the **Student Help** button. Call **753-8100** or email **helpdesk@niu.edu** for assistance.

Brief Description

This course is an introduction to natural environmental systems. Lectures will emphasize the interrelationships of hydrology, soils, landforms, vegetation, and geologic materials. In addition, the impact of humans on natural environmental systems will be discussed.

If you are interested in any of the topics we cover this semester I strongly encourage you to consider taking another Geography course that deals with that topic. Feel free to visit with me any time regarding other Geography classes, becoming a Geography major or minor, or enrolling in the Environmental Studies minor. A flow chart emphasizing the full curriculum in Physical Geography is posted on the course website.

Laboratory (GEOG 102 Students Only)

A separate 1-credit laboratory course GEOG 102 can be taken at the same time with this course. GEOG 102 will provide a hands-on introduction to basic techniques used to study elements of natural environmental systems. Thus taking GEOG 102 may enhance your understanding of the materials in GEOG 101 (this course). Check with your advisor regarding your department and college graduation requirements. GEOG 102 will meet the first week of the semester.

Course Goals and Objectives

It is hoped that you will leave this course with a basic understanding and appreciation for the Earth's natural environmental systems, the interactions among different components, and the processes involved; will want to know more about the subject matter presented; and will have had fun learning along the way. After successful completion of this course, you should be able to

- Describe different natural processes operating on Earth;
- Describe the interactions among these processes and explain how they shape the natural environment we see today;
- Explain the impact of human activities on natural environmental systems.

Grading and Exams

In-class assessments through Classroom Performance System (CPS or clicker) (10%)

Numerous studies have shown that the CPS or clicker technology enhances students learning, encourages active participation in class, helps you focusing on the material presented, and makes the learning a fun experience. That is exactly the reason I decided to use this technology in this class.

You are **required** to bring it to **each and every lecture**, as you will need it to earn credit for in-class quizzes. The CPS points account for 10% of your course grade (5% for participation and for 5% correct answer). So it is to your best interest to get one and register **as soon as possible**. You can purchased CPS in the bookstore (\$25.35) and **register it through BlackBoard**. You can purchase one-term enrollment codes for \$13 or a life-time enrollment code for \$35. If you choose to purchase one-term enrollments, you only pay for three semesters (\$39 total). (DO NOT go to eInstruction website to register as the clicker box said.) Detailed instructions on how to register and answers to other frequently asked questions can be found at http://www.its.niu.edu/its/clickers/cps_student_faq.shtml. We will start using it right away so that you will get used to using it; the first week's CPS points will be counted as extra credit; you are responsible for gaining the CPS credit after that. **There will be NO make-ups for these in-class assessments.** Two in-class activities can be dropped to allow for malfunctioning or forgotten clickers, unexcused absences, etc. You cannot receive credit without your clicker. CPS scores will be posted on Blackboard; it is your responsibility as a student to check that your scores and bring any problems to my attention by email. You might consider putting your name on a sticker/tape on the clicker, in case you misplace it.

Extra Credit: To encourage you to look over your notes regularly (and to discourage folks arriving late to class!), a “clicker question” will be presented at the start of each class, reviewing the previous day’s lecture notes. (This is separate from the regular in-class quiz activities.) A running total of your correct answers will be compiled leading up to each exam, and posted on Blackboard. If you score $\geq 80\%$, you will receive +1 point on that exam. The tally starts anew with each exam. You must remain for the entire class period in order for your score to register for the quiz.

Exams (90%)

There will be 4 exams and 1 optional cumulative final. Only the **4 highest scores** (out of all 5 exams) will count toward your grade (**each for 22.5%**). If you are satisfied with your grade after the 4th exam, you may choose not to take the final. Some selected in-class quizzes will be made available in BlackBoard (after they are given) to help you practice for the next exam. These on-line practice quizzes will NOT be counted again toward your course grade. All exams will be close book and **any cheating behavior will result in a grade of F** (see Plagiarism Statement under “Other”). Exam and quiz questions will be primarily multiple choices but may also contain matching and true-false questions. Some practicing quiz questions may reappear on the exam. **The exam dates are 9/15, 10/11, 11/5, 12/3, and 12/8** (optional), **which are fixed unless otherwise noticed** (see a more detailed tentative schedule on page 4). **Please mark your calendar and do not miss an exam.**

There will be NO make-up exams after the scheduled exams are given. Should you have an emergency or schedule conflict, you must contact me BEFORE the exam date as soon as possible so that alternative arrangement can be made. Otherwise students who miss an exam without first contacting me will get zero for that exam. No exceptions.

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Yes, I deliberately repeat this so that everybody understands this policy from day one. It is simply not fair to the students who prepared and took the exam on time to allow other students to have extra time to prepare and/or discuss what was on the exam with others in the class.

Course grade

An overall score for the course will be computed based on 90% of the 4 best exams, 10% of in-class quizzes (5% for participation and 5% for correct answer). The overall score is converted to letter grade based on the following scale:

Grade	% of maximum possible overall score
A	>90%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	< 60%

The lower limit for each grade range will not move up. If your overall score is very close to the break point, your grade *may* be elevated to the next higher grade *only if* there is a natural breaking/clustering in the score distribution at the instructor's discretion. So you should set your goal well above the lower limit of the grade you wish to obtain.

Course Guidelines and a few Miscellaneous Tips

1. Announcements in lecture take precedence over all handouts and web materials.
2. Class will begin and end as scheduled. As a courtesy to your fellow classmates please arrive on time and **avoid packing up before class is scheduled to end.**
3. As courtesy to other students, please do not talk or in any other way distract other students while the instructor is lecturing.
4. All **cell phones**, pagers, and similar items **MUST** be turned **off** or set on vibrate before entering the classroom. **Anyone whose cell phone rings during lecture will receive -2 points deduction on the next exam (or the same exam if it rings during an exam).**
5. You are responsible for attending all lectures. *Exam questions will be developed primarily from lecture material.* Coming to class, taking good notes, and actively participate in-class activities will be extremely helpful and they are a critical part of the learning process. Discussing notes, ideas... with fellow students is an excellent and fun way to learn.
6. Be prepared for classes, keep up with reading, and review material timely; arrive on-time and take advantage of the extra-credit CPS question.
7. Ask questions. Ask in lecture, in lab, during office hours, if you see me walking across campus... I am here to help you. If you are having difficulties with any portion of the class, I strongly encouraged you to visit with me as soon as possible so we can correct the situation. **Do not wait until the end of the semester to bring problems to my attention.**
8. Tutoring for many General Education courses is available through Educational Services and Programs at NIU. Information is available at: <http://www.esp.niu.edu/>
9. Learn to manage your time. Sometime this semester or during your college career you will have multiple exams/projects due the same day or on successive days. Many of you have busy educational, social, and employment schedules. Get a calendar book and plan accordingly in advance of due dates.
10. In order to protect your privacy, grade information will be exclusively listed on Blackboard website. No scores will be posted in public or given over the phone or email.

11. If there is a university closing on the day of a scheduled exam, the exam will occur at the next scheduled class meeting.
12. You are encouraged to stop in and visit. If it is not “office hours”, please realize that I have other commitments and may not always be available or that other students may be visiting. Please email or call ahead to set up an appointment if it is not office hours.
13. Have fun. It is my goal that you enjoy this class as well as learn something about physical geography while you are here this semester.
14. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me privately as soon as possible so that we can make suitable arrangements (see Receiving Assistance below).

Other

Receiving Assistance: If you have any questions concerning course materials or procedures, please contact me promptly. If you have a documented disability that need special accommodation, you must: (1) provide the required verification of the disability to the Center for Access-Ability Resources, (2) meet with the Center for Access-Ability Resources to determine appropriate accommodations, (3) inform me of the requests for accommodations as early as possible in the semester.

Plagiarism Statement: "The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university." *Northern Illinois University Undergraduate Catalog.*

GEOG 101 Tentative Schedule of General Lecture Topics

Note: The time allowed for each general topic may change. **Green and Bold dates are exam dates and will not change.** Grayed dates are no-class holidays. Readings are listed by chapter.

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading
1	8/23, 25, 27	Introduction to Physical Geography	Ch. 1
2	8/30, 9/1, 3	The Geographers' Tools	Ch. 2
3	9/6, 8, 10	Earth-Sun Geometry and the Seasons	Ch. 3
4	9/13, 15, 17	Earth's Internal Structure, Rock Cycle, and Geologic Time (Exam I, 9/15)	Ch. 12
5	9/20, 22, 24	Tectonic Processes and Landforms	Ch. 13
6	9/27, 29, 10/1	Atmospheric Moisture and Precipitation	Ch. 7
7	10/4, 6, 8	Groundwater and Karst Landscapes	Ch. 15
8	10/11, 13, 15	Fluvial Processes and Landforms (Exam II, 10/11)	Ch. 16
9	10/18, 20, 22	Fluvial Processes and Landforms	Ch. 16
10	10/25, 27, 29	Coastal Processes and Landforms	Ch. 19
11	11/1, 3, 5	Arid Landscapes and Eolian Processes (Exam III, 11/5)	Ch. 18
12	11/8, 10, 12	Glacial Geomorphology	Ch. 17
13	11/15, 17, 19	Weathering and Mass Movements	Ch. 14
14	11/22, 24, 26	The Global Distribution and Character of Soils	Ch. 11
15	11/29, 12/1, 3	Plant Geography (Exam IV, 12/3)	Ch. 10
16	12/8	FINAL EXAM (cumulative & optional) Wed. 12/8, 10-11:50 a.m.	