



Houston Community College - Northwest

Alief Campus

Geography 1301 Course Syllabus

Course Information:

Course Title: Physical Geography
Course Prefix/Number: GEOG 1301
CRN (Section Code): 71542
Semester: SUMMER I 2018 (5-Week)
Site: Alief Campus, Room B213
Class Days/Times: 10:00-11:45am MTWRF (Monday through Friday)
Credit/Contact Hours: 3 / 48 (16 weeks)
Class Structure: Lecture / Discussion

Professor's Name: Ramin Zamanian
Email: Ramin.Zamanian@Hccs.edu
Office Hours/Location: Katy Campus, Room 309
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30

Instructional Materials:

Required: *Exploring Physical Geography*, 2nd edition, by Rohli et al.

Note: This is a digital textbook (ebook) and you will receive instructions to access the book at the beginning of semester. Paper textbooks will not be offered. Also, other (free) readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

Department Contact: Department of Anthropology and Geography
Mr. Bryant Evans – Department Chair, Office Phone (713) 718-5828
Mrs. Tomi Middleton – Assistant, Office Phone (713) 718-5625

Essential Needs Statement:

Any student who faces challenges securing their foods or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Student Success for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

GETTING STARTED IN THE COURSE:

1. Log in to Canvas and read syllabus thoroughly. Check "Modules" for most class information.
2. Obtain a copy of the electronic textbook.
3. Be sure to check both HCC email and Canvas for announcements at least every 1-2 days.

Course Description.

College-level geography courses are intended to help students understand why things are where they are on the surface of the earth. As such, students will have the opportunity to better develop a spatial perspective when thinking about their surroundings or when thinking about other regions of the world.

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.

Course Student Learning Outcomes:

GEOG 1301 – Physical Geography

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of scientific investigation as they apply to Earth's physical systems and processes.
2. Describe and explain the processes of Earth's physical systems: weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes and landform development.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among the Earth's physical systems.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the modifications humans make to the environment through interactions with Earth's physical systems.
5. Define geography, physical geography, and the earth's four interrelated spheres: the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere.
6. Describe and understand geography in terms of flows, maps, and place.

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 History 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.

Academic Discipline Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Learn to explain and analyze spatial and temporal interrelationships, processes, and patterns of human and physical phenomena on the Earth's surface.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of local, regional, national, and international dimensions of geographic issues and translate this into becoming more empathetic and globally-informed citizens.
3. Interpret maps and geospatial tools as a means of applying a greater understanding of the dynamic interplay between environments, people, and places.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills through written, oral, and graphic communication.
5. Develop problem solving, reasoning, and observational skills through geographic inquiry in preparation for continued education at a university and/or employment.

Core Competencies – Assignments as they relate to each of the core competencies:

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.

Workload. This course will follow the standard Carnegie Unit of college credit. This means that for each hour spent in the classroom, you will likely spend two hours studying outside the classroom.

Course Structure. This class is to be lecture-based, and class participation is expected as part of the total grade. There is no lab. There is no "redo" work available.

4 EXAMS, with the lowest score of the first 3 exams dropped: 40-60 questions worth 100 points each. Each exam will predominantly consist of multiple-choice questions, along with several true/false questions. The vast majority, but not all, of the exam questions come from the lecture slides and videos. Not all of the lecture slides will come from the textbook.

For each exam, students will be given several terms from textbook chapters to know which will probably not be covered in class. 3-5 exam questions will come from these. Also, *several questions will come from the lecture itself, not the slides.* Therefore, as with virtually all college courses, good note-taking skills are crucial for success on the exams.

Fourth (final) exam: Also worth 100 points, and not cumulative. It has the same format as the first 3 exams. ***This exam score will NOT be dropped at the end of the semester.*** The final exam must be taken at the scheduled time. It will not be given at any other time except under the college's exam overload policy or by providing an acceptable written excuse.

If there is a case of exam overload, students need to clear it with the college, provide written proof that the overload policy applies to their situation, and **must** notify me in writing at least TWO WEEKS before the final exam date.

Note for all exams:

- Exams are curved infrequently if at all, and if curved would typically only be curved several points at most. Do not expect any given exam to be curved.
- Be sure to bring your student ID with you on the exam days as you may be asked to show your ID.

Note for all assignments:

- **No emailed assignments will be accepted under any circumstances.** This includes papers being turned in early. (Some assignments are to be handwritten, some are to be turned in digitally on Canvas).
- **No late assignments will be accepted during the last week.** Any late assignment can be turned in for up to half credit if turned in before the week of the final.
- Instructions for the research paper, group presentations, and National Parks assignment will be provided in the first 1-2 weeks of the semester.

RESEARCH PAPER/WRITING ASSIGNMENT: The 5-page (double-spaced) research paper is worth 100 points. The assignment instructions will be provided within the first week of class. However, a few major points about the paper need to be made here:

- **TURN IN ON CANVAS ONLY.** Any emailed or handwritten papers will receive a score of zero.
- **Late papers lose 20 points each actual day that is late.** If a paper is more than 2 days late, it can receive a 50% at most. *The late penalty still applies even if the reason for the paper being late involves software or other computer problems.*
- **Papers will receive a score of zero if all or part of the writing from another author is copied into your paper.** More details about plagiarism will be explained at a later date.

TEAM PRESENTATION: A team presentation worth 40 points, and based off the research paper. Teams will give a presentation (10-13 minutes) shortly after turning in research papers. 3/4 of your score will be the instructor's assessment of the presentation, the rest will be from your fellow group members.

The percentage you make as an individual (from your group members' grading) is the maximum you can make for the whole project. Also, the team will lose 30% of their points for each class period the presentation is late without an acceptable excuse.

TEXTBOOK ASSIGNMENTS: Worth 30 points total. Handwritten (and hand-drawn illustrations) only. Please make sure to turn in a hard copy of all of your work.

RIVERS & NATIONAL PARKS ASSIGNMENTS: Worth 20 points each. This assignment applies what we learned throughout the course to studying various national parks and rivers. Part of the exercise must be done outside of class; the rest will be completed during class. Students must turn in a handwritten hard copy on the day the exercise is completed in class.

ATTENDANCE: Worth 20 points. Before the HCC Day of Record, attendance will be taken every day, for administrative purposes. The 20 points will come from 5 random attendance checks taken at some point after the Day of Record.

Despite there being 5 attendance checks, you are expected to attend every class meeting during the course of the semester. You are also expected to be in class on time. This is showing basic respect to your fellow classmates and instructor.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION: Worth 20 points. *Students present for fewer than half of the 5 random attendance checks will automatically receive 0 participation points.* These points can only be fully earned if significantly more than just the same few people participate throughout the semester.

Credit for 20 points includes all class discussion and activities, and students asking relevant questions from time to time. There may also be occasional, brief, in-class writings which are to be submitted by given deadlines.

The number of points to be awarded to the class will be announced towards the end of the semester.

Some other points about class participation:

- Everyone gets the opportunity to fully state their ideas or questions. This means no interrupting your classmates while they are talking. Raise your hand if someone else is talking and you also wish to speak.

- There are no stupid questions, as any question relevant to the course material has value in this class. Chances are good that many people have the same question you may be wondering about.

-Think of your time in the classroom as an opportunity to ask any relevant questions you may have.

Over the course of the semester, students are expected to give thoughtful answers to most of the questions I ask in class, and are encouraged to **respectfully** comment on other students' statements and opinions (do you agree/disagree, and WHY?). I encourage you to respectfully either support your fellow students' arguments or disagree with them, perhaps to encourage someone to consider a different viewpoint. All of us are here to challenge our current knowledge about the world and expand our own understanding of the world.

Course Grading Summary:

First 3 Exams = 200 pts total (after lowest score dropped) Final Exam: 100 pts Research Paper: 100pts Presentation: 40pts Nat'l Park Assignment: 20pts Rivers Assignment: 20pts Textbook Exercises: 30pts Participation: 20pts Attendance: 20pts <u>Total: 550 points</u>
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Reminder: Dropped at the end of the semester: Lowest of first 3 exams. NOT dropped at the end of the semester: Any other grade.

HCC Grading Scale:

A = 100 – 90;.....	4 points per semester hour
B = 89 – 80:	3 points per semester hour
C = 79 – 70:	2 points per semester hour
D = 69 – 60:	1 point per semester hour
59 and below = F.....	0 points per semester hour
IP (In Progress)	0 points per semester hour
W(Withdrawn).....	0 points per semester hour
I (Incomplete).....	0 points per semester hour

AUD (Audit) 0 points per semester hour

IP (In Progress) is given only in certain developmental courses. The student must re-enroll to receive credit. COM (Completed) is given in non-credit and continuing education courses. To compute grade point average (GPA), divide the total grade points by the total number of semester hours attempted. The grades "IP," "COM" and "I" do not affect GPA.

Final Average Grade Curving:

If, and only if, certain conditions are met, I will curve final averages at the end of the semester as follows: **The limit for final average curving is 2.00 points below the next highest grade level. Therefore any final average of 87.99, 77.99, 67.99, or 57.99 will NOT be curved to the next highest grade level.**

Conditions for Grade Curving:

- All exams and the research paper must have a grade of at least 50%, including the dropped exam.
- The student is present for at least half of the random attendance checks.
- Students, individually and as a class, adhere to the Class Etiquette and the Academic Integrity standards.

* Reasons for withdrawing the bonus points and grade curving include people generally not following other class etiquette and academic integrity guidelines on misconduct.

If I need to cancel the attendance bonuses/grade curving, a final average of 89.99, 79.99, 69.99, and 59.99 will mark the limits of an A, B, etc, and will NOT be curved to the next highest grade level.

Aside from the curve, final averages do not get raised under any circumstances, unless you show me a grading error, which I will gladly fix. It does not matter what grade you tell me you want/need in the course – your final average is **solely** based on the total points you *earn*. Wanting to graduate, having a scholarship or needing to get a scholarship in the future are not excuses for me to raise your final grade. *Earn* that graduation or scholarship! Also, enthusiasm and good attendance alone, while appreciated, are not valid reasons for asking to raise a grade, especially the final average. Any personal troubles over the course of the semester that are not excused in an official written document do not qualify as a reason for raising a grade. Do not ask me to make special considerations for you, as I will simply refer you to this paragraph.

Class Etiquette:

Overall, respect of fellow students and instructor is expected. College students are expected to maintain an environment conducive to learning in a lecture room.

Please do not cause any unnecessary distractions. I reserve the right to ask someone causing such a distraction to leave the lecture room.

Anyone making a habit of coming late, or leaving class early, or frequently leaving & returning during class time, without an acceptable reason will be permanently removed from the class.

Avoid conversing as the lecture begins and avoid preparing to leave before the lecture ends. No conversations (texting, whispering, or otherwise continuous conversations) during lectures.

If you must text or check a text message, please do so quickly and quietly, and *occasionally*. Frequent texting or surfing the internet by any one student will result in a zero-texting policy for the class. Surfing the internet with smartphones, I-pads, etc, without being instructed to do so is prohibited.

Laptops are allowed for note-taking only.

Before class, please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices, and remove earbuds and headphones. Avoid sleeping, working on unrelated materials, reading newspapers, magazines, etc, during class. If you have plans to leave class before it is over, inform me before class. You may bring food and drinks so long as you are not causing distractions with them.

Course Policies:

Make-up Exams will be taken in the instructor's office and will need to be taken no later than two weeks after the scheduled exam date. Make-up exams are **only for emergencies**, when official written documentation can be provided to me *at any time before taking the make-up exam*. Written documentation excusing your absence is required. Grades for make-up exams will not be posted until official written documentation is shown.

Make-up exams will NOT be given for personal, familial, or social functions, *routine* dental/medical/legal appointments, vacation travel, being arrested and/or in jail, oversleeping (even if due to power outages or inconsiderate roommates – I recommend having two alarms, with at least one battery-operated).

The acceptable excuses for missing exam, assignment, or attendance check days are:

1. College-sponsored activities: This usually relates to class-related field trips and conferences. *An official written document from the sponsoring group or person must be shown prior to taking the make-up exam.*
2. Jury duty and court appearances: An official note from the court/judge must be shown.
3. Family emergency/death in the family: A letter from a parent or spouse confirming the emergency situation must be shown. The letter must indicate their willingness to be called over the phone by me, and must come with a phone number, as they will be contacted. The student will not be able to take the exam until a family member has been contacted and the situation confirmed. An obituary or funeral program is not sufficient unless you are specifically mentioned as a participant or surviving family member. This is the only case where a parent or spouse will not need to be contacted by me.
4. Severe personal illness or injury: If you are sick enough to miss an exam, you are sick enough to seek medical attention. Thus official documentation from a doctor or hospital must be shown, indicating that the student was ill or injured on the exact day of the exam. *Any claims of illness/injury without a doctor's excuse note are not acceptable for making up an exam.*
5. Atypical work-related duties: Work-related emergencies or unexpected work activities. For example, being called for active duty while serving in the military. A written note from a supervisor will be needed.

Lecture Slides:

I will post lecture slides online 2 days before each exam for students to review.

I will stop providing lecture slides if class attendance becomes low or student tardiness becomes excessive (as per my judgment).

Lecture Speed:

Class lectures will proceed at a reasonable pace. I will slow down or pause for the occasional, honest request by students. Any abuse of this policy will result in action as outlined in the Academic Integrity section of this syllabus.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity involves the avoidance of dishonesty and misconduct in their many forms.

Acts of dishonesty include attempts at cheating on exams, and copying/plagiarism on assignments. **As an HCC policy, all cheating/plagiarism will be documented in reports sent to HCC administration.** Acts of dishonesty will result in an automatic **grade of zero** for the assignment on the 1st offense, and an **F for the course** on the 2nd offense.

Misconduct pertains to what has been mentioned in the Class Etiquette portion of the syllabus, and serious misconduct is also reported immediately to HCC administration.

Violations of scholastic ethics are considered serious offenses by Houston Community College, the Department of Anthropology and Geography, 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>

Drop/Withdrawal:

It is the responsibility of the student to drop or withdraw from this course. Aside from excessive tardiness or other behavioral problems, the instructor will not drop/withdraw any student. If you do not initiate a withdrawal, it will result in you receiving an "F" for the course.

The last day for student withdrawals is June 25, 2018. This must be done prior to 4:30 PM on that date 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.

"Incomplete" Grade Policy. A student may only receive an Incomplete grade for the semester if the following conditions are met:

- 1) The student has already completed over 2/3rds of the graded work for the course.
- 2) The student is involved in a serious emergency situation requiring the student to miss extensive amounts of time during the semester, and the student has provided acceptable written documentation to warrant an Incomplete grade.

- 3) If no such written documentation is available, the student may ask an advisor or an administrator to send a letter to the instructor requesting an Incomplete grade for the student.

“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.

Early Alert Notification: HCC utilizes an Early Alert system managed by the HCC 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 faculty member. If a professor is concerned about a student's performance in class, that student may be referred to Early Alert for counseling intervention.

ADA Compliance:

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please meet with a campus Abilities Counselor as soon as possible in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and Ability Services. It is the policy and practice of HCC to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. For more information, please go to <http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/>

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972, 20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 ET. SEQ.

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex-including pregnancy and parental status-in educational programs and activities. If you require an accommodation due to pregnancy please contact an Abilities Services Counselor. The Director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator. All inquiries concerning HCC policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504), and complaints may be directed to:

David Cross

Director EEO/Compliance

Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity

3100 Main

(713) 718-8271

[Houston, TX 77266-7517](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/) or [Houston, TX 77266-7517](http://www.hccs.edu/district/students/disability-services/) or Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu

Campus Carry

At HCC the safety of our students, staff, and faculty is our first priority. As of August 1, 2017, Houston Community College is subject to the **Campus Carry** Law (SB11 2015). For more information, visit the HCC **Campus Carry** web page at <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/police/campus-carry/>.

HCC Policy Statements: Access Student Services Policies on their Web site:

<http://central.hccs.edu/students/student-handbook/>

Accessing Moodle-Eagle Online / Canvas. Canvas is the name of the classroom management system where the web-enhanced segments of our course will take place. The address for accessing Canvas on the web is <https://eo2.hccs.edu/login/index.php> (SUBJECT TO CHANGE). 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://bbcrm.edusupportcenter.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=8513>

Important Phone Numbers:

For Canvas Online technical support: (713) 718-2000 option 4-option 2-option 3.

For general information about the campus: Ask the information desk (1st floor).

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

EGLS₃-- Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System: At HCC, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the HCC Student System online near the end of the term.

Schedule/Course Outline - Please note that the content for specific dates given are "best estimates;" they may be adjusted from time to time, with advanced notice.

Please print out this schedule and have it somewhere easily accessible.

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>LECTURE TOPIC</u>	<u>CHAP</u>
Start Date			.
1) 6/4		-The Nature of Physical Geography -Energy and Matter in the Atmosphere	1, 2
2) 6/11	-EXAM 1: MON Ch. 1, 2, 3	-Atmospheric Motion -Atmospheric Moisture -Weather Systems, Severe Weather	3, 4, 5
3) 6/18	-EXAM 2: TUES Ch. 3, 4, 5, 6 -RESEARCH PAPER DUE FRIDAY 11:59PM	-Atmos-Ocean-Cryos Interactions -Climates around the World -Biomes -Plate Tectonics	6, 7, 18, 10
4) 6/25	- Last Day to Drop: Monday -PRESENTATIONS: Tuesday -EXAM 3: Wednesday Ch. 7, 18, 10, 11 -Nat'l Parks Assignment: Friday	-Volcanoes, Earthquakes -Weathering and Mass Wasting -Fresh Water of the Continents	11, 12, 8
5) 7/2	-Rivers Assignment: Tuesday -NO CLASS WEDS. -FINAL EXAM: Thursday at 10AM Ch. 8, 12, 13, 14 -BONUS DUE: Thursday 8:00PM	-Landforms Made by Running Water -Glaciers and Glacial Landforms	13, 14