

GGS 102-001

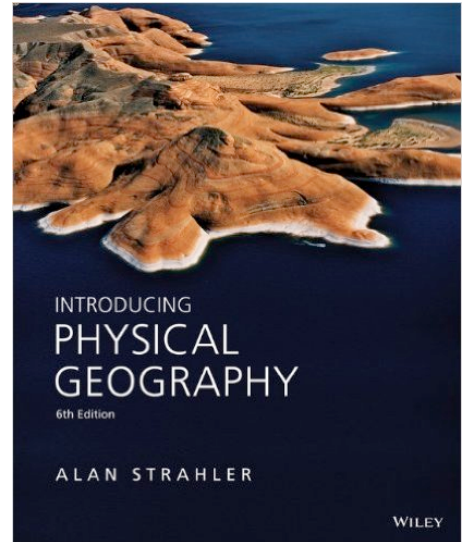
Physical Geography

Spring 2016

Instructor: Sharon Spradling, Adjunct Professor
Department of Geography and GeoInformation Science (GGS)
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Office in room 2219 of Exploratory Hall
Office hours Tuesdays 3:00-4:00 PM (right after class)
or by appointment

Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:45 PM
Room 107 of Sandbridge Hall

Textbook: *Introducing Physical Geography* (6th Edition).
Author: Alan Strahler
Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013
ISBN-13: 978-1118396209
ISBN-10: 1118396200



Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

This is an introductory course in physical geography. It is designed to provide you with an understanding of the natural features of the earth including earth-sun relations, weather, climate, soils, vegetation, geology and landforms. We will also discuss the tools geographers use such as maps, geographic information systems, and types of remote sensing.

Course Objectives:

By attending class lectures, reading the assigned book chapters, and independent study, students will be able to:

1. Learn the vocabulary and basic concepts involved in physical geography
2. Understand basic methods used in geography to study earth systems
3. Use basic geographic skills to analyze the physical phenomena of the earth

Grading Policy:

There will be 3 in-class exams and a final exam. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest exam grade out of the first three exams, including a missed exam. For this reason, I will not give make up exams even with a valid excuse. If you miss the first exam (even with a valid excuse) you will receive an F as a midterm grade, even though it will still be possible for you to make an A as your final grade. Your grades will always be updated and visible in Blackboard. You must take the final exam to pass the class. If you miss the final exam, you must notify me immediately and I will require documentation such as a letter from your physician in order to give you a make-up final. If you miss the final exam without a valid reason, you will receive an F as your grade. Final grades will be calculated as follows:

	<u>% of Final Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
<u>Exams I, II and III (drop lowest grade)</u>	60%	600
<u>Final Exam (comprehensive)</u>	40%	400
	100%	Total = 1000

Grading Scale:

Midterm and final grades will be assessed as follows:

<u>% Range</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
90-100%	A
80-89.9%	B
70-79.9%	C
60-69.9%	D
0-59.9%	F

If you do not take an exam on the scheduled day your grade will be a zero. If you show up late for an exam after other students have finished and left the room, you will not be permitted to take the exam.

Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	(Jan 19 & 21)	Introduction to Geography and Mapping
2	(Jan 26 & 28)	Earth as a Rotating Planet
3	(Feb 2 & 4)	Earth's Global Energy Balance
4	(Feb 9)	EXAM I
	(Feb 11)	Air Temperature
5	(Feb 16 & 18)	Atmospheric Moisture and Precipitation
6	(Feb 23 & 25)	Winds and Global Circulation/Weather Systems
7	(Mar 1)	EXAM II
	(Mar 3)	Climates and Climate Change
8	(Mar 8 & 10)	SPRING BREAK
9	(Mar 15 & 17)	Biogeographic Processes
10	(Mar 22 & 24)	Biogeography
11	(Mar 29 & 31)	Soils and Earth Materials
12	(Apr 5)	EXAM III
	(Apr 7)	Plate Tectonics
13	(Apr 19 & 21)	Tectonic and Volcanic Landforms
14	(Apr 26 & 28)	Weathering and Mass Wasting; Freshwater
15	(May 3)	Landforms
16	(May 4-11)	FINAL EXAMS

GMU Email Accounts & Blackboard

You must use and regularly check your GMU email account and Blackboard to receive information for this class. Please do not send emails to me from non-GMU accounts. If you send me an email at sspradli@masonlive.gmu.edu I will normally respond within 24 hours.

Honor Code

You are expected to follow the George Mason University rules of student conduct as noted in the catalog.

Office of Disability Services

If you require academic accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703)993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. ODS will then contact me to arrange appropriate accommodations.

Communications Policy

Please turn cell phone sounds off, and do not text or talk during class. If you use a laptop for note taking, please do not conduct other business on your computer during class as this is very distracting for your classmates.

If you have any questions during class, raise your hand and I will be happy to answer them.