West Los Angeles Collage

Fall Semester 2015
Class times: MW 5:10 pm – 6:35pm
ROOM: MSA 302
Section: 4166

Instructor: Alula Abate
Office Hrs: MW 4pm – 5pm
or by appointment
Email: abatea@wlac.edu

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY
(GEOG 001)

COURSE SYLLABUS

Required Text: Physical Geography, Tenth Edition
Authors: James F. Peterson, Dorothy Sack, and Robert E. Gabler

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Physical geography is a science that uses a spatial perspective to study the Earth's surface and the factors and processes that affect many aspects of the physical environment. The course will examine the interaction of the four major spheres of the Earth's system: the atmosphere, the lithosphere, the hydrosphere and the biosphere. The atmosphere is a thin mass of air composed of various gases that envelope the Earth; the lithosphere consists of the Earth's crust and the upper most mantle; the hydrosphere consists of the oceans, lakes and rivers; and the biosphere is made up of people, animals and plants. Each of these physical realms has unique properties and components, interacting with each other and powered by solar energy to create complex environmental systems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Develop an interest and awareness of the Earth as a complex set of interrelated and interdependent systems and also expand student's skills in problem solving.
- Examine the patterns, systems, and processes that make up the physical environment.
- Study the human-environment relationships, i.e. the impact of the environment on humans and the changes on the Earth's surface that are attributable to human actions.
- Assess the limits and possibilities of the physical environment against the needs of society for various resources, including nonrenewable ones.
- Analyze all the spatial aspects of changes that are constantly taking place in the physical environment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading System: During the course of the semester, **TWO TESTS, SEVERAL ASSIGNMENTS & A FINAL EXAM** will be given. All tests will contain a mixture of types of questions: Essay, objective, multiple choices, and definitions. All grade evaluations will made on a curve.

- **Two tests 50%**
- **Assignments 20%**
- **Final 30%**

Do not miss any of the tests because no make-up test will be given unless under extenuating circumstances. If you have a learning problem, please let me know right away in order that arrangements can be made to insure that you realize your full academic potential or you may contact the Disabled Students Programs and Services.

Attendance: You are expected to attend classes regularly and arrive on time. Three or more consecutive and habitual tardiness may result in exclusion from class. You should notify the instructor immediately if you miss a class and provide proof at the next class session (Bereavement, religious holiday, illness, etc.). You should bear in mind that regular attendance in class is your key to success in any course you take. You are required to read the assigned chapter(s) before the lecture and come to class prepared. You are expected to participate in class discussions and ask questions if the material covered in the textbook or in the lecture is not clear to you. Take your own notes, as notes copied from other classmates are not sufficient to convey to you the whole learning experience.

Classroom conduct: When class is in session, all regular rules and policies regarding personal behavior at WLAC must be observed. It is incumbent on all to create and maintain a congenial teaching and learning environment. All electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, tablets, laptops, etc.) must be turned off. However, if you are expecting an emergency call during class, please see me before class or inform me via e-mail.

Withdrawal policy: It is your responsibility to officially withdraw from a class you have stopped attending before the deadline set by the Office of Admissions and Records. Informing the instructor will not be sufficient. Failure to notify the Admissions Office will result in an "F" in your academic record.

Academic Integrity Statement: It is expected that students adhere to a strict code of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating and plagiarizing in any form will result in an "F" grade and subject to disciplinary action.

CLASS SCHEDULE (MW 5:10 – 6:35)

(This schedule is subject to some change)

	Date	Reading	Topic
August	**31**	Chapter 1	Earth Environments & Systems **pp. 2 – 21**
Septmeber	**2**	Chapter 2	The geography Grid, Maps, Map Projections, Map making. **pp. 27 - 49**

	7		**Legal Holiday**
	9	Chapter 3	Earth as an Energy-matter System, Earth-Sun-Moon relationships. **pp. 60 – 74**
	14	Chapter 4	The Atmosphere, Air Temperature, Energy Transfer processes. **pp. 81 – 105**
	16	Chapter 4/5	Atmospheric Pressure, Winds and Circulation Patterns
	21	Chapter 5	Atmospheric Pressure, Winds and Circulation Patterns **pp. 11 - -133**
	23	**Test # 1**	**All Materials Covered in Chapters 1 – 5**
	28	Chapter 6	Moisture, Condensation & Precipitation, Atmospheric Circulations. **pp. 140 – 161**
	30	Chapters 6/7	Air Masses & Weather Systems, Lifting, fronts and Cyclonic Systems. **pp. 168 – 187**
October	**5**	Chapter 7	Air Masses & Weather Systems
	7	Chapters 7/8	Global Climates & Climate Change; Climate System & Climate Classification. **pp. 199 – 221**
	12	Chapters 8/9	Earth's Climate Systems & Global Climate Change
	14	Chapters 9/10	Climate Regions: Humid Tropical & Arid Regions **pp. 230 – 247**
	19	Chapter 10	Climate Regions: Middle-Latitude, Polar and Highland Regions. **pp. 254 – 282**
	21	**Test # 2**	**All Materials Covered in Chapters 6 – 10**
	26	Chapter 11	Ecosystems, Cycles and Classifications **pp. 288 – 299, 305 – 319**
	28	Chapter 12	Soil Formation and Classification **pp. 326 -329, 331 – 339**
November	**2**	Chapter 13	Earth's Structure, Plate Tectonics, Minerals & Rocks **pp. 356 – 380**
	4	Chapter 14	Tectonic Forces, Volcanoes, Earthquakes, Landforms **pp. 388 – 397, 400 – 413**
	9	Chapter 14	Tectonic Forces, Volcanoes, Earthquakes, Landforms
	11	**Legal Holiday**	
	16	Chapter 15	Weathering Processes & Mass Wasting **pp. 422 – 426, 428 – 442**
	18	Chapter 15	Weathering Processes & Mass Wasting
	23	Chapter 16	Underground Water & Karst Landforms

			pp. 450 – 465
	25	Chapter 17	The Stream System, Fluvial Processes, Fluvial Landforms **pp. 473 – 494**
	30	Chapter 17	The Stream System, Fluvial Processes, Fluvial Landforms

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December	**2**	Chapter 18	Arid Region Landforms: Fluvial Processes & Eolian Processes. **pp. 504 – 527**
	7	Chapter18	Arid Region Landforms: The work of Water & wind
	9	Chapter 19	Glacial Processes & Landscapes **pp. 536 – 560**
	14	**Final Exam**	