

University of Victoria - Department of Geography

COURSE DESCRIPTION – Fall 2015

GEOG103: Introduction to Physical Geography

Instructor: Dr. Ian J. Walker **Office hours:** T, R 0900-1000 DTB B124
Lectures: M, R 1000-1120 ELL 168
Labs: as scheduled

Objectives: This course introduces students to the study of Physical Geography using an applied, earth-systems approach. The course examines processes within and interrelations between the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere that result in patterns of weather and climate, landforms, soils and ecosystems. Lectures will be structured around ‘real-world’ issues (e.g., climate change, natural hazards, natural resources) where the intersection between Earth sciences and human activities will be explored. Lecture material is complemented by field and laboratory assignments and supplementary readings.

Prerequisites: none.

Recommended Text: There is no required text for this course, although we recommend use of an online e-book entitled, “Fundamentals of Physical Geography” 2nd edition, by Michael Pidwirny & Scott Jones, UBC Okanagan, online at: <http://www.physicalgeography.net>.

Two excellent print textbooks, both with Canadian editions, are:

- De Blij et al. (2010). *Physical Geography. The Global Environment*. 2nd Canadian edition. Oxford University Press (ISBN: 9780195428971) or 2013 4th global edition (ISBN: 9780199859610).
- Strahler, A.H. & Archibold, O.W. (2011). *Physical Geography: Science and Systems of the Human Environment*. 5th Canadian edition. Wiley. (ISBN: 9781118077894).

CourseSpaces website: Once signed in to the UVic webpage, click ‘My online tools’ then ‘CourseSpaces’ where you will find a link to GEOG103. Here you will find all relevant course materials and information (course outline, readings, supplemental lecture materials/links, labs, datasets, etc.).

Evaluation components:	Mid-term exam:	25%
	Labs (5 x 7%):	35%
	Lab Exam:	15%
	Final Exam:	25%

- **NOTE:** students must obtain passing grades for both the examination component (mid-term + final) and the laboratory component (labs + lab exam) to obtain credit

Important Course Policies:

- Students must complete all evaluation components to obtain credit.
- Students must obtain a passing grade on both the examination component (mid-term + final) and the laboratory component (labs + lab exam) to obtain credit.
- Extenuating circumstances &/or exceptions to these policies will require: a) direct discussion with the course instructor in advance, if possible, and b) official medical or counseling documentation.
- Labs are an important part of GEOG103
 - All details regarding your labs & their marks are managed by your TA. Please discuss any issues on labs with them first.
 - A lateness penalty of 25% of the total mark per day will be applied to all late assignments. This deduction will apply unless you make arrangements with your TA in advance or you can provide official medical or counseling documentation for extenuating circumstances.
 - Please attend only the laboratory section for which you are registered. If you must miss a lab, please make arrangements with your TA in advance to attend another section.
 - You must pass the laboratory component (labs + lab exam) to obtain credit for this course.
- Examinations:
 - Attendance for mid-term and final examinations is mandatory. Exceptions will be made only under the following conditions:
 - The instructor is informed before the exam that the absence will occur and agrees that the extenuating circumstances warrant the absence. Personal preferences or commitments (e.g., holidays, travel, etc.) are not considered 'extenuating'.
 - Students must provide official counseling or medical documentation to support their request.
 - Do not sit an exam if you are ill. Contact the instructor immediately and provide medical documentation in advance, if possible. A Request for Academic Concession (<http://registrar.uvic.ca/undergrad/records/documents/def.html>) must be filed by the student as soon as possible following the illness.
- Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.
- Please feel free to contact the course instructor with any concerns.

Grading:

Grades assigned for GEOG103 are in accordance with the Department of Geography grade structure and interpretations as follows:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D
90-100%	85-89%	80-84%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	65-69%	60-64%	50-59%

<i>Passing Grades</i>	<i>Description (as listed in the Undergraduate Calendar)</i>
A+ A A-	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance earned by work which is technically superior, shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
B+ B B-	Very good, good and solid performance earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
C+ C	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory performance earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
D	Marginal performance earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
<p><i>Failing or Temporary Grades (e.g., F, N, DEF) are described in the Undergraduate Calendar (http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html).</i></p> <p><i>Please note: Deffered status (DEF) is a form of Academic Concession granted only in response to documented incidents of serious illness, an accident, or family affliction. Approval requires official medical or counseling documentation and an approved Request for Academic Concession (RAC) form (http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/DeSt.html).</i></p>	

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Lecture Outline:

Date	Lecture	Theme	Topics	Labs
R Sep 10	1	Introduction	Course details, What is Physical Geography?	No labs this week
M Sep 14	2	A. Global climates & climatic change	Global climatic changes & ice ages	Mt. Tolmie field trip
R Sep 17	3		Global climates	
M Sep 21	4		Composition & structure of Earth's atmosphere	1) Climatology lab
R Sep 24	5		Atmospheric circulation & winds, extreme weather	
M Sep 28	6	B. Global Water	The Hydrosphere: water mass & energy exchanges, precipitation	2) Hydrology lab
R Oct 1	7		Watersheds & surface water systems	
M Oct 5	8		Rivers, flooding & fluvial landscapes	3) Stream table experiment
R Oct 8	9		Groundwater systems & resources	
M Oct 12		No lecture – Thanksgiving		No labs this week
R Oct 15	10		Glacier systems, processes & landscapes	
M Oct 19		Mid-term exam (in lecture)		No labs this week
R Oct 22	11	C. Natural Hazards	The Lithosphere: Earth's age, structure & tectonics	
M Oct 26	12		Landscape hazards & risks	4) Mass wasting lab
R Oct 29	13		Slope systems, mass wasting features & hazards	
M Nov 2	14		Permafrost (periglacial) processes & hazards	No labs this week
R Nov 5	15		Coastal processes, landforms & hazards	
M Nov 9		No lecture - Reading Break		No labs this week
R Nov 12	16	D. Biogeography	The Biosphere: origins & organization of life on Earth	
M Nov 16	17		Weathering & soils	5) Biogeography lab
R Nov 19	18		Historical biogeography: evolution, speciation, extinctions	
M Nov 23	19		Ecological biogeography	No labs this week
R Nov 26	20		Island biogeography	
M Nov 30	21		Biogeography Case Study	No labs this week
R Dec 3	22		Course review	