

Course Syllabus

GEOG 131 – Principles of Physical Geography

Fall 2010

Professor: Ms. Christine Geddes

E-mail: cageddes@henryford.ucompass.com

Course Description

An overview examining the spatial distribution of the physical environment and major earth systems, including plate tectonics, climate, landforms, vegetation, and natural hazards with emphasis on the ways humans utilize and alter the earth's surface.

Course Summary

This course will present an **overview of physical processes and features of the earth, and human use and alteration of the physical environment**. We will examine relationships that exist between humans and their environments and the resulting spatial patterns. All topics will be examined utilizing the geographic approach of **spatial analysis**. Topics that will be examined within this framework include: earth systems, landforms, human perception of the environment, biosphere, population, ecology, land use, climate, culture, consumerism, atmosphere, agriculture, energy, natural resource use, technology, hydrosphere, ecosystems, pollution, development, natural hazards, and human health and food production. Particular attention will be given to **human use and alteration of the physical landscape**.

Core Course Objectives

A student who successfully completes GEOG 131 will:

1. Explain spatial analysis and describe the geographic approach and perspective.
2. Explain the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on the earth's surface.
3. Identify and explain the physical processes that shape the patterns on the earth's surface.
4. Explain how to use maps to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan for the future.
5. Describe the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on the earth's surface.
6. Discuss how culture influences the ways people interact with and use the environment, and identify the spatial variations of human resource use.
7. Provide examples of how human actions modify the physical environment.
8. Describe how physical systems affect human systems.
9. Discuss forms of pollution and the resulting impacts on the physical environment.
10. Analyze an environmental problem from a geographic perspective. Describe the nature of the problem, assess the present and long term impacts on people and the environment, and determine the best possible solutions and actions needed to solve or mitigate the problem.

Success in Geography

Participate on a weekly basis in on-line discussions, complete all assignments, read both textbooks, and be **active** in the learning process. Read anything related to culture, population, the environment, economics, politics and geography in journals, newspapers and magazines or on-line, watch or listen to the world news as often as possible. Think about **information** – where it comes from and how it is presented. Develop a spatial awareness and above all, think critically and analytically. Remember: **It's all spatial!**

Required Textbooks

(To order your textbooks on-line, please click this link for the [Henry Ford Community College Bookstore](#).)

There are two required books:

- Joseph, Tarek. A. *Geography: People, Places, and Patterns, Third Edition*. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co: Dubuque, 2010 (ISBN: 978-0-7575-7205-0).
- Christopherson, Robert W. *Elemental Geosystems, Sixth Edition*. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2010 (ISBN: 978-0-3215-9521-8).

Suggestions/Helpful Information Regarding Books:

1. **Joseph book:** purchase only NEW copies of the third edition of the Joseph book. Used copies and previous editions often have assignment pages missing. You will not be able to complete the required assignments in this course if the Joseph book has missing assignment pages so purchase a new copy.
2. **Christopherson book:** Either new or used copies of the sixth edition of the Christopherson book are acceptable (again, purchase only *new* copies of the third edition of the Joseph book).
3. I strongly recommend the purchase of these books directly from HFCC's bookstore (<http://collegestore.hfcc.edu/>). This will ensure that you receive the correct books and versions. Additionally, some students who have bought the books from on-line sources have not received them until weeks into the course.

Course Requirements

This course will be a fun, exciting, and rewarding experience if you make the effort to participate. Full participation on a weekly basis is mandatory, as is purchasing and reading both textbooks.

This course is divided into **three parts**. Each part will include one exam, one essay assignment (called "A Geographer's Perspective"), one Discussion Board critical thinking question, and weekly quizzes.

Required Assignments:

- **Discussion Board (DB) Posts:** The DB is an on-line forum in which students are required to participate within the UCompass class. Three Discussion Board topics will promote critical thinking and interaction with other students in the class. Participation in each DB is worth a total of ten points: a student may earn up to 6 points for posting a thorough response to the Opening Critical Thinking Question (presented by the Professor) and up to four points for a quality response to a post by another student. Therefore, two posts are required each week for full credit.

Important information:

- DB posts must be completed by Sunday at 3:00 p.m. EST on the weeks they are due.
 - There is a **75 word limit** on each post. Do not exceed 75 words or points will be deducted.
 - Students should submit no more than two posts (their initial post and their response to a post by a fellow student) for any discussion question. Points will be deducted for submitting more than two posts.
 - If a reference is used (including either textbook), you must cite the source. Points will be deducted for missing citations.
- **Weekly Quizzes:** Fifteen quizzes (one per week) will cover material from the assigned textbook readings for each week. Each quiz is worth 10 points and must be submitted by Sunday at 3:00 p.m. EST during the week it is due.
- **Exams:** Three exams will cover material from the assigned textbook readings, Discussion Boards, critical thinking questions, written assignments, and any other information that is assigned or presented. Each exam is worth 100 points and must be submitted by Sunday at 3:00 p.m. EST during the week it is due.
- **Essay Assignments – “A Geographer’s Perspective (AGP)”:** Three written essays called “A Geographer’s Perspective (AGP)” will be completed from *Geography: People, Places, and Patterns*. AGP assignments must be completed following the specific directions and be submitted on time in order to be accepted. Specific AGP instructions will be explained in the weekly packets and posted in the assignments section at the beginning of each week. Each 25-point assignment must be submitted by Sunday at 3:00 p.m. EST during the week it is due. There is a **450 word limit** on all AGP essays. Do not exceed 450 words or points will be deducted. Again, if a reference is used (including either textbook), a source citation is required. Points will be deducted for exceeding the word limit or failing to include citations when appropriate.

Grading

Discussion Board posts: 10 points each	3 DBs x 10 points = 30 points
Weekly Quizzes: 10 points each	15 quizzes x 10 points = 150 points
Exams: 100 points each	3 exams x 100 points = 300 points
“A Geographer’s Perspective”: 25 points each	3 AGPs x 25 points = 75 points

Total possible points: 30 + 150 + 300 + 75 = **555**

Grading Scale:

A+ 100-98%	B+ 89-88%	C+ 79-78%	D+ 69-68%	E 59-0%
A 97-92%	B 87-82%	C 77-72%	D 67-62%	
A- 91-90%	B- 81-80%	C- 71-70%	D- 61-60%	

Course Policies

All College regulations and policies will be enforced on all matters, including academic dishonesty (cheating). If you have any questions regarding these regulations and policies, I encourage you to contact me.

Assignment Policies:

- **Make-up Quizzes and Exams:** No make-up quizzes or exams will be given. Missing an exam or quiz will result in a score of zero. In extreme situations and under special

circumstances (with official documentation provided), a make-up exam may be granted at the discretion of the Professor if notification is given within 24 hours of the exam, with or without a penalty imposed.

- **Quiz and Exam Resets:** Do not rely on an exam or quiz reset. It is the student's responsibility to have a properly working computer and Internet connection. In the unlikely event that a reset is granted, a ten percent penalty (one letter grade) will be assessed by the instructor.
- **Late Assignments:** No late assignments will be accepted. A late assignment will result in a score of zero. Assignments are due at the time stated in the syllabus each week. In order to be accepted "A Geographer's Perspective" assignments must follow the format and directions exactly as stated. In extreme situations (with official documentation provided), and with advanced notification, a 24-hour extension may be granted at the discretion of the Professor, with or without a penalty imposed.

Drop Policy: A student may drop this course by the College-designated date. No drops will be granted after that date.

Withdrawal Policy: A student who simply stops participating in this course, without officially withdrawing, has not dropped the course and will receive a letter grade based on the total amount of points they earned in the course.

Incomplete (I) Grade Policy: Incomplete grades are not granted in this course.

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Academic dishonesty (cheating) in any form (as defined in the HFCC catalog) is a serious offense that will result in serious consequences and possibly immediate course failure and official letters being sent to the College Registrar and the appropriate academic Dean. If you have any questions regarding these regulations and policies, I encourage you to contact me.

Academic dishonesty refers to any activity that is designed to improve a student's grade in a fraudulent manner. It includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Unauthorized acquisition of tests or alteration of grades (such as the theft of tests, test keys, or faculty grade books, as well as the purchasing of tests, test keys, or faculty grade books).
- Unauthorized use of notes, books, or other prohibited materials during an exam.
- Open cheating on an examination (such as copying from another student's paper or work).
- Permitting another person to take a test in the student's place or receiving unauthorized assistance with any work for which academic credit is received.
- Revision of graded work in an attempt to receive additional credit fraudulently.
- Plagiarism, using of another person's work without acknowledgement.
- Any other conduct intended to obtain academic credit fraudulently or dishonestly.

If a student fails the course due to Academic Dishonesty, the Professor will notify the student in writing and will also provide copies to the Registrar.

On-line Conduct Policy: I strive to make every class meeting an exciting, challenging, and rewarding experience. I welcome and encourage your active participation in the learning process. While in this course, **students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in an appropriate, respectful manner at all times.**

Students are expected to show respect for the rights of others, the educational mission of the College, and to maintain standards of personal integrity. Students working on-line will be held to the same behavioral standards as students in a traditional classroom. Please be aware that discussions will be observed and reviewed. Students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Personal correspondence should not be conducted on the Discussion Board.

- Treat and respect others as you wish to be treated and respected.
- Offensive comments, or any inappropriate expressions, phrases, or terms are not permitted.
- Review the tone, language, word choice, spelling, and grammar of any correspondence before sending it.
- HFCC's computer use policy is in effect. The policy can be found at <http://www2.hfcc.edu/resources/policy.htm>
- Students are responsible for completing their own course work.

UCompass Support & Instructional Technology

If you require assistance accessing UCompass on-line courses, please contact Instructional Technology at 313.845.9663. The technician assigned to this course is Victoria Signorelli, who can be reached through extension 5. You can also contact Victoria by e-mail at signorelli@hfcc.edu.

Instructional Technology is located on the lower level of the Learning Technology Center, Room A-004 (in the same building as Campus Safety).

Computers @ HFCC

The Media Center, located on the second floor of the library, is an open-access computer lab where students can make use of computers in order to work on assignments and papers, access the Internet, and check e-mail. The Media Center can be reached at 313.845.6386.

If you do not have a reliable, high-speed Internet connection at home, it is strongly recommended that you make use of a computer at HFCC when taking exams in this course. Taking an exam with a dial-up—or any other unreliable Internet connection—means you risk having the connection lost during the exam and being locked out of the ability to take it.

Course Schedule

Week	Beg. Date	Assignments	Due Date
Part I			
1	Thursday, Aug 26	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 1: Essentials of Geography In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preface • Sect. 1.1: What is Geography? <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 1	Sunday, Sep 5, 3:00 p.m. EST
2	Monday, Sep 6	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 2: Solar Energy, Seasons, and the Atmosphere In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sect. 1.2: The Five themes of Geography: It's All Spatial <u>Discussion Board:</u> Week 2 Discussion Board <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 2	Sunday, Sep 12, 3:00 p.m. EST
3	Monday, Sep 13	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 3: Atmospheric Energy and Global Temperatures In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sect. 6.1: Overview of the Physical Environment <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 3 <u>Written Assignment:</u> AGP 1 (in <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Geographer's Perspective (AGP): 10.1.6 - Human Alteration of the Physical Landscape 	Sunday, Sep 19, 3:00 p.m. EST
4	Monday, Sep 20	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 4: Atmospheric and Oceanic Circulations In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sect. 6.2: Mapping: It's All Spatial <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 4	Sunday, Sep 26, 3:00 p.m. EST
5	Monday, Sep 27	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 5: Atmospheric Water and Weather In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Sections: 1.1, 1.2, 6.1, and 6.2 <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 5 <u>Exam:</u> Exam 1	Sunday, Oct 3, 3:00 p.m. EST
Part II			
6	Monday, Oct 4	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 6: Water Resources In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sect. 7.1: Water and Human Resource Use <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 6	Sunday, Oct 10, 3:00 p.m. EST
7	Monday, Oct 11	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 7: Climate Systems and Climate and Climate Change In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sect. 7.2: The Earth as a Playground: Culture, Consumerism, and Global Warming <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 7	Sunday, Oct 17, 3:00 p.m. EST

8	Monday, Oct 18	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 8: The Dynamic Planet In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 6.3: Processes that Shape the Earth <u>Discussion Board:</u> Week 8 Discussion Board <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 8	Sunday, Oct 24, 3:00 p.m. EST
9	Monday, Oct 25	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 9: Tectonics, Earthquakes, and Volcanoes In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 9.1: The United States <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 9 <u>Written Assignment:</u> AGP 2 (in <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Geographer's Perspective (AGP): 10.1.7 – A Current Event Through A Geographer's Eyes 	Sunday, Oct 31, 3:00 p.m. EST
10	Monday, Nov 1	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 11: River Systems and Landforms In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Sections: 7.1, 7.2, 6.3, and 9.1 <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 10 <u>Exam:</u> Exam 2	Sunday, Nov 7, 3:00 p.m. EST
Part III			
11	Monday, Nov 8	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 12: Wind Processes and Desert Landscapes In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 2.3: Population Growth <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 11	Sunday, Nov 14, 3:00 p.m. EST
12	Monday, Nov 15	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 13: The Oceans, Coastal Processes, and Landforms In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 2.4: The Population Debate <u>Discussion Board:</u> Week 12 Discussion Board <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 12	Sunday, Nov 21, 3:00 p.m. EST
13	Monday, Nov 22	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 15: The Geography of Soils In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 8.1: The Geography of Food: You Are Where You Eat <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 13 <u>Written Assignment:</u> AGP 3 (in <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Geographer's Perspective (AGP): 10.1.8 – Truth In Advertising?: Applied Geography 	Sunday, Nov 28, 3:00 p.m. EST
14	Monday, Nov 29	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 16: Ecosystems and Biomes In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sect. 6.4: Ecosystems, Biomes, and the Spatial Distribution of Organisms <u>Quiz:</u> Quiz 14	Sunday, Dec 5, 3:00 p.m. EST
15	Monday, Dec 6	<u>Reading Assignment:</u> In <i>Elemental Geosystems</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ch. 17: Earth and the Human Denominator 	Sunday, Dec 12, 3:00 p.m.

		In <i>Geography: People, Places, and Patterns</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Sections: 2.3, 2.4, 8.1, and 6.4 <u>Quiz</u> : Quiz 15 <u>Exam</u> : Exam 3	EST
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