

GS 101 – Introduction to Physical Geography-- Spring 2008

Professor: Dr. Allison Dunn, office ST410P
Office Hours: MF 11:30-12:30; W 2:30-3:30 or by appointment
Contact: Allison.Dunn@worchester.edu / 929-8641

Description: This is a course introducing physical geography, which examines the processes and features that make up the Earth. We will study the four major Earth systems: the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the lithosphere, and the biosphere. We will use the tools used by physical geographers to understand and analyze these Earth systems. We will also investigate the impact humans have had on the Earth and its processes.

Required Text: Introducing Physical Geography, 4th edition, by Strahler and Strahler
Readings and homework assignments are taken from the 4th version of the textbook, which is available at the bookstore. If you use another source for your textbook, please ensure the version is correct. Having an older version of the textbook is not an acceptable excuse for missing or incorrect assignments.

Grading:

Exams (3 total):	45%
Assignments:	45%
Class participation:	10%

Exams: There will be 3 equally weighted exams over the course of the semester, with the last exam being given during the last class period. While the exams are not cumulative, each course subject builds upon previous material that you must understand. There will be **NO make-up exams** given. The exam dates are listed on the schedule; **do not** schedule appointments or travel on these dates.

Assignments: There will be assignments most weeks in order to practice the concepts covered in class. You are encouraged to work with your classmates on the assignments, but all work you submit must be your own. Assignments will be distributed in class; you are responsible for completing the assignment even if you are absent on the date it is distributed. Late homework will be penalized by 10% for each class meeting it is late. **Your lowest assignment grade will be dropped.**

Class participation: While daily attendance will not be taken, 10% of your grade will depend on your class participation. Classroom participation includes active engagement in lectures and class activities, demonstrable listening, and behavior appropriate to creating a supportive college atmosphere (no text messaging, web surfing, cell phone use, etc.)

Focus the Nation: On January 31st, Worcester State College will be an official site for Focus the Nation, a national teach-in to engage students and citizens with political leaders and decision makers about climate change and global warming. There will be teach-in sessions at 8:30, 10:00, 11:30, and 1:00 in the Blue Lounge in the Student Center. To encourage student involvement, any student participating in the teach-in will receive **extra credit** for this course upon submission of a short (1 page) essay discussing something you learned at the teach-in.

Class Schedule

Week	Concepts	Assigned Reading	Notes
Jan 21	Introduction to physical geography	Prologue; Chapter 1: 24-38	
Jan 28	Working with maps, Earth – sun relationships	Chapter 1: 38-42, Chapter 2: 52-62	
Feb 4	The atmosphere, temperature, the greenhouse effect	Chapter 2: 62-73 Chapter 3: 88-113	
Feb 11	Atmospheric moisture, precipitation	Chapter 4: 120-139	
Feb 18	Exam 1: Feb 20		No class 2/18 Exam 1: Feb 20
Feb 25	Pressure and winds , local and global wind patterns, weather systems	Chapter 5: 151-173	
Mar 3	Atmosphere-hydrosphere coupling, El Niño, hurricanes	Chapter 5: 173-181, Chapter 6: 196-204	
Mar 10	Weather vs. climate, climate change	Chapter 7: 270-277 Chapter 10: 393-395	
Mar 17	Spring Break		No class
Mar 24	Plate tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes	Chapter 11: 396-400, Chapter 12: 421-446 Chapter 13: 451-461	
Mar 31	Exam 2: Apr 4 Earthquakes, ground water	Chapter 13: 469-477 Chapter 15: 510-520	Exam 2: Apr 4
Apr 7	Ground water, lakes, introduction to streams and rivers	Chapter 15: 520-543	
Apr 14	Streams and rivers	Chapter 16: 545-569	
Apr 21	Water resources, glaciers	Chapter 19: 630-644	No class 4/21
Apr 28	Glaciers and ice ages	Chapter 19: 645-652	
May 5	Movie: Mysteries of the Megaflood Exam 3: May 7		Exam 3: May 7 All assignments and corrections due 5/7

Academic Honesty

WSC expects students to maintain standards of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic careers.

Academic dishonesty violates the very nature of our academy. It includes, but is not limited to submitting, copying, or substantially restating the work of another person or persons in an oral or written work without citing the appropriate source; collaborating with someone else in an academic endeavor without acknowledging that contribution; and copying the answers of another student in an examination. The official policies and procedures of the College's response to academic dishonesty are outlined in the Student Handbook, in the section "Worcester State College Student Code of Conduct and the Judicial System". Students violating this policy will **fail** the course.