

## **Geography 110 (and 111) Syllabus: Physical Geography**

Instructor: Richard O. Hughes III

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Required Text: Essentials of Physical Geography, Gabler et al, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007, Saunders College Publishing, 656p.

Materials Recommended for Class: Colored Pencils, calculator

Note: Enrollment in Physical Geography Laboratory is recommended but not required. Consult your educational advisor.

### **Purpose and Scope**

This class is a spatial study of the Earth's dynamic physical systems and processes. Topics include Earth-Sun relationships, weather and climate, water, soils, landforms and the biosphere. Emphasis will be placed on the interrelationships among systems and processes, and their resulting patterns and distributions. A background in simple chemistry, mathematics and physics is helpful, but not required. With respect to tests, questions will emphasize application, interpretation and analysis of data and content, rather than memorization of facts and vocabulary.

### **Learning Outcomes**

(By the end of the semester, you should understand the following "big picture" topics of geography and Earth Science.)

- \*Students will understand the basic theory of plate tectonics and southern California's place in the plate tectonic system of the dynamic Earth.

- \*Students will understand that tectonic processes dynamically move the Earth's crust, and that the Earth's hydrosphere and atmosphere work together to constantly reshape the landforms on the surface of the Earth.

- \*Students will have a basic understanding of the concept of scale (spatial and time), and how it pertains to geography and the Earth Sciences.

- \*Students will understand that the Earth's Oceans and Atmosphere are responsible for the distribution of the energy received from the sun.

- \*Students will understand that the climate at different places on Earth is dependant upon the amount and duration energy received at that location, and that the climate dictates the type of vegetation as well as the weather conditions.

### **Important Dates**

June 28 : Last day to withdraw without a grade of "W"

July 19 : Last day to withdraw with a grade of "W"

## Student Responsibilities and Class Policies

- 1) Attend class regularly and on time. It is **your responsibility** to notify me that you arrived late after I took roll. **Three absences are excusable, but any more than that could result in your being dropped from the class.**
- 2) Turn in assignments on time. If you are late, I reserve the right to reduce your grade on that assignment.
- 3) Once class begins and the doors are shut, **PLEASE DO NOT EXIT THE CLASSROOM FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN AN EMERGENCY.** It is **distracting to your fellow students and to me. Answering your cell phone is not an emergency.** Please notify me prior to the beginning of class of any personal necessity that requires you to leave class early. Otherwise, **leaving early is counted as an absence and will affect your grade.**
- 4) Please **turn off all “ringers” to pagers and cell phones.** Responding to pages and calls **will be done after class**, except in emergency.
- 5) If you need to drop the course, especially late in the semester, and you do not take the proper steps to do so on your own, you will receive a grade of “F” for the class.
- 6) A student may be dropped from the course for any one of the following reasons:
  - a) failure to attend the first two (2) class meetings;
  - b) more than three (3) absences during the first 4 weeks;
  - c) disorderly or inappropriate conduct of any sort followed by dismissal from class or a field trip;
  - d) arriving late to class more than six (6) times.
- 7) **There are no make up tests, exams, assignments or field trips, unless prior arrangements are made.** If you do have to miss an exam, be especially prepared for the makeup, **YOU WILL NEED IT.** Everyone is required to take **all exams**, including the final comprehensive exam.
- 8) In general, there is no extra credit. However, extra point opportunities are given in most quizzes and exams. Extra credit field trips are also available.
- 9) **Cheating of any sort will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs (even “small” infractions), and the student may receive a grade of “F” for the semester.**

## Grades

Your grades will be posted after each exam and points will be accumulated as follows:

- |                                                       |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1) Three (3) tests at 100 points each                 | =300 Points |
| 2) Ten (10) quizzes or problem sets at 10 points each | =100 Points |
| 3) Field Trip or project and associated work          | =100 Points |
| Total                                                 | =500 Points |

Your grade will be determined by the points you’ve accumulated throughout the semester. Your total points will be divided by 500 and converted to a percentage, which will be applied to the following scale:

**A: 90-100%    B: 80-89.9%    C: 70-79.9%    D: 60-69.9%    F: 0-59.9%**

## The Quizzes and Problem Sets

Quizzes are given at least once a week during class, and more frequently in condensed summer classes. **If you miss the quiz, it can not be made up.** Quizzes are worth ten (10) points each, and are taken from the lecture and reading material. Only ten (10) quizzes will be counted. If I give more than ten, the lowest one(s) will be dropped.

Several problem sets will be given throughout the semester. Separate instructions will be provided. Each ranges in value from ten to twenty points.

### The Field Trips

Participation in a 1-day long field trip is required. Details will be provided for you in a separate set of instructions. There will be several trips for you to choose from. Attendance points will be given, and an assignment associated with the trip will be given as well. Sometimes during the shorter summer session there is time for only one field trip, or if funding is scarce, a term project will be substituted for the trip.

### The Tests

A test is given at the end of each unit. The test dates are etched in stone, and the dates are included in the course outline. If you know you are going to miss a test, let me know as soon as possible. **If you do not warn me in advance, you may not be able to make up the exam!** I also reserve the right to give you a much harder more detailed comprehensive exam for a makeup. Generally, the tests consist of two distinct parts, which are:

- 1) A multiple guess section, which also may include true-false, matching, etc. **(you will need a no. 882-E scantron for this section of the test)**, and
- 2) A short answer essay section which may include an explanation of a diagram or graph and/or a short explanation of an Earth process.

### Recipe for Academic Success in this Class

The method explained below exposes your conscious and subconscious mind to the material at least seven (7) times before taking a test. This method requires time is effective in studying for just about any classroom course:

- 1) Prior to class, read background material listed on the course description carefully, and if you are a highlighter person, use a marker pen to highlight key terms and concepts. Also pay special attention to diagram and figures in the text.
- 2) Listen attentively and write down everything at the lecture. Sacrifice neatness for quantity and quality of notes, for you can always recopy your notes for study later. Make sketches of any diagrams on the board.
- 3) Supplement lecture notes with other diagrams and explanations that you highlighted in your textbook.
- 4) Neatly organize and recopy lecture and textbook notes into a permanent notebook that you will use for study.