

Distance Education GGS 102: Physical Geography

Summer Session A 2016

GGG 102 fulfills Mason Core requirement in Natural Science Non lab

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Virtual Office Hours:

Available by Skype daily for student inquiries. Appointments should be scheduled by email. I am available from Sunday afternoon to Friday afternoon: within this 5 days period, I will do my very best to respond to student inquiries within 24 hours.

Honor Code:

“Students members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.”

In this course, you are not to:

- Access sources/information during an on-line exam/quiz
- Give help or information/work to a friend/classmate

[Read the Honor Code for a list of definitions and examples](#)

Content:

“Patterns, problems, and prospects of the world’s principal human-geographic regions. Emphasis will be made on areal differentiation and the role geographic differences play in the interpretation of the current world scene (from the George Mason University Catalog 2010-2011).” In the changing world, this course will encourage students to make important connections across boundaries.

Course Prerequisites:

There are no formal prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand spatial awareness by using appropriate geographic tools.
2. Describe and then explain a geographic document such as map/photograph/chart.
3. Identify, evaluate, and properly cite resources appropriate to the field, such as audio/visual/online/print materials, or artifacts.
4. Understand global patterns.
5. Understand the interconnectedness, difference, and diversity of a global society.
6. Analyze global problems or issues.
7. Build an international trip project using Google Earth.

Required textbook:

Physical Geography, Strahler, Wiley Editions

Please note that this textbook can only be found at the GMU bookstore as it is a custom textbook. This explains why the page numbers in the "reading assignments" refer to the page number appearing at the bottom of the page in the custom textbook.

The information in this custom textbook is originally from Introducing Physical Geography, 6th edition Strahler, Wiley Editions

I do expect every student to buy the textbook, an essential support of the class

Important Dates:

- **Last day to add class:** Wednesday May 18, 2016
- **Last day to drop without penalty:** Wednesday May 18, 2016
- **Memorial Day Holiday (no class):** Monday May 30, 2016

Learning Community:

In this 100% or asynchronous online course:

- Each week is divided into 3 sessions; sessions start on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week.
- Each session is structured as follows: assigned readings from the textbook, video lectures, and assignments.

Working online requires dedication and organization. Students must check their GMU email messages on a **daily** basis and communicate any questions or problems that might arise promptly.

Netiquette:

In our online learning community, we must be respectful of one another. Please be aware that innocent remarks can be easily misconstrued. Sarcasm and humor can be easily taken out of context. When communicating, please be positive and diplomatic. I encourage you to learn more about [Netiquette](#).

Performance-based assignments:

All students will be evaluated by the tasks which appear below.

*****Due to the condensed nature and rapid pace of the course, late submissions are not accepted for any assignments, outside of valid documented extenuating circumstances.**

Course Orientation Quiz:

The course orientation quiz is available at the beginning of Week 0, Monday May 9 2016, and it is due no later than Sunday May 22 at 11:59 pm.

Please read the syllabus and become familiar with the course schedule and policies.

Students have 15 minutes to complete the course orientation quiz. The quiz has eight questions consisting of multiple choice and true/false and each question is worth .25 point.

Students have 2 attempts for the course orientation quiz: the lower grade will be dropped.

Test:

There are 2 tests scheduled for Summer Session A.

Each test will last one hour. Questions will be displayed one at a time. The questions will be multiple choice or True/False. Once an answer is submitted the next question will appear.

There is no backtracking.

Questions will be generated from all assigned material: reading assignments, video lectures, and exercises.

Each test will have 50 questions. Two of these questions are extra credit. Each question is worth half of .5 point.

Exercise:

There are 5 exercises scheduled for Summer Session A.

Discussion:

There are 3 Discussions scheduled for Summer Session A.

Students must submit an initial post and reply to four other classmates.

The initial post and the four replies must be submitted on two different days.

Initial posts and the four replies each must range between 50 to 60 words.

Final Project:

“Why do people live in the immediate proximity of a volcano?”

The description of the Final Project can be found in the “Syllabus and Documents.” Please read it carefully.

There are two steps to completing your Final Project.

1. Week 3/Session 1(2 points)

2. **Week 5/Session 2 (19 points): Submit your individual Final Project no later than Thursday June 16 at 11:59 pm.** Please plan ahead as final projects not submitted at this date and time will be graded as a zero.

Please note that all the times are EST (Eastern Standard Time)

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL ACTIVITIES.

*****Due to the condensed nature and rapid pace of the course, late submissions are not accepted for any assignments, outside of valid documented extenuating circumstances.**

GRADING PERCENTAGE

48%	Tests
21%	Final Project
9%	Discussions
20%	Exercises
2%	Course Orientation Quiz

Grade cut-offs:

- A 90% – 100%
- B 80% - 89.99%
- C 69% - 79.99%
- D 60% - 68.99%
- F less than 60%

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:

Hardware:

You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required to take a distance education course consider and allow for: 1) the storage amount needed to install any additional software and 2) space to store work that you will do for the course. If you are considering the purchase of a new computer, please go to <http://itservices.gmu.edu/services/services-students.cfm> to see recommendations.

Software:

This course uses Blackboard as the learning management system.

You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See [supported browsers and operating systems](#).

Log in to [myMason](#) to access this course.

Access to a Computer Workstation with: Web browser (See Blackboard [supported browsers and operating systems](#))

Adobe Acrobat Reader ([free download](#))

Flash Player ([free download](#))

Windows Media Player ([free download](#))

Microsoft Office Word ([purchase](#))

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

STUDENTS EXPECTATIONS:

Academic Integrity

Students must be responsible for their own work, and students and faculty must take on the responsibility of dealing explicitly with violations. The tenet must be a foundation of our university culture. [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/distance>].

Honor Code

Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode>].

MasonLive/Email (GMU Email)

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. [See <https://thanatos.gmu.edu/masonlive/login>].

Patriot Pass

Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web, Virtual Computing Lab, and WEMS. [See <https://thanatos.gmu.edu/passwordchange/index.jsp>].

Responsible Use of Computing

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].

Students are expected to follow courteous Internet etiquette

STUDENTS SERVICES:

University Libraries

University Libraries provides resources for distance students. [See <http://library.gmu.edu/distance>].

Writing Center

The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>]. You can now sign up for an Online Writing Lab (OWL) session just like you sign up for a face-to-face session in the Writing Center, which means YOU set the date and time of the appointment! Learn more about the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) (found under Online Tutoring).

Counseling and Psychological Services

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu>].

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment," is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy>].

SCHEDULE

*****Please note that the page numbers in the "reading assignments" refer to the page number appearing at the bottom of the page in your textbook.**

Learning Modules	Read the Reading Assignments	View Video Lectures	Submit Assignments no later than the due date
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<p>Week 0 Session 0 05/09 Introduction</p>	<p>3 Easy Steps</p>	<p>Course Orientation Video</p>	<p>Course orientation quiz due no later than Sunday 05/22 at 11:59 pm Practice Google Earth</p>
<p>Week 1 Session 1 05/16 Geography</p>	<p>Textbook The geographic grid Page 16 to Page 18 Global time Page 22 to Page 25</p> <p>Other readings</p>	<p>Geography Scientific Method</p>	<p>Introduce yourself Practice Google Earth</p>
<p>Week 1 Session 2 05/18 Geographic Tools</p>	<p>Textbook The shape of the Earth Pages 14 and 15 Map projection Page 18 to Page 22</p> <p>Other readings</p>	<p>Geographic Tools GIS GIS Demo</p>	<p>Exercise 1 due no later than Sunday 05/22 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 1 Session 3 05/20 The Earth's Global energy balance</p>	<p>Textbook The Earth's Revolution around the Sun Page 25 to Page 30 The Ozone layer Page 34 to Page 35</p> <p>Other readings</p>	<p>Solar System Solar System 1 Energy Essentials</p>	<p>Exercise 2 due no later than Sunday 05/22 at 11:59 pm The course orientation quiz will close on Sunday 05/22 at 11:59 pm</p>

<p>Week 2 Session 1 05/23 Earth materials and plate tectonics</p>	<p>Textbook The structure of the Earth Page 199 to Page 201 Earth materials and the cycle Rock change Page 201 to Page 211 The Wilson cycle and supercontinents Page 227 to Page 229 Other readings</p>	<p>Pangea Plate Boundaries</p>	<p>Test 1 due no later than Tuesday 05/31 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 2 Session 2 05/25 Tectonic and volcanic landforms</p>	<p>Textbook Tectonic landforms Page 236 to Page 246 Other readings</p>	<p>Earthquakes Volcanoes Yellowstone Hot Spot Bill Burton's interview</p>	<p>Discussion 1: the post and the four replies are due no later than Tuesday 05/31 at 11:59 pm.</p>
<p>Week 2 Session 3 05/27 Weathering and Mass Wasting</p>	<p>Textbook Chapter 9 Page 266 to Page 282 Other readings</p>	<p>Weathering Mass Wasting Landslide Earthflow Lahar</p>	<p>Exercise 3 due no later than Tuesday 05/31 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 3 Session 1 06/01 Fresh water of the continents</p>	<p>Textbook Chapter 10 Page 284 to 314 Other readings</p>	<p>The Water Cycle Rivers Ogallala Aquifer</p>	<p>Final Project's Step 1 due no later than Sunday 06/05 at 11:59 pm Exercise 4 due no later than Sunday 06/05 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 3 Session 2 06/03 Landforms made by waves and winds</p>	<p>Textbook Chapter 12 Page 346 to Page 380 Other readings</p>	<p>Tides Waves A tidal wave Tsunami</p>	<p>Discussion 2: the post and the four replies are due no later than Sunday 06/05 at 11:59 pm.</p>

<p>Week 4 Session 1 06/06 Air Temperature</p>	<p>Textbook Temperature structure of the atmosphere Page 69 to Page 70 Daily and annual cycles of air temperature Page 71 to Page 75 World patterns of air temperature Page 75 to Page 102 Other readings</p>	<p>Temperature: observation Temperature: explanation Arctic Ocean is sets record low</p>	<p>Test 2 due no later than Sunday 06/12 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 4 Session 2 06/08 Atmospheric moisture and precipitation</p>	<p>Textbook Chapter 4 Page 90 to Page 122 Other readings</p>	<p>Water Precipitation Tornado</p>	<p>Discussion 3: the post and the four replies are due no later than Sunday 06/12 at 11:59 pm.</p>
<p>Week 4 Session 3 06/10 Winds and global circulation</p>	<p>Textbook Chapter 5 Page 129 to Page 155 Other readings</p>	<p>Wind essentials Coriolis Force Global patterns of air atmospheric pressure Local winds</p>	<p>Exercise 5 due no later than Sunday 06/12 at 11:59 pm</p>
<p>Week 5 Session 1 06/13 Weather systems</p>	<p>Textbook Air mass and fronts Page 163 to Page 169 Mid latitude Anticyclones and Cyclones Page 169 to Page 179 Other readings</p>	<p>Weather One jet stream: the Polar Jet Stream Hurricane</p>	<p>Work on Final Project</p>
<p>Week 5 Session 2 Final Session 06/16 Final Project</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Final Project is due no later than Thursday 06/17 at 11:59 pm</p>