

Geography 205 (S1): Introduction to Physical Geography
Spring Semester 2008
Tue/Thu 9:30-10:45 AM
CLAS Building, Room 434

Instructor: Luc Claessens

Office Location: CLAS 432
 Phone: (860) 486-2086
 Email: luc.claessens@uconn.edu
 Office Hours: Tuesday, 11-12
 Thursday, 2-3

Teaching Assistant: Dean Chauvin

Office Location: CLAS 419
 Email: dean.chauvin_jr@uconn.edu
 Office Hours: Tuesday, 11-12

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to physical geography. Topics include weather, climate, biogeography, soils, geology, hydrology and geomorphology. Particular attention is paid to the interconnections among these environmental systems and the influence of human activities.

Textbook (required)

Strahler, A. and A. Strahler. 2006. *Introducing Physical Geography*. Fourth Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. [Available at the UConn Co-op.]. The textbook comes with lots of online resources, including chapter summaries, web quizzes, virtual field trips, animations and more (go to <http://www.wiley.com/college/strahler> and click on the corresponding student companion site).

HuskyCT and Email Communication

Course material is distributed through HuskyCT. There you will find weekly lecture notes and other handouts, archives of course related emails and your grades. Student support for HuskyCT is provided by the Learning Resource Center (LRC), Level I of the Homer Babbidge Library (6-1187). I will send out weekly emails using campus email; please make sure that your UConn email address is current.

Grading Policy

Mid-term Exam I	Tue, Feb 26	20 %
Mid-term Exam II	Tue, Apr 8	20 %
Final Exam	Finals Week	25 %
Quizzes	Approx. weekly (~9 total) (2 lowest grades will be dropped)	20 %
In-Class Exercises	Approx. weekly (~13 total) (2 lowest grades will be dropped)	5 %
Projects	2 total	10 %

There are no Extra Credits. There will be no curving of grades. Final course letter grades will be based on the standard 10 percent scale, which will include adjustments for +/- grades.

Exams

The mid-term exams will be on material covered since the previous exam through the most recent lecture. The final exam will be comprehensive, scheduled during finals week. A set of review questions will be distributed before each exam. All exams must be taken at the scheduled times. Make-up exams will not be administered, unless you: (1) contact me before the exam (phone/voicemail); and (2) provide a valid and certified medical excuse. Otherwise, you will receive a grade of zero for the exam that you missed. Absences due to conflicts with employment schedules and/or scholastic activities are not considered

adequate excuses for missing exam. In case of emergency, you must provide adequate supporting evidence for the absence. The exams remain property of the instructor.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be administered approximately every week, and will be on material covered in the previous week. Quizzes cannot be made up. However, your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped. This should accommodate absence due to sickness, emergency or scholastic activity. I won't make any special arrangements if you happen to miss more than two quizzes, except for long-term medical absence (a valid and certified medical excuse must be presented within 1 week).

In-Class Exercises

In-class exercises will be administered approximately every week. You are encouraged to work with others on the assigned problems. However, you should be able to complete the problems independently. Exercises cannot be made up. However, your two lowest exercise grades will be dropped. This should accommodate absence due to sickness, emergency or scholastic activity. I won't make any special arrangements if you happen to miss more than two exercises, except for long-term medical absence (a valid and certified medical excuse must be presented within 1 week). Exercises are not graded (attendance only).

Projects

Two take-home projects will be assigned during the course of the semester. Project #1 is a description of your hometown physical geography; and Project #2 is a self-guided fieldtrip on glacial landforms. You are encouraged to work with others on the assigned problems. However, you should be able to complete the problems independently, and should turn in your own, original work. Copying solutions from fellow students is considered cheating. Late projects are not accepted.

Expectations of Students

Participation and Attendance

You are expected to attend and actively participate in all lectures. Part of your grade is from quizzes and in-class exercises, so it is in your best interest to attend lectures regularly. Note that the above grading policy allows for limited absence. However, if you regularly miss class and/or assignments, you are responsible if your final course grade gets affected. Please do not contact me about making special arrangements, except in the case of long-term medical absences as explained above.

Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct in any form is in violation of the University of Connecticut's *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to: copying or sharing answers on tests or assignments, plagiarism, and having someone else do your academic work. Depending on the act, a student could receive an F grade on the test/assignment, F grade for the course, and could be suspended or expelled from the University. Please see the Student Code at <http://www.dosa.uconn.edu/> for more details and a full explanation of the Academic Misconduct policies.

About the instructor

I am an Instructor in Residence in the Department of Geography. I do research on the interactions between hydrology and ecosystem processes, with particular interest in the effect of changes in land-use and climate. I have worked in hydrology (watersheds, evapotranspiration, land-atmosphere interactions), biogeochemistry (nutrient loading and processing) and water resources engineering (flood control, water conservation, irrigation).

Course Outline and Reading Assignments (Tentative) – Geography 205 (S1)

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1 Jan 22	Introduction, Earth as Rotating Planet	Prologue, Chapter 1
Week 2 Jan 29	Earth as Rotating Planet (cont'd), Global Energy Balance	Chapter 1, Chapter 2
Week 3 Feb 5	Air Temperature	Chapter 3
Week 4 Feb 12	Atmospheric Moisture and Precipitation, Winds and Global Circulation	Chapter 4, Chapter 5
Week 5 Feb 19	Weather Systems, Global Climates	Chapter 6, Chapter 7
Week 6 Feb 26	Exam I Biogeographic Processes	Chapter 8
Week 7 Mar 4	Biogeographic Processes (cont'd), Global Biogeography	Chapter 8, Chapter 9
Mar 10-14	Spring Break	
Week 8 Mar 18	Global Soils, Earth Materials	Chapter 10, Chapter 11
Week 9 Mar 25	Lithosphere and Plate Tectonics, Volcanic and Tectonic Landforms	Chapter 12, Chapter 13
Week 10 Apr 1	Volcanic and Tectonic Landforms (cont'd), Weathering and Mass Wasting	Chapter 13, Chapter 14
Week 11 Apr 8	Exam II Fresh Water of the Continents	Chapter 15
Week 12 Apr 15	Fresh Water of the Continents (cont'd), Landforms Made by Running Water	Chapter 15, Chapter 16
Week 13 Apr 22	Landforms and Rock Structure, Landforms Made by Waves and Wind	Chapter 17, Chapter 18
Week 14 Apr 29	Landforms Made by Waves and Wind (cont'd), Glacial Landforms and the Ice Age	Chapter 18, Chapter 19
Finals Week May 5 – May 10	Final Exam (Sat, May 10, 10:30-12:30 PM)	

Disclaimer

The above schedule, policies, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

Some Useful Phone Numbers

- Counseling and Mental Health Services: 486-4705 (after hours: 486-3427) www.cmhs.uconn.edu
- Career Services: 486-3013 www.career.uconn.edu
- Alcohol and Other Drug Services: 486-9431 www.aod.uconn.edu
- Dean of Students Office: 486-3426 www.dos.uconn.edu