



## Houston Community College - Northwest

### DISTANCE EDUCATION ONLINE COURSE

#### Geography 1301 Course Syllabus

#### Course Information:

<b>Course Title:</b>	Physical Geography
<b>Course Prefix/Number:</b>	GEOG 1301
<b>CRN (Section Code):</b>	71529
<b>Semester:</b>	SUMMER 1 (5-WEEK) 2018
<b>Site:</b>	N/A – ONLINE ( <i>EXCEPT EXAM DAYS – EXAMS ARE ALL ON-CAMPUS</i> )
<b>Class Days/Times:</b>	N/A – ONLINE
<b>Credit/Contact Hours:</b>	3 / 48 (16 weeks)
<b>Class Structure:</b>	Lecture / Discussion
<b>Professor's Name:</b>	Ramin Zamanian
<b>Email:</b>	Ramin.Zamanian@Hccs.edu
<b>Office Hours/Location:</b>	Katy Campus, Room 309 (Office Hours: Tues 1:30-3:30)

#### 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.

#### Instructional Materials:

Required:	Exploring Physical Geography, 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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. Other (free) readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

#### 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.

### **COURSE STRUCTURE:**

This class is to be lecture-based, with class participation expected as part of the total grade. There is no lab. The exams and assignments for the entire course will be worth 450 points total. There is no "redo" work available.

**3 EXAMS, with the lowest score of the first 2 exams dropped:** Each of the first 2 exams will have 40-60 questions, and the final exam will have 80 questions. The first 2 exams will be worth 100 points each, and the final exam will be worth 150 points.

They will all be mostly multiple choice, plus several true/false questions. The vast majority, but not all, of the exam questions come from the lecture slides and videos. *Many of the lecture slides and other material will not come from the textbook.*

For each exam, students will be given several terms to know which will not likely be covered in lectures. 3-5 exam questions will come from these.

Also, *several questions will come from the lecture itself, not the text/pictures on the slides.* Therefore, as with virtually all college courses, good note-taking skills during the lectures are crucial for success on the exams.

**Fourth (final) exam:** Worth 150 points and not cumulative. It has the same format as the first 3 exams except more questions. *This exam score will NOT be dropped at the end of the semester.*

**Exams are curved infrequently if at all. Do not expect any given exam to be curved.**

**RESEARCH PAPER/WRITING ASSIGNMENT:** The paper is worth 100 points. A paper assignment will come separately from this syllabus during the first two weeks of the semester. However, a few very important points about the paper need to be made here:

**At the very least, papers will receive a score of zero if *all or part* of the writing from another author is copied into your paper, without acknowledging the source.** More details about plagiarism will be explained at a later date.

**Course papers will ONLY be accepted through the CANVAS Dropbox. This includes papers being turned in early. Late papers lose 30 points per day (not accepted after 2 days due to semester averages needing to be turned in to HCC by then).**

*The late penalty still applies even if the reason for the paper being late involves software or other computer problems.*

Students sending papers via e-mail will be asked to submit the paper to the CANVAS Dropbox, and the late penalty will still be assessed if the paper is emailed late. Only papers in the CANVAS Dropbox will be graded.

**FORUM PARTICIPATION:** Worth 100 points total, this grade is divided into 3 parts: Discussion Forum individual participation (70 points), overall class participation (10 points), and Research Forum participation (20 points).

**Discussion Forum Individual Grade (70 points):**

During most weeks, a new Discussion Forum will be made available. A satisfactory post will earn a student 7 points. Students can receive a maximum of 14 points per discussion forum.

Some forums have discussion questions for anyone to answer, others will be questions from the textbook. When posting in the forums, you'll need do the following to get credit:

1) Let the class know in the forum which question you will answer. If someone has already posted on a question that you want to discuss, you can either respond to their post in a thoughtful, meaningful way (maybe add an idea or question a part of the person's answer) or write a new post but make sure that you are not essentially repeating someone else's answer.

2) To get full credit, your forum posts should be roughly 2-4 sentences. If you are writing a response that is much longer, please write a brief summary of your main point at the top of your response. Posts that are not reasonably concise, to-the-point, or contribute in a meaningful way (such as merely repeating someone else's forum post) will not be graded.

Class Participation Grade (10 points):

The class participation points can only be fully earned if significantly more than just the same few people participate in the forum discussions throughout the semester, people are responding to other students' posts from time to time, and if I see people voluntarily posting more than 1 good forum post per week, consistently.

Students are expected to give thoughtful answers to the questions posted online, and are encouraged to **respectfully/professionally** comment on other students' statements and opinions (do you agree/disagree, and WHY?). I encourage you to verbally either support your fellow students' arguments or disagree with them. Disagreements are not to be given or taken as a personal attack. Rather they are to encourage consideration of a different viewpoint, as all of us are here to challenge our current knowledge about the world and expand our understanding of the world.

Research Forum Grade (20 points):

The Research Forums are centered on specific topics. Typically there will be 2 research forums, and their availability and deadlines will be announced during the semester. These often take place towards the end of the semester.

Course Grading Summary:

First 2 Exams = 100 pts total  
(after lowest score dropped)  
Final Exam: 150 pts  
Research Paper: 100 pts  
Discussion Forums: 70 pts  
Research Forums: 20 pts  
Class Participation: 10 pts

**Total: 450 points**

Reminder:

Dropped at the end of the semester: Lowest of the first 2 exams.

NOT dropped at the end of the semester: Any other grade.

## Grade Distribution

%

A:	100-90.00
B:	89.99-80.00
C:	79.99-70.00
D:	69.99-60.00
F:	59.99 and below

### **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:**

- Final Average no more than 2.00 points below next highest grade level
- All exams must have a grade of at least 50%, even the dropped exam grades.
- The student posts at least half of the number of required (and acceptable) posts.
- 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 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*. Having a scholarship or needing to get a scholarship in the future are not excuses for me to raise your grade. *Earn* that 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. **Please do not ask me to make special considerations for you, as I will simply refer you to this paragraph.**

## **Course Policies:**

**Deadlines:** Exams need to be taken on the weekends designated on the class schedule. For forums, students will typically have 7 days from the day a discussion forum thread is started to respond. Students are expected to post in discussion by the end of those respective weeks. The research paper has a specific date when it is due, which is shown in the syllabus schedule.

**Technology Requirements.** Students will need Internet access plus Microsoft Office 2013.

**Time Requirement.** This class is to be lecture-based, with class participation expected as part of the total grade. Because Geog 1301 is a 3-hour credit course, spread out over 5 weeks, student should expect to spend roughly 15 hours per week listening to lectures, discussing on the forum, and reading their textbooks.

### **Communications:**

The instructor will respond to urgent emails as quickly as possible and will respond to any other types of emails typically 2 business days. After 2 business days, if there is no response, simply re-send the email to the instructor. The professor will participate in the forums as needed to help guide the discussions.

**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.

### **Class Etiquette:**

College students are expected to maintain an environment conducive to learning in an online setting. Students are expected to treat all others with respect, and to avoid posting inappropriate content and causing unnecessary distractions or disruptions in the forums.

The professor has the right to eject any student from the class, or revoke privileges such as potential bonus points and grade curving, if deemed necessary. Students are also expected to report cheating, which is part of academic integrity, described below.

### **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. Any cheating/plagiarism will be documented in a report 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 2<sup>nd</sup> offense.

Misconduct pertains to what has been mentioned in the Class Etiquette portion of the syllabus.

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.

**"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 or Houston, TX 77266-7517 or [Institutional.Equity@hccs.edu](mailto: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/>.

**TECHNOLOGY SERVICES:**

**HCC Online Student Handbook**

The HCC Online Student Handbook contains rules and procedures unique to the online 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 such as 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.



**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 (1<sup>st</sup> floor).

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

**EGLS<sub>3</sub>-- 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.

**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

See course schedule below.

**Schedule/Course Outline** - Please note that the content for specific dates given are "best estimates;" they may be adjusted from time to time, although the exam dates will most likely remain as is.

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

***\*THE TESTS WILL BE PENCIL/PAPER TESTS ON CAMPUS ON WEEKENDS. INFORMATION ON THE OFFICIAL TIMES, DAYS, AND CAMPUSES TO ATTEND WILL BE SENT TO YOU.***

**HCC Online Testing Locations (note: subject to change – see my announcements for the official days/times):** <http://www.hccs.edu/online/testing--tutoring/>

You can also email questions about testing times and locations to [hcc.online@hccs.edu](mailto:hcc.online@hccs.edu)

<u>WEEK</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>CHAPTER/LECTURE TOPIC</u>	<u>CH.#</u>
<b>Start Date</b>			
1) 6/4		-The Nature of Physical Geography -Energy and Matter in the Atmosphere	1, 2
2) 6/11	<b><i>-EXAM 1: Ch. 1, 2 Weekend of June 15-17 (on-campus)</i></b>	-Atmospheric Motion -Atmospheric Moisture	3,4
3) 6/18	<b><i>-EXAM 2: Ch. 3, 4, 5, 6 Weekend of June 22-24 (on-campus)</i></b>	-Weather Systems, Severe Weather -Atmos-Ocean-Cryos Interactions	5, 6
4) 6/25	<b><i>- Last Day to Drop: June 25  -RESEARCH PAPER DUE THURS 11:59PM</i></b>	-Climates around the World -Water Resources -Plate Tectonics	7, 8, 10
5) 7/2	<b><i>-Research Forums Due Tues 11:59pm  -BONUS DUE: Thurs at 11:59pm  -FINAL EXAM: Ch. 7,8, 10, 11, 12, 14 Weekend of July 6- July 8 (on-campus)</i></b>	-Earthquakes, Volcanoes -Weathering and Mass Wasting -Glaciers and Glacial Landforms	11, 12, 14