



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
**SAN ANTONIO**

**---- GEOG1301: Physical Geography/Meteorology:**  
**---- Syllabus---**

Lecturer: Drew C. Engelke

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**Contact me via email** or talk to me before or after class for any issues/concerns.

- Please do not contact me via Blackboard messages.

Office hours: MW 9am – 930am and 1230-2pm or by appointment as needed.

Office: CAB 325

NOTE: A virtual meeting is also an option if campus office hours will not work.

**Textbook:** Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography, 10th Edition ;

Robert Christopherson & Ginger H. Birkeland

©2018 | Pearson ISBN – 13 9780134597119

<https://www.pearson.com/us/higher-education/product/Christopherson-Geosystems-An-Introduction-to-Physical-Geography-10th-Edition/9780134597119.html>

**No late work will be accepted in this course.**

### **GEOG 1301. Physical Geography**

This course provides an introduction to the processes involved in the formation of the Earth's physical environment. Emphasis is on the general studies of flora, fauna, weather, climate, vegetation, soils, and land forms. A focus on meteorology will be integral to the course.

### **Course Description**

This foundation course for the study of physical geography will introduce students to key areas of geography, including climate, weather, soils, land and resource management, cartography, geomorphology, agriculture, human migration and settlement patterns, urban development, and the influence of geographic factors on social organization and development. It will also include the applications of the discipline, such as the role of physical geography in the determination of population patterns, economic development, landforms, natural disasters and infrastructure development. Meteorology will be a major focus of the class. On campus Field Research will be a component of the course.

### **Course Objectives**

Students are expected to act in a professional and mature manner during this course. They are to be responsible, display emotional maturity and responsibility and have the desire and motivation to learn. Students are expected to accomplish the following:

- to think critically and thoughtfully about diverse and complex issues.
- to become familiar with the world in which we live.

- to be able to identify and discuss cultural and political issues of the world in which we live in an intelligent and professional manner.
- to engage in discussions about the geographic concepts and philosophies and learn how to teach others these basic concepts and beliefs.
- to research and communicate orally and in writing on various topics of concern and interest in the world.
- to learn different disciplines of geography and how they relate and interrelate in the world and on smaller scales of interest.
- to be able to read and interpret various different maps and atlas information and to combine the information into a context for teaching others.
- to become a person who will be able to appreciate and understand other cultures and beliefs in the world.
- to relate to and identify basic geographic skills such as spatial interaction, the “why where?” concept and mapping projections and techniques.

### **GEOG 1301 – Physical Geography**

#### **Knowledge:**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of fundamental physical geography to include:

- Demonstrate appreciation for and understanding of the Earth and its physical systems. (Includes demonstrating knowledge of the spheres, geospatial measurement (lat./lon.), seasons, etc.)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex nature of the Earth’s atmosphere. (Includes describing its composition, vertical structure, changes, differences between weather and climate, insolation/temperature, pressure, wind, moisture, weather in general, etc.)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex nature of the Earth’s hydrosphere. (Includes demonstrating understanding of the hydrological cycle, oceans, ice, surface water, sub-surface water, etc.)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex nature of the Earth’s lithosphere. (Includes demonstrating understanding of the nature of soils, landforms and landform processes [internal, fluvial, solution], etc.)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex nature of the Earth’s biosphere. (Includes demonstrating understanding of biochemical cycles, food chains, ecosystems and biomes, environmental relationships, etc.)

#### **Skills:**

Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret:

- Graphs/charts
- Maps and/or remotely sensed images

Students will practice skills in:

- Time management
- Speaking/presenting in class
- Working collaboratively in groups
- Primary-source research and field research on campus

## **Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to be an introductory course in Physical Geography. This class will focus on the readings, maps and photographs of the Earth as described by the required textbook. A study of the physical geography of the Earth and the interrelations of people and the physical world will be the focus of this class.

Each student will learn the climates, landforms, natural disasters, weather systems and plate tectonics of the planet Earth. The students will learn and discuss how the continents, realms and regions of the world vary in culture, population, religion, politics, natural resources, climate and economics due to physical geography. Also, students will acquire a general knowledge of the Earth's meteorology, the various soils and materials which encompass the world and how different landforms are created.

At the conclusion of this course the students will be able to understand, interpret and realize the diverse world in which we live in an intellectual manner and disposition. Each student should have a general knowledge of our physical processes, features and how it affects where and how people live. Too often we get caught up in our own little world and do not realize who are neighbors really are, what they are like, what they believe and how they live. This course will enable the students to broaden their views, beliefs and ideals about the world in which we all live and interrelate.

## **Institutional Goals**

- Achieve a depth of knowledge in a single discipline sufficient to understand its methods, language, content, history and value.
- Achieve an awareness of and respect for diverse religions, cultures, and viewpoints.
- Students should be able to write clearly and coherently, read with comprehension, speak effectively, and listen with care and openness.
- To think critically and reflectively and draw reasonable, supportable conclusions both individually and in groups.
- Students are assisted in the development of an integrated ethical perspective and a sense of moral purpose.
- To have a desire to cultivate physical and psychological health and wellbeing.
- To develop a will to pursue continued culture, intellectual, and spiritual growth.

## **Course Requirements**

Students are expected to attend each scheduled class and be prepared to take notes discuss topics and participate on field trips. The students will be tested on lectures/discussions from the text and from lecture topics, discussions and other readings assigned. Group-work/discussion will be an integral part of the course make-up. Most of the group work will be in class or on campus during the class period. You will take a mid-term exam and one comprehensive final exam. Attendance is expected/required.

## **Attendance** *(during Covid 19 health concerns policy subject to change/modify as needed)*

All students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and be on time. However certain unforeseen circumstances or situations do arise and cannot be helped or avoided. In these extreme circumstances 3 absences are allowed. **Any more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a 30 point reduction in your final grade for each additional absence after the third.** (Example: 3 absences with 2 additional = 60 point reduction in final grade) \*\*\*Student athletes and other student involvement in organizations will be given proper consideration for conflicts and need to make proper arrangements for class notes etc. missed.

## **Plagiarism**

With the advent of technological advances and the internet, plagiarism has become more of a problem in today's education system. I trust that you will be mature and intelligent about not attempting to plagiarize your work. If the situation does arise a "swift and fierce" punishment will be done without hesitation. The first time it happens an automatic "F" will be given on that particular assignment. The next time will result in an "F" for the course.

## **AI Policy**

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

## **ADA Policy**

Texas A&M University makes every effort to ensure that students are not impeded in any form from learning and participating in the learning process. Guidelines are available through Student Services and the Welcome Center.

## **Class Format**

Most classes will be in the form of lectures, discussion, group-work and field study on campus. The use of illustrations, maps, transparencies, slides, videos and PowerPoint presentations will be an integral part of the class. At times, there may be a guest speaker on a topic which we are covering and discussing. Group discussions will be encouraged.

Students are discouraged from having private conversations, rude behavior, tardiness or leaving early from class. **Cell phones, i-pods, ipads (unless used for lecture note-taking), etc. must be turned off during class. This is not only unprofessional, but very rude and inappropriate.** If a situation arises in which the cell phone is needed to receive calls or be contacted for an emergency only please see me prior to class and arrangements will be made. A student who continually disregards these rules will be sent to the Dean without hesitation and appropriate measures will be taken.

**TexShare Card:** (Research)

All students should acquire a TexShare card. This card will give you access to books and other research materials at most area university libraries, including UTSA and the Alamo College campuses. Contact the TAMU-SA librarian for assistance. This card will enhance your research in other courses also.

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**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**Research paper:** Details to be discussed in class. 10 page paper. More details will be posted in Course Content on Blackboard. Due at the end of semester. Date to be determined.

**Map Project:** Details to be discussed in class. This is an in-class assignment with campus field work involved.

**Class participation/exercises** (*Covid 19 health concern may modify/change this as needed*)  
You are expected to be in class and participate in discussions. Reading assignments for discussion must be done prior to class discussions. Group activities and individual in-class work exercises will be assigned on occasion.

**Discussion Forum Topics (SUBMIT to Blackboard Discussion Board)**

You will be assigned discussion topics during the semester. They will cover various aspects of physical geography. Expect to turn in completed work on the due date given. No late discussions on the Forum or make-up work will be accepted.

**Mid Term Exam**

This exam will be given at mid semester. The date will be determined and discussed in class. It will consist of course material covered up to that point.

**Final Exam**

Cumulative Exam from the semester information discussed in class and from your readings/assignments.

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**\*Grade point scale – 1000 points**

Research paper	1 @ 250	250 points (25%)
Mid-term Exam	1 @ 100	100 points (10%)
Discussion topics	4 @ 100	400 points (40%)
Final Exam	1 @ 150	150 points (15%)
Classroom exercises/map project	TBD	100 points (10%)

\*Note: The points are **cumulative** throughout the semester. At the end of the semester your total points earned will determine your Final Grade. There is no extra credit. All work is to be submitted on time. **No late submissions will be accepted.** All information is discussed in class and posted on the class Blackboard. Communication with me will be in the classroom, during office hours or the most efficient/effective way is via email.

**Grade Scale**

<b>Total Points Earned</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
900 – 1000	A
800 – 899	B
700 – 799	C
600 – 699	D
599 and below	F

## IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive

Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at [military.va@tamusa.edu](mailto:military.va@tamusa.edu) or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student’s GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as “F” grades and will impact the student’s GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees



should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu); 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which

is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

### *Students' Rights*

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

### *Students' Responsibilities*

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

