

Geography 2050 – Physical Geography: The Atmosphere Course Syllabus – Spring 2014, Section 3

Classing meetings on T, Th 12:00p to 1:20p in 169 West Hall

Professor Information

Dr. Jill Trepanier

Dept. of Geography and Anthropology

E324 Howe-Russell (just after the double doors marked “Louisiana Office of State Climatology”)

Email: jtrepa3@lsu.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3p – 5p or by appointment

Office Phone: 225-578-6192

Textbook (required)

Geosystems (8th edition) by Robert W. Christopherson.

The course web site is <http://www.masteringgeography.com>. You will already have access to the website if you have a new copy of the textbook. If you have the electronic version, older edition, or a used copy, **you must buy access to the website for \$30. *Mastering Geography is required for the course. Your assignments and practice quizzes are only on this website.*** If nothing else, you must have access to Mastering Geography. Instructions for accessing Mastering Geography are listed on a separate document on Moodle 2 (right after the syllabus).

Course Description (from LSU Catalog)

Physical principles, processes, and operations in the atmosphere and world climatic realms.

Course Overview

The topical focus of GEOG 2050 “Physical Geography: The Atmosphere” includes: (1) basic concepts in atmospheric science, including atmospheric structure and composition, energy balances, and atmospheric circulation; (2) characterization of meteorological and climatological variability and processes at different space and time scales, including macro- and meso-scale weather processes and climate changes; and (3) linkage of variations in the Earth’s weather and climate patterns to humans and their environment. Scientific thinking and real-world applications of meteorological and climatological information are emphasized, along with an interactive approach to learning using Moodle 2, multimedia, and web resources.

Class Policies

- Please respect your classmates and instructor by being on time (i.e., arrive before noon) and be prepared for class.
- Please refrain from personal conversations during class. If you have a question, raise your hand.
- If you must leave class early, please sit near the aisle at the back of the lecture hall and use the rear exit doors.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices **must be** silent during class. You are not allowed to send email or text messages during class. I will allow laptops to be used for note taking only. If you are distracting other students I will ask you to turn off your laptop.

Moodle 2

All course related material will be posted on Moodle 2 that you access through your My LSU account <https://sso.paws.lsu.edu/login>. Grades are posted on Moodle 2 within a week after each exam. If you need help with Moodle, contact the Help Desk helpdesk@lsu.edu or http://itsweb.lsu.edu/USS/help_desk/item2424.html.

I highly recommend you check Moodle before each class for last minute updates.

Grades

Grades for the course will be assigned based on four factors amounting to 400 points.

Exam #1 100 pts Exam #2 100 pts Exam #3 100 pts

Assignments: 100 pts total

The exams are multiple choice, matching, short answer, and essay questions designed to monitor and assess student performance. Please note that there will not be a cumulative final exam; instead, there will be three exams spaced throughout semester.

Final course letter grades will be assigned using a standard A-B-C-D-F system, with 90% the lowest A, 80% the lowest B, 70% the lowest C, 60% the lowest D, and < 59.5% F. A final numerical score for the course is calculated as percentages of the four components. Based on the final score, a final letter grade is assigned. Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number (e.g., 89.50 = 90 and 89.49 = 89). Failure to complete any exam will result in a zero for that assignment. Please resolve any grade disagreements with the instructor and report any discrepancies in writing to the instructor by May 10.

Students should keep in mind that grading is an assessment of quality, not a measure of effort. Please do not interpret my attempt to make the classroom environment friendly and welcoming as any indication of relaxed academic expectations. On the contrary, you should expect a rigorous learning experience, as I set a high academic standard for the class.

Missed Exams

Requests for makeup exams are **rarely** permitted and **make-up exams are all essay** if the makeup occurs after the exam period. If you have a legitimate excuse, you must notify the instructor by e-mail or telephone **before the exam begins** or, when that is logistically impossible, very soon afterwards on the same day. You must provide proof for your excuse in writing (doctor's note, towing receipt with time listed, etc.). Students will only be allowed to take exams **early** in the case of a legitimate university conflict (i.e., travel for an athletic event or other university business). Conflicts with jobs, other classes, and your personal life are not satisfactory excuses. Personal travel is **not**, in any circumstance, a legitimate excuse.

*I highly recommend **not** scheduling your exam for the last time slots if there is a chance you will not make your exam appointment. Students who take exams in the last time slots statistically score lower. Students who take their exams the first day score higher than any other day.*

Email Policy

Email will be a primary means of communication for this course. Students **must** ensure that their email address on Moodle 2 is accurate, as important course information will be provided periodically via the Moodle 2 email interface. Students must check their email regularly (at a minimum, before class and 2-3 times per week) to stay informed of any course news and announcements. Whenever possible, I will respond to a student email inquiry within 24 hours. In return, we ask that students observe some basic guidelines regarding email etiquette:

- Address your email message professionally (*i.e., written letter with proper spelling and grammar and salutation*).
- Sign your name with contact information; in a large class it is difficult to identify a student solely by email address.
- When making requests for information or assistance, always be polite.

In addition, in order to make class-related email exchanges as efficient as possible, we will **not** respond to emails requesting basic course information that is in this syllabus or on Moodle 2. The class syllabus and schedule is posted on Moodle 2. *If your email request pertains to the whole class, I may ask to post it on Moodle 2 so that all your classmates can benefit.*

Assignments

Throughout the semester, I will assign seven assignments through Mastering Geography (see schedule). There will be reminders posted in Moodle 2 and will be announced in class. These activities are designed to help you comprehend and understand the topics discussed during that week. You can use the textbook, the Internet, and other references to help you. *The due date will be clearly marked and **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED**.* All assignments will be turned in through Mastering Geography.

How to pass this class - have a learning strategy with an emphasis on time management

Students often ask how best to prepare for these tests. I strongly encourage you to:

- (a) **Read** the chapter for each week before class on Tuesday, then reread and take notes during the week.

(b) **Attend every** class and take notes. I do not post complete lecture notes on Moodle 2, just the items not in the textbook.

(c) **Answer** the questions at the end of the chapter and review the additional materials posted on Moodle.

(d) **Complete** the study items and quizzes on the textbook website

<http://www.pearsonhighered.com/mygeoscience/>.

General Education Learning Objectives

This course satisfies three credits for the university's general education natural (physical) sciences requirement. As such, it addresses in a sustained way many of the following criteria:

- The structure and properties of atoms and matter
- Chemical reactions, motions, and forces
- The conservation of energy and the increase in disorder
- The interactions of energy and matter
- Energy in the earth system, geochemical cycles, and the origin and evolution of the universe and the earth system

In fulfillment of the general education requirement, GEOG 2050 is focused on energy in the earth system, geochemical cycles, and the origin and evolution of the universe and the earth system.

This course emphasizes all of the above criteria to some extent, but in particular

The conservation of energy and the increase in disorder

- The interactions of energy and matter

The learning goals for students in GEOG 2050 are to:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of a broad survey in the discipline, including the underlying principles that govern the natural world
- (2) Demonstrate the ability to use inductive and deductive reasoning to understand scientific phenomena.

Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to share ideas, skills, and to freely discuss the principles and applications of course materials *outside* of class lectures and exams. However, the guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own. ***There is no place or tolerance for cheating in this course.***

“Academic Misconduct” shall mean cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and all other actions which are described in Section 8.1.C. or any act or other form of academic dishonesty or omission designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student.” *LSU Code of Student Conduct*
Misrepresentation of your own work through plagiarism, collusion, or data distortion is a serious breach of the LSU Code of Student Conduct, which states:

“Plagiarism” is defined as the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else's words, structure, ideas, or data. When a student submits work as his/her own that includes the words, structure, ideas, or data of others, the source of this information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references, and, if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks as well. Failure to identify any source (including interviews, surveys, etc.), published in any medium (including on the internet) or unpublished, from which words, structure, ideas, or data have been taken, constitutes plagiarism.”

LSU Code of Student Conduct is available at <http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/index>.

This includes the activities on Moodle. **DO NOT** give your answers to another student; this is a cheating violation (LSU Code of Student Conduct section 8.1.C). All students involved in a cheating incident will be referred to the Dean.

Cheating will result in a referral to the Dean of Students.

Attendance

Attendance will not be taken, *thus no explanations are needed for missed lectures*. The evaluation of student performance will be based entirely on material presented during class lectures and assignments. Therefore, it will be nearly impossible to earn a high grade without coming to class on a regular basis. “A” and “B” students come to class and complete the assignments; “C,” “D,” and “F” students come to class and complete the assignments less frequently. No other variable correlates as well with student performance.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the class notes.

I suggest you find a classmate and exchange email addresses.

Physical or Learning Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with the Office of Disability Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. Please contact the Office of Disability Services, 112 Johnston Hall, 225-578-5919. All discussions will remain confidential. This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. I look forward to talking with you soon to learn how I may be helpful in enhancing your academic success in this course.

Course Calendar – Spring 2014 (Subject to change)

Topic	Days	Reading	Assignments
Essentials of Geography	1/16, 1/21, 1/23	Chapter 1	
Solar Radiation & Seasons	1/28, 1/30	Chapter 2	Assignment 1 (both) Due Jan. 24 at 11:59p
Atmospheric Composition & Structure	2/4, 2/6, 2/11	Chapter 3	Assignment 2 (Ch. 2 and 3): Due Feb. 11 at 11:59p
Exam #1	February 18. Review session Feb. 13.		
Atmosphere and Energy Balance	2/20, 2/25, 2/27	Chapter 4	Assignment 3 (Ch. 4) Due Feb. 28 at 11:59p
Mardi Gras Holiday	No class 3/4	Have fun!	
Global Temperatures	3/6, 3/11	Chapter 5	Assignment 4 (Ch. 5) Due March 11 at 11:59p
Atmospheric and Ocean Circulation	3/13, 3/18, 3/20	Chapter 6	Assignment 5 (Ch. 6) Due March 18 at 11:59p
Exam #2	March 27. Review session March 25.		
Atmospheric Moisture	4/1, 4/3	Chapter 7	Assignment 6 (Ch. 7) Due April 4 at 11:59p
Professor and TAs at Conference; no class 4/8 and 4/10.			
Spring Break, No class 4/15 or 4/17. Have fun!			
Weather	4/22, 4/24	Chapter 8	Assignment 7 (Ch. 8) Due April 25 at 11:59p
Global Climate Systems and Climate Change	29-Apr	Chapter 10	
Exam #3	Friday, May 9 5:30 p– 7:30p. Review session May 1		