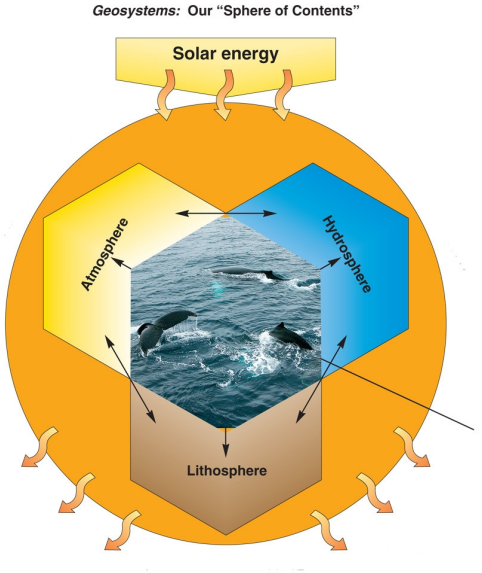
Introduction to Physical Geography

(GARP 0102, 4 credits)



Physical Geography is the study of the physical phenomena and processes that shape the surface of the Earth and their associated variability in time and space.

We will explore the four interlocking "geosystems" of the Earth, including the Atmosphere (weather, climate), Lithosphere (landforms), Hydrosphere (surface/ground water), and Biosphere (life).

We will also assess and discuss the interactions between (us) humans and our (natural?) surroundings.

This course consists of three lecture classes per week (MWF, 09:20 to 10:10) and one (of three) lab sessions (MWF, 10:25 to 12:05). No prerequisites.

Lecture GARP 0102, Section 001 (CRN# 10329)
Bates 218, MWF 09:20 to 10:10

Lab	GARP 0102, Section 01A (CRN# 10330)	Monday	10:25 – 12:05
	GARP 0102, Section 01B (CRN# 10331)	Wednesday	10:25 – 12:05
	GARP 0102, Section 01C (CRN# 10332)	Friday	10:25 – 12:05
	All labs in Bates 05 (basement)		

➔ Please choose one of the three lab sessions to accompany the lecture.

Your Instructor

Dr. Carsten Braun (cbraun@wsc.ma.edu 413.572.5595)
Office: Bates 06 (basement, next to the lab room)
Office Hours: MWF, 12:15 to 13:15 (or anytime by appointment)

➔ If you feel that you are not progressing as well as you hoped, please feel free to talk to me during my office hours or a mutually convenient time – the sooner the better! I'm happy to do whatever it takes to help you succeed.

My goal for this course is simple: I want to get you excited about the Earth and the natural environment that surrounds us every day. This knowledge is actually quite applicable and useful on a daily basis: You will learn what goes on around you and why! So, the next time it rains/snow, or you come across a river/lake, you will know why and how.

Textbook Tom L. McKnight and Darrel Hess
Physical Geography: A Landscape Appreciation – 8th Edition
Pearson Prentice-Hall (ISBN 0-13-145139-1)
$118 (comes with a CD), cheaper used, but be aware!
Online version: http://www.safarix.com/0131451391 ($55.35 for 150 days)

➔ You are required to have (access to) this textbook for the course.

This is a great, well-designed, informative, and well-illustrated textbook. It also comes with a comprehensive Student Companion WWW site (http://wps.prenhall.com/esm_mcknight_physgeo_8) which provides additional media, illustrations, and very useful self-test features. I encourage you to make use of this resource – it will help you expand and test your knowledge throughout the semester.

Lab Manual Darrel Hess
Laboratory Manual – 8th Edition Physical Geography – A Landscape Appreciation
Pearson Prentice-Hall (ISBN 0-13-145213-4), 308 pages plus maps
$56.25, cheaper used, but be aware!

The exercises in this updated lab manual give you an opportunity to apply many of the concepts discussed in the lecture. It also comes with a Student Companion WWW site (http://wps.prenhall.com/esm_mcknight_physgeo_8/0,9340,1444537-,00.html) that contains additional media and links to useful WWW resources.

➔ You are required to have your own copy of the lab manual for this course.

Course Logistics

The first section of the semester focuses on Climatology (Week 1 to 9), the second section of the semester focuses on Geomorphology (Week 10 to 15). We will not cover the entire textbook or lab manual. Instead, the course is structured around carefully selected themes and associated textbook chapters and lab exercises.

In addition to the textbook and lab manual, you will need a standard 3-ring binder (to organize the hand-outs) and a notebook for your lecture notes. I urge you to be organized with your time and your materials. Take good notes, use your critical thinking when studying, and don't try to "blindly" memorize facts and data without understanding the underlying concepts. I encourage you to study with someone else or in a small group, so you can "test" each other and expand your own knowledge by explaining things to each other.

Each of the four tests will draw from the materials presented in class (lecture and lab), the hand-outs, and from the assigned readings in the textbook. We will have a discussion/review session before each test as preparation. The tests will last the entire period and consist of a combination of Multiple Choice questions and Short-Answer questions. The tests will be conducted "pyramid-style": You will take the test in the traditional manner during the first half of the class (solo-part) and hand-in your answers. Then, you will take the test a second time allowing open notes and discussions with other students in the class (group-part). The solo-part of the test counts for 75 percent of the test grade; the group-part will be worth 25 percent of the test grade.

There are no make-up tests, unless you are experiencing a real and documented emergency. You have to let me know in advance, or as soon as possible. Make-up tests, if necessary, will be administered during the Final Exam period (12/18 to 12/21). Note: It is not possible to take test early.

I encourage you to review the Academic Honesty Policy at Westfield State College (available on the WWW site). Any attempt of cheating during your tests will be severely sanctioned by canceling your test and receiving zero points. Depending on the gravity of the situation, you may be also dealing with the Dean of Education and/or the Dean of Academic Affairs.

The homework assignments are designed to formalize the reading and learning process through writing. The assignments will require you to answer a series of review questions from the textbook in one to two paragraphs each (max. 2 pages combined). These are not "trick" questions – the answers are readily available in the textbook and will form the basis for our discussion and review sessions before each test. I expect these assignments typed and printed. Hand-written assignments are acceptable as long as I can read your hand writing (if I can't read it…I can't grade it…zero points). However, if you do the reading, answer the questions appropriately, and hand-in the assignment on-time, then there is no reason why you shouldn't receive full points for each assignment.

To minimize disruptions…

- Please be on time (i.e. get there before class starts).
- Don't leave before the end of class.
- Turn off your cell phones.
- Attendance is Mandatory.

Course Schedule

Week	Class	Date	Theme	Assignment	Reading
Week 1	Class 1	9/6 (We)	What is Physical Geography?		Preface, Ch.1
	Class 2	9/8 (Fr)	The Scientific Method		
			College Success Strategies	HW1 out	Hand-outs
Week 2	Class 3	9/11 (Mo)	Mapping the Earth		Ch.2
	Class 4	9/13 (We)	The Earth in Space		Ch.1
	Class 5	9/15 (Fr)	The Atmosphere	HW2 out/HW1 due	Ch.3
Week 3	Class 6	9/18 (Mo)	Earth's Radiation Balance I		Ch.4
	Class 7	9/20 (We)	Earth's Radiation Balance II		Ch.4
	Class 8	9/22 (Fr)	The Greenhouse Effect		
			Global Warming	HW3 out/HW2 due	p. 82-84
Week 4	Class 9	9/25 (Mo)	Pressure and Wind		Ch.5
	Class 10	9/27 (We)	Global Circulation I		Ch.5
	Class 11	9/29 (Fr)	Global Circulation II	HW3 due/Study	Ch.5
Week 5	Class 12	10/2 (Mo)	Local/Regional Circulation		Ch.5
	Class 13	10/4 (We)	Review/Discussion		Ch.1-5
	Class 14	10/6 (Fr)	**Test #1**	HW4 out	Ch.1-5

Week	Class	Date	Theme	Assignment	Reading
Week 6	No Class	10/9 (Mo)	Columbus Day		
	Class 15	10/11 (We)	Moisture and Precipitation I		Ch.6
	Class 16	10/13 (Fr)	Moisture and Precipitation II	HW5 out/HW4 due	Ch.6
Week 7	Class 17	10/16 (Mo)	Mid-Latitude Climate I		Ch.7
	Class 18	10/18 (We)	Mid-Latitude Climate II		Ch.7
	Class 19	10/20 (Fr)	New England Climate	HW5 due/Study	Hand-outs
Week 8	Class 20	10/23 (Mo)	Extreme Climatic Events		Ch.7
	Class 21	10/25 (We)	Review & Discussion		Ch.6,7
	Class 22	10/27 (Fr)	Test #2	HW6 out	Ch.6,7
Week 9	Class 23	10/30 (Mo)	Climatic Zones/Types		Ch.8
	Class 24	11/1 (We)	Tropical Climate		Ch.7,8
	Class 25	11/3 (Fr)	Climate Change vs. Global Warming	HW7 out/HW6 due	Hand-outs
Week 10	Class 26	11/6 (Mo)	Rocks and Minerals		Ch.13
	Class 27	11/8 (We)	Plate Tectonics/Volcanism	HW8 out/HW7 due	Ch.14
	No Class	11/10 (Fr)	Veterans Day		
Week 11	Class 28	11/13 (Mo)	Weathering/Erosion I		Ch.15
	Class 29	11/15 (We)	Weathering/Erosion II		Ch.15
	Class 30	11/17 (Fr)	Soils & Groundwater	HW8 due/Study	Ch.9,12
Week 12	Class 31	11/20 (Mo)	Review & Discussion		Ch.7-9,12-15
	Class 32	11/22 (We)	Test #3	HW9 out	Ch.7,8,12-15
	No Class	11/24 (Fr)	Thanksgiving Recess		
Week 13	Class 33	11/27 (Mo)	Fluvial Processes I		Ch.16
	Class 34	11/29 (We)	Fluvial Processes II		Ch.16
	Class 35	12/1 (Fr)	Coastal Processes I	HW10 out/HW9 due	Ch.20
Week 14	Class 36	12/4 (Mo)	Coastal Processes II		Ch.20
	Class 37	12/6 (We)	Glacial Processes I		Ch.19
	Class 38	12/8 (Fr)	Glacial Processes II	HW11 out/HW10 due	Ch.19
Week 15	Class 39	12/11 (Mo)	Glaciers and Climate Change		Hand-outs
	Class 40	12/13 (We)	New England Geography		Hans-outs
	Class 41	12/15 (Fr)	Review & Discussion	HW11 due/Study	Ch.16,19,20

Notes on the Course Schedule

- Wednesday, October 11 follows a Monday schedule at Westfield State College.
- No class on 10/9, 11/10, and 11/24 (Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Recess)
- Thanksgiving Recess begins Wednesday November 22 at 12:20 – which means that we will have a lecture that day! (In fact, we have Test #3…don't plan to leave town before that!)
- Friday, December 15 is the last day of classes.
- Snow Make-up Day: Friday, December 22 (we may need it – don't plan to start the holidays before that!)

Test #4 is scheduled for Monday, December 18 (12:20 to 14:20) during the Westfield State College Final Exam Period (see Course Offerings and Registration Information Booklet, Page 2, for more information). However, the test be similar in length and scope to the previous three tests and only covers material from Week 13 to Week 15.

➔ See the Westfield State College Academic Calendar for more information.

Grading Policy

Your final grade is a function of your performance throughout the entire semester and combines the four tests, the lab exercises, and the homework assignments. You will not "flunk" this course based on any one poor test result or lab exercise. If you are concerned about your grades or performance in the course – please talk to me.

➔ Grading is a time-consuming process – please allow at least one week for the results to be ready.

Tests — 40 percent of your final grade.
Each test represents 10 percent of your final grade.
No make-up tests.

Labs — 30 percent of your final grade.
12 lab exercises in total, the two lowest grades are dropped, 10 grades remain.
Each lab exercise presents 3 percent of your final grade.
No make-up/late labs.

Homework — 30 percent of your final grade.
11 homework assignments, the lowest grade is dropped, 10 grades remain.
Each homework assignment represents 3percent of your final grade.
Late = Zero

Letter	Points	Letter	Points	Letter	Points
A	93 to 100	B–	80 to 82	D+	67 to 69
A–	90 to 92	C+	77 to 79	D	63 to 66
B+	87 to 89	C	73 to 76	D–	60 to 62
B	83 to 86	C–	70 to 72	F	<60