



Houston Community College – Northwest

Distance Education

Geography 1301 Course Syllabus

Course Information:

Course Title: Physical Geography Online

Course Prefix/Number: GEOG 1301

CRN (Section Code): 11793

Semester/Date: Summer 2017 / June 5 – July 9, 2017

Course Description: Geography is a dynamic spatial science that features a heritage of investigating the relationship between people and the natural environment through time and space. This course introduces students to the processes that drive Earth's physical systems. Students will explore the relationships among these physical systems, with emphasis on weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes and landform development, and human interactions with the physical environment. The theoretical focus of this class is on the Earth as a set of interconnected systems guided by mass and energy exchanges. The course meets a non-lab Natural Science Core requirement at Houston Community College.

Course Location: Online (Canvas-Eagle Online); exams will be taken on campus

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor Information:

Name: Bryant Evans

US Mail: Houston Community College - Northwest

Katy Campus, 1550 Foxlake Drive, Suite 359B

Houston, TX 77084

Phone: (713) 718-5828

Email: bryant.evans@hccs.edu

Office Hours: Mondays 9-11 AM (please contact me to schedule an appointment if you would like to meet during my office hours)

Office Location: Katy Campus, 359B

Instructor Webpage: <http://learning.hccs.edu/faculty/bryant.evans>

Distance Education Course - Description:

•This Internet geography course will cover the same materials as a traditional in-class course. One big difference is that it will not be necessary to attend lectures. Rather, we will communicate often with one another online. This course requires you to be disciplined and self-motivated. You will need to rely upon yourself to complete the readings and assignments, study the materials, and participate in discussions. This course also assumes that you have basic computer skills, or a basic level of computer literacy. By the end of the course, you will be comfortable navigating through our "virtual classroom" while simultaneously expanding your geographic skills and knowledge.

Instructional Materials:

Required : "Visualizing Physical Geography, 2/e " by Strahler
ISBN: 978-0-470-62615-3

Note: Other readings may be assigned throughout the semester. Please make sure to have your textbook by Week 2. As a DE student, you have several options in buying your text: (1) visit the HCC Central campus bookstore to purchase books immediately, (2) visit any HCC bookstore to order textbooks to be shipped from the HCC Central campus bookstore to that location – this process usually takes 24-hours, or (3) order online via the HCC Bookstore webpage at <http://hccs.bkstore.com/> . One other affordable option is to purchase an e-text version of the textbook, which provides you with online access to the text for 180 days. This option is available at www.coursesmart.com.

"Summer Pace". Please be aware that the summer semester is just like any regular semester at HCC, only that it is condensed into a much shorter time period. This means the pace for which we will cover the material will be much more rigorous. Therefore, it is especially important to log in several times each week so as to provide yourself the opportunity to complete the assignments you are expected to complete within the given framework of time provided.

Accessing Canvas Online. Canvas-Eagle Online is the name of the classroom management system where all of our online assignments for this class will take place. You will need to log in to Canvas at least a couple times each week throughout the semester to access notes, assignments, etc. The address for accessing Canvas on the web is <https://hccs.instructure.com>. Your Eagle Online ID is the same as your HCC User ID (i.e. W0023456). The first time you log in to Canvas, you will type your user id and the default Eagle Online password of "distance". This password is independent of your online registration password, and it will be your responsibility to change your password. In case you run into technical difficulties, you can access the Eagle-Online help desk at <http://www.hccs.edu/online/technical-support/>

Objectives / Student Learning Outcomes – Courses at HCC have objectives which are centered on "Student Learning Outcomes" (SLOs). These reflect what students will know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate once they have taken a course. The objectives for this course are guided by the measureable core competency and student learning outcome paradigms. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define geography, physical geography, and the earth's four interrelated spheres: the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere.
2. Describe geography in terms of flows, maps, and place.
3. Explain the earth's geographic reference grid, specifically developing an understanding of latitude and longitude.
4. Describe geographic patterns associated with the atmosphere.
5. Explain patterns of climate and weather.
6. Analyze geographic patterns linked to the hydrosphere.
7. Discuss/explain the physical processes and geographic patterns associated with the lithosphere.
8. Describe geographic patterns that are connected to the biosphere.

Core Competencies – Courses offered at HCC which are taken within “core” status meet a set of stringent guidelines which will help the student advance core skills in foundational areas. Physical Geography meets a Life and Physical Sciences core requirement at HCC. Life and Physical Sciences core area courses “focus on describing, explaining, and predicting natural phenomena using the scientific method” and “involve the understanding of interactions among natural phenomena and the implications of scientific principles on the physical world and on human experiences.” By taking a Life and Physical Sciences core offering, you will have the opportunity to further develop the following core competencies: critical thinking skills, communication skills, empirical and quantitative skills, and teamwork skills. Throughout the semester, assignments and assessments in this class will help measure your advancement in each of these core competencies.

Assignments as they relate to each of the core competencies:

Critical Thinking Skills - Examples may include, but are not limited to: research, reports, writings, use of Scientific Method, technology-based compilations or presentations which include analysis, analysis/solutions of problems/case studies, analysis of spatial data and patterns, justification of results, and explanation of reasoning.

Communication Skills – Examples may include, but are not limited to: Assignments which present a grammatically correct essay or speech, effectively organized with a thesis statement, introduction, body, conclusion, supportive reasoning, and appropriately documented evidence. If the assignment is an oral presentation, the assignment should also require effective verbal and nonverbal delivery. Visual design elements should be incorporated into any communication assignment. Visual elements may include graphs, tables, charts, slides, or streaming video as examples.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills – Examples may include, but are not limited to: case studies, atlas exercises, reports, creating or analyzing tables and graphs related to statistical data, projects that utilize applied mathematics.

Teamwork Skills – Examples may include, but are not limited to: collaborative work on case studies, atlas exercises, reports, projects or presentations which measure not only the end result, but quality of contribution, cooperation, and self-management in the process of working on a team-based assignment.

Important Phone Numbers/Resources:

For contacting Geography and Anthropology Department: Ms. Tomi Middleton (713) 718-5625

For questions on Canvas-Eagle Online technical support: (713) 718-5275, option 3

For help resetting Eagle Online Password: (713) 718-8800, option 1

For general information about the Katy Campus: (713) 718-5757

For general information about Houston Community College: (713) 718-2000

Grading. 400 points are possible in this course. Your final grade will be distributed as follows:

Course Grade:

Assignment	% of course grade	Points	Point Totals = Grade
Online Discussions	15%	60	360-400 points (90-100%) = A
Weekly Quizzes	15%	60	320-359 points (80-89%) = B
Course Project	20%	80	280-319 points (70-79%) = C
Midterm Exam	25%	100	240-279 points (60-69%) = D
Final Exam	25%	100	239 or below (below 60%) = F
Total	100%	400	

Note about final grades. HCC does not mail a final grade report to students. Grades are posted to your transcript which can be viewed, online, in the same area where you register. To access this area, you will visit www.hccs.edu and click "Register Here". From there, click "Registration and More" to login and view an unofficial transcript online.

Grading Policy. There will be a midterm exam and a final exam during the course of the semester. A midterm score can't be a replacement for your final exam grade. Extra credit is not available in this course. Generally speaking, make-up assignments will not be allowed. Late assignments will not be accepted. You are responsible for all information given out online. "I didn't know about the assignment because I didn't log in this week" is not an acceptable excuse. Your grade will be a reflection of your overall effort, participation and achievement in the course. More details on assignment grades can be found on our course page.

You will be given from four to seven days to complete most online assignments. Moodle is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, so my assumption is that (even if you are ill) you will have the opportunity at some point to do the assigned work. The only excuse I will accept is that the Houston Community College network or Canvas itself has been down for a significant period of time. (Network outages of an hour or two happen often enough; that is not what I mean by "significant time.") In other words, do not procrastinate until half an hour before any given week's assignments are due.

Quizzes. You will be taking multiple quizzes each week in our class. The questions on the quizzes will be over the material covered in that given week and will primarily serve as a review tool for the text readings you have been doing for our class. The quizzes will typically consist of a combination of multiple choice and true/false questions and you will be provided with 30 minutes to complete each quiz. For most quizzes, you will have one attempt to complete it and need to complete it in one sitting.

Course Project. As part of the requirements for Geography 1301, you will have a course project. More details on the project will be provided to you soon after the semester has begun and the project will be worth 25% of your total grade.

Online Discussions. It is very important for you to login to class each week and participate, not only in completing the quizzes and course project, but also in discussing course-related topics. For the most part, the online discussions will center around your responses and ideas about questions posed by either myself or your text.

Exams. You will be taking your tests on campus at HCC locations this semester for our class. The tests are to be taken on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday during our designated testing weekends. For more information on DE testing times/locations, please check out the following link: <http://de.hccs.edu/student-services/testing-locations/> If you do not take the exams during the designated testing weekend period, then you will not be able to receive credit for it - there will be no exceptions. There will be no make-ups for the exam, and no excuses will be accepted for not completing the exam. You are expected to uphold the strictest standards of academic integrity on the exams - any evidence to the contrary will lead to disciplinary actions, including but not limited to receiving a zero for anyone involved in breaching the exam rules and guidelines. The final will not be cumulative.

Recommended Browsers: It is highly recommended that you either, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari for accessing this or any other Canvas-based course. Students who try using Internet Explorer in Canvas often encounter technical problems, so it is advisable to avoid using Internet Explorer when accessing this class. Remember that the responsibility of access to this course is ultimately the student's responsibility, so please only utilize Firefox, Chrome, or Safari for this class so as to avoid potential technical issues.

Geography 1301 Course Policies:

HCC Mission Statement:

- The Houston Community College System is an open-admission, public institution of higher education offering academic preparation, and lifelong learning opportunities that prepare individuals in our diverse communities for life and work in an increasingly international and technological society. The Northwest Anthropology and Geography Department will provide an environment conducive to learning and encourages academic excellence. Furthermore, the History and Geography faculty will encourage the development of the following competencies: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Critical Thinking and Computer Literacy.

Drop/Withdrawal:

- Obviously, I hope that you will be in this course from start to finish. However, **if for any reason you can't finish, it is your responsibility as the student to initiate dropping or withdrawing from a course.** If you do not contact me or your DE counselor, you risk not being dropped from the course (even if you stop attending) and you will continue to receive grades each week. The only exception to this is if there is no sign of any online activity (not logging in from the beginning of the semester, in which case the instructor reserves the right to drop the student). If it becomes necessary for you to withdraw, it is advisable to initiate the process by contacting your DE Counselor or me. You may also withdraw from class on your own after carefully reviewing your options prior to the deadline through the HCC Student Center. The last day for student withdrawals is **June 26th.**

If you do not initiate a withdrawal and stop attending class, it will likely result in you receiving an "F" for the course. This must be done prior to **4:30 PM on June 26th** in order to receive a "W" on your transcript. The State of Texas imposes penalties on students who drop courses excessively. For example, if you repeat the same course more than twice, you have to pay extra tuition. The Texas Legislature passed a law in 2007 limiting new students to no more than six total course withdrawals throughout their academic career in obtaining a baccalaureate degree. For more information, you are encouraged to review the HCC 6 Drop Policy.

Early Alert Notification: The Distance Education (DE) Department utilizes an Early Alert system managed by the DE counselors to provide outreach and intervention to students who may be at risk of withdrawal or failure. Referrals to this system are typically made by a DE faculty member. If a DE professor is concerned about a student's performance in class, that student may be referred to Early Alert for counseling intervention.

Academic Integrity: Violations of scholastic ethics are considered serious offenses by Houston Community College, the Department of Geography and Anthropology, and by your instructor. Students may consult the HCC Student Handbook to find out more about academic honesty. An online copy can be found at: <http://www.hccs.edu/handbook/StudentP.htm>

ADA Compliance: Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 ET. SEQ.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires that institutions have policies and procedures that protect students' rights with regard to sex/gender discrimination. Information regarding these rights are on the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance. It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly. Know your rights and how to avoid these difficult situations. Log in to: www.edurisksolutions.org . Sign in using your HCC student e-mail account, then go to the button at the top right that says **Login** and enter your student number.

"Course Repeat" Policy. Students who take a course for a third time (or more) will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. Please ask your instructor/counselor about opportunities for tutoring/other assistance prior to considering course withdrawal or if you are not receiving passing grades.

DE Student Handbook/"Netiquette":

- The Distance Education Student Handbook contains policies and procedures unique to the DE student. Students should have reviewed the handbook as part of the mandatory orientation. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's contents. The handbook contains valuable information, answers, and resources, such as DE contacts, policies and procedures (how to drop, attendance requirements, etc.), student services (ADA, financial aid, degree planning, etc.), course information, testing procedures, technical support, and academic calendars. Refer to the DE Student Handbook by visiting this link: <http://de.hccs.edu/de/de-student-handbook>

Two keys to a successful online environment include respect among all participants and open, fluid communication between the members of our community. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. However, remember that opinions are not always based on fact, and it is important to

keep this distinction clear. Additionally, it is essential that you respect the opinions and ideas of your fellow classmates to help maintain a healthy online community.

Contacting the Instructor. There will be several ways you can reach me throughout the semester. The best and most important way to keep in contact with me is via the Inbox/Conversations function in Canvas. Additionally, **it is a requirement for this class to make sure you have access to and regularly check your HCC student email.** If you have any questions about accessing your HCC student email, navigate to the following link for more information: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/student-e-mail/eagle-id/> Alternatively, you may contact me by telephone via my office number at 713.718.5828. I am at the Katy Campus one day a week during the summer session, so the best time to reach me is during my office hours – otherwise, leave me a message and I will try to contact you within a few days. You can also contact me via my other email address: bryant.evans@hccs.edu If you have any individual questions or concerns, please email me between Monday and Friday. If you email me after 5 PM on Friday, do not expect a response until Monday morning.

Workload. This course will follow the standard Carnegie Unit of college credit. For a three-unit course, this translates into an average of about 12-15 hours a week (for a summer course) for class readings, studying and other assignments.

Course Outline. Please note that the content for specific dates given are “best estimates;” they may be adjusted from time to time.

WEEK	CONTENT
Week 1	Planet Earth, Energy Balance, and Air Temperature (Chapters 1-3)
Week 2	Precipitation, Winds, and Weather (Chapters 4-6)
MIDTERM	June 16, 17, or 18 at a designated HCC Campus Location
Week 3	Hydrosphere and Lithosphere (Chapters 8,9, and 11)
Week 4	Biosphere (Ch 15 & 17)
Week 5 (FINAL)	June 30, July 1, or 2 at a designated HCC Campus Location