

Physical Geography – GGS 102-DL1
George Mason University
Spring 2023
January 23rd – May 6th
Online

Instructor: Nana Ama Obeng Nti

Co-Instructor: Sherry Young

Office: Online only for 2023

E-mail instructor: nobengnt@gmu.edu

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Online office hours Nana: Thursdays 2-4 on Zoom and available by appointment via email

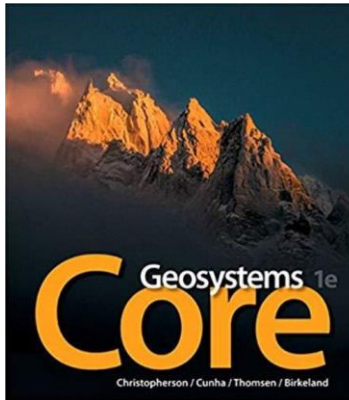
Online office hours Sherry: Mondays 1:00-4:00 and available via email

Course Overview: Physical geography is the spatial study of the natural materials and processes that interact on Earth. In physical geography, Earth is studied from a systems science perspective which emphasizes the interactions between the atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere, and biosphere. In this course, students will become familiar with climate, weather, landforms, earth processes, and ecosystems through an examination of their spatial distributions and patterns.

Prerequisites: No prior coursework is required, but basic computer skills are a must.

Enrollment and repeat policy: This course adheres to the general Mason policy that an undergraduate course may be repeated for grade up to three times; however, some majors may have more restrictive limits on specific courses, for more information please check with your advisor. Dropping or withdrawing (W grade) from a course is not counted as a repeat in this policy.

Required Textbook: Geosystems Core Plus the Modified Mastering Geography with eText 1st edition by Robert W. Christopherson, Stephen Cunha, Charles E. Thomsen, and Ginger Birkeland ISBN: 9780321949554. Make sure the version you buy includes the **modified** online access code; assignments will be linked to Blackboard.



**The fastest and highly recommended option, is to buy the modified code with the etext through Pearson by clicking on one of the Pearson links through Blackboard. This is the easiest way to connect and have immediate access. You may also buy directly from Pearson online and get the instant access Modified Mastering Geography Code with the etext. The link for this is below. You may buy a physical copy of the book if you would like; but honestly, the etext is better and probably cheaper. The etext has additional content such as videos in each chapter. Either way, you'll need to connect the code through Blackboard; with the modified code, there isn't a class code to enter. It is important to get instant access; you will have homework and a quiz due the first week.

Please email me if you have any questions, I go over this in detail on the welcome video as well. If you buy the option for \$89.99 it includes everything you need and you don't have to buy anything else.

Technology Requirements:

1. Regular access to a computer and mouse: updated enough to view and listen to videos online and to complete assignments on Blackboard and the Mastering Geography site. There are several computer labs on campus available for student use. A phone alone will not be adequate.
2. GGS computer lab: lab in EXPL 2102 is open 24 hours for you to use. Registration in a GGS class should automatically grant you swipe access. Please contact ggsit@gmu.edu to report issues.
3. Microsoft Word: assignments will have to be uploaded as a PDF or Word doc. into blackboard. Ability to view PowerPoints and PDFs.
4. Reliable internet access.

Important Dates:

First day of classes	1/23
Last day to drop – full refund	2/6
Last day to drop – 50% refund	2/13
Unrestricted Withdrawal Period	2/14 – 2/27
Mid-term Evaluation Period	2/20 – 3/24
Selective Withdrawal Period	2/28 – 4/3
Spring Break	3/12 – 3/18
Exam 1	2/26 – 3/4
Exam 2	4/2 – 4/8
Last Week of Class & Exam 3	4/30 – 5/6

Mason Core: Natural Science

Mason Core natural sciences courses engage students in scientific exploration; foster their curiosity; enhance their enthusiasm for science; and enable them to apply scientific knowledge and reasoning to personal, professional, and public decision-making. This course meets learning outcomes 1 through 4 for Natural Science.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand how scientific inquiry is based on investigation of evidence from the natural world, and that scientific knowledge and understanding: a) evolves based on new evidence, and b) differs from personal and cultural beliefs.
2. Recognize the scope and limits of science.
3. Recognize and articulate the relationship between the natural sciences and society and the application of science to societal challenges (e.g., health, conservation, sustainability, energy, natural disasters, etc.).
4. Evaluate scientific information (e.g., distinguish primary and secondary sources, assess credibility and validity of information).

General information and Policies:

1. This course is an asynchronous online course; there are no set course meetings, as all course materials are available for students to access online. **Note: there are still set deadlines and material will be available in scheduled weekly content folders.** General information about online courses for George Mason can be found at <https://masononline.gmu.edu/faqs/#FAQ1?cmgfrm=www.google.com>

2. This online course consists of 15 weekly modules that start at 12:00 am Sunday and end on Saturday at 11:59 pm EST of the same week. You may work at your own pace during the week; however, all assignments, quizzes, and exams must be completed by 11:59 pm on Saturday of the assigned week. **Expected total time required** to work on assignments **per week range between 6-10 hours** depending on how fast you read and complete the assignments and how comfortable you are with the material. Some weeks have more assignments than others. Assignments are available a week early on the Mastering Geography Website for anybody who would like to work ahead. **Exams and quizzes are only available during the assigned week** and will be taken on Blackboard. Late assignments will only be accepted at the discretion of the professor for extenuating circumstances, in general late assignments receive a grade of 0. **Make-up exams will be given only for University approved excused absences** with documentation. Assignments serve as attendance (see table with assignments and due dates).
3. Students must use their Mason email account to receive important university information, including messages related to this class. See <https://its.gmu.edu/service/office365-email/> for more information.
4. I will return emails as quickly as possible Monday through Friday. If you send an email on Saturday or Sunday it could be a full 24 hours before I respond.
5. Students of this course must be familiar with the GMU honor code <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/9798/honorcod.html#code>. Violations of the honor code will be reported. Violations of the honor include plagiarism and cheating, including obtaining publisher answer sheets.
6. Occasional discussion board interactions will occur on Blackboard. Please be kind and respectful to fellow students. Remember your audience when posting on the discussion board and use proper academic/business netiquette and language. Review the George Mason Diversity Statement below.
7. Failing to complete work or interact with the professor **will not** result in automatically being dropped or withdrawn from the class. Students are solely responsible for any changes in enrollment. The grade earned will be reported at the end of the semester for all students enrolled at that time. Even if it's 0.
8. Mastering Geography assignments are connected to Blackboard once you set up your account with your **Modified Mastering Geography code**. See the PDF about setting up your Mastering Geography account.

Assignments and Grading:

Graded assignments for this class will consist of weekly homework including a mixture of Mastering Geography assignments, MapMaster assignments, and discussion board assignments with readings (total 30%), weekly quizzes (total 10%), and 3 exams (total 60%). The exams are not cumulative; however, new material will build on previously learned concepts. Reading assigned chapters in your textbook and viewing the chapter-based lectures are imperative to being successful in this class. Assignments were created to further your understanding about the material covered in the textbook and to meet Mason Core objectives.

Type	Frequency or Dates	Percent of Total	Points	Where
Assignments	Weekly for each chapter	30%	300	Pearson Mastering Geography Website, MapMaster, and Discussion Board
10 Quizzes	Weekly for each chapter except weeks with exams	10%	100	Blackboard
Exam 1	2/26 – 3/4	20%	200	Blackboard
Exam 2	4/2 – 4/8	20%	200	Blackboard
Exam 3	4/30 – 5/6	20%	200	Blackboard

Grading Scale:

Grade	Points	Percent Range	Grade	Points	Percent Range
A ⁺	960-1000	96% - 100%	C ⁺	760-799	76% - 79.9%
A	930-959	93% - 95.9%	C	730-759	73% - 75.9%
A ⁻	900-929	90% - 92.9%	C ⁻	700-729	70% - 72.9%
B ⁺	860-899	86% - 89.9%	D	600-699	60% - 69.9%
B	830-859	83% - 85.9%	F	<600	<60%
B ⁻	800-829	80% - 82.9%			

GGG 102 Calendar – Fall 20

Week & Module	Dates	Textbook Chapters & Materials	Assignments (must be completed before 11:59 pm Saturday night of each week)
1	1/16 – 1/28	Week 0: set up Mastering Geography and review welcome videos in the Week 0 Module	Assignments on Mastering Geography MapMaster Intro Assignment
		Week 1: Textbook: Intro Section pages I1-I27	Introduce yourself on Blackboard: discussion board.
		Video or PowerPoint Lectures in Modules: week 1.	Chapter Intro Quiz on Blackboard
2	1/29 – 2/4	Chapter 1 Solar Energy, Seasons and the Atmosphere pages 1-30.	Assignments on Mastering Geography for chapter 1.
		Video or PowerPoints Modules: week 2 for chapter 1	MapMaster for chapter 1
3	2/5 – 2/11	Chapter 2 Atmospheric Energy & Global Temperatures pages 32- 60.	Assignments on Mastering Geography MapMaster Assignment Chapter 2
		Video or PowerPoints Modules: week 3 for chapter 2	Chapter Quiz (1&2) on Blackboard
4	2/12 - 2/18	Chapter 3 Atmospheric & Oceanic Circulation pages 62-84.	Assignments on Mastering Geography MapMaster Chapter 3
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: week 4	Chapter 3 Quiz on Blackboard
5	2/19- 2/25	Chapter 4 Atmospheric Water and Weather pages 88 – 122.	Assignments on Mastering Geography MapMaster Chapter 4
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: week 5.	Chapter 4 Quiz on Blackboard
6	2/26 – 3/4	Chapter 5 Water Resources pages 124 – 148.	Assignments on Mastering Geography
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 6	Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5) on Blackboard
7	3/5 – 3/11	Chapter 6 Global Climate Systems pages: 150-172.	Assignments on Mastering Geography MapMaster Chapter 6
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 7	Chapter 6 Quiz on Blackboard
8	3/12 – 3/18	Spring Break!	No Assignments enjoy Spring Break!
9	3/19 – 3/25	Chapter 7 Climate Change pages 174 – 210.	Assignments on Mastering Geography
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 9	Discussion Board on climate change Chapter 7 Quiz on Blackboard
10	3/26 – 4/1	Chapter 8 Tectonics, Earthquakes, & Volcanism pages: 212-244.	Assignments on Mastering Geography Discussion Board Cascadia
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 10	Chapter 8 Quiz on Blackboard

11	4/2 – 4/8	Chapter 9 Weathering, Karst, Landscapes, & Mass Movement pages: 246-266.	Assignments on Mastering Geography
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 11	Exam 2 (Chapters 6-9) on Blackboard
12	4/9 – 4/15	Chapter 10 River Systems and Landforms pages: 268 – 290.	Assignments on Mastering Geography Discussion Board Pakistan Floods
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 12	Chapter 10 Quiz on Blackboard
13	4/16 – 4/22	Chapter 11 Coastal Systems & Wind Processes pages 292-318.	Assignments on Mastering Geography
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 13	Chapter 11 Quiz on Blackboard
14	4/23 – 4/29	Chapter 12 Glacial and Periglacial Landscapes pages 320 – 342.	Assignments on Mastering Geography & MapMaster Chapter 12
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 14	Chapter 12 Quiz on Blackboard
15	4/30 – 5/6	Last week! Chapter 13 Ecosystems & Soils pages: 343 - 377	Assignments on Mastering Geography
		Chapter 14 Terrestrial Biomes pages 378-410.	Discussion Board What have you learned?
		Video or PowerPoint Modules: Week 15 There is one combined lecture video/PowerPoint for chapters 13 and 14.	Final Exam (Chapters 10-14) on Blackboard End of semester! Great job!

**** Schedule may change if necessary.**

***** Exam 1 covers chapters 1-5, exam 2: chapters 6-9, exam 3: chapters 10-14.**

George Mason Diversity Statement:

“George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.” To read more please visit <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>.

Disability Accommodations:

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs as early in the semester as possible.

Academic integrity:

The George Mason honor code is available to read at the Office for Academic Integrity (<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>). The Honor Code Pledge reads as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Violations of the honor code will be penalized with failure of the assignment and possibly the entire course upon discretion of the instructor. While collaboration and group learning is encouraged, each student must turn in their own work. All sources of information used within your work must be properly cited, this includes any information you take from the internet, even on homework and discussion board assignments.