

University of Guelph
Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics
Course Outline, Fall 2022

GEOG*1300 – Introduction to the Biophysical Environment – Credit Weight 0.5

Classes: Mondays and Fridays 3:30 – 4:20 ROZH 102

Asynchronous Wednesdays

Instructor: Dr. Brown (laura@uoguelph.ca)

Office Hours: by appointment

Labs: meet in Hutt 240b

Graduate Teaching Assistants: Amy (zhaoshu@uoguelph.ca)

Talib (talhasan@uoguelph.ca)

GTA Office Hours: by appointment via Microsoft Teams

Prerequisites: None

REQUIRED TEXT

Arbogast, A.F, Ford, L., and Dagesse, D. (2018) *Discovering Physical Geography: Canadian Edition*

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

" This course introduces physical geography, focusing on the principles and processes governing climate, landforms, and vegetation systems and their interrelationships and will examine natural and human-induced changes to environmental systems. Laboratories will address measurement techniques, representation and analysis of environmental systems using maps and satellite imagery, laboratory techniques, and field observation."

OVERVIEW

In this course, you will learn to see the Earth through the eyes of a physical geographer. Our planet's surface is a highly dynamic place where forces and processes driven by internal and external energy sources interact to create our climate, landforms, and landscapes.

We will examine the effects of solar energy, climate, tectonic activity, gravity, weathering, erosion and sediment transport within the context of physical geography. While much of the material covered will be descriptive rather than mathematical, Physical Geography is a quantitative science. Some of the material in this course draws upon basic science theory and relationships. We will use primary numerical relationships from time to time. You will be expected to solve simple math problems in lab assignments and on the final exam.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course aims to introduce and enhance the University of Guelph's learning objectives and the Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics. Specifically, in this course, students will:

- Develop a comprehensive *depth and breadth of understanding* of the core concepts and processes that drive Earth's Systems. Students will evaluate the Earth as an integrated system by examining dynamic energy flows, natural processes and interactions at different spatial and temporal scales that result in our present landscapes.
- Critically and *independently* recognize, synthesize and evaluate diverse sources of knowledge, and approaches pertinent to exploring elements of geoscientific problems
 - Investigate complex real-world challenges using appropriate concepts, methods, and tools from the geographical sub-disciplines.
 - Develop EXCEL and Google Earth skills for geographic analysis

Overview of Course Content and Organization

We will have one unit each week:

Week	Dates	Topics	Textbook Chapters	Lab Schedule
0	Sept. 09	Welcome to the course; what is Geography?	Chapter 1	Self-Guided Google Earth and Excel skills development
1	Sept. 12 -16	Tools and Concepts used by Geographers	Chapter 2	
2	Sept. 19 - 23	Solar energy, Earth-atmosphere energy balance	Chapter 3 pgs 47-54 and Chapter 4	Lab 1
3	Sept 26 -30	Atmosphere and global temperatures	Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 pgs 111 -114	
4	Oct. 3 -7	Atmospheric and Oceanic Circulation	Chapter 6 pgs 116-141	Lab 2
Fall Break Oct. 8-11				
5	Oct. 12-14	Atmospheric Moisture and precipitation	Chapter 7	
6	Oct. 17-21	Air masses and storms	Chapter 8	Lab 3
7	Oct. 24-28	MIDTERM – climate change	Chapter 9 pgs 212, 230-244	
8	Oct. 31-Nov. 4	Plate tectonics, earthquakes volcanoes	Chapter 12 pgs 313-331 and Chapter 13	Lab 4
9	Nov. 7 -11	Weathering and Mass Movement	Chapter 14	
10	Nov. 14 - 18	Fluvial systems and Landforms	Chapter 16	Lab 5

11	Nov. 21- 23	Glacial and Periglacial Landscapes	Chapter 17	
12	Nov. 28-Dec.2	Biogeography	Chapter 10	

We will cover each unit using a combination of lectures, textbook readings, and discussions.

There are five 2-hour lab sessions that students must attend. Students must pay a lab fee of \$10.00 in the first week of labs to cover the cost of the Lab materials and transportation for the field trip.

Lab assignments are due 1 week after your scheduled lab session before midnight. Late deductions are 20% per day.

CourseLink Page

To access our class webpage, use your central account ID and password. You use the same login ID and password to access your University of Guelph e-mail and WebAdvisor. CourseLink can be accessed from the University's homepage, and I bookmark it in my browser for easy access.

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to participate in class and take notes from the textbook readings and the lectures to supplement the posted material. If you miss classes for any reason, it is your responsibility to get the notes from one of your classmates.

COURSE NOTES

I will post the slides I use in my lectures on CourseLink so you can follow along and take notes.

COURSE EVALUATION

The final grade will be assessed from Weekly Review Quizzes completed online (10%), five Lab Assignments (30% total), and two tests, a Midterm (25%) and the Final exam (35%). Quizzes are based on information presented in lectures and discussed in class. The midterm is an online test in week seven and covers the lecture material presented in the first half of the course. The final exam is an online exam focused primarily on the second half but has some cumulative content and a cumulative lab section.

In summary:

Weekly Review Quizzes	10% Start Sept. 16th.
Labs	30% Start week of Sept 19
Mid-term	25% on-line test – Oct. 26
Final Exam	35% on-line Dec. 16 -8:30-10:30

To pass the course, students must obtain an overall average of 50% in the combined mid-term and final exams.

Students with a **documented conflict** for any tests need to see me **at least two weeks** before to arrange an alternative time. There is no guarantee that this will be accommodated, but ensuring that you address the issue several weeks in advance will certainly assist the process

Weekly Review Quizzes – worth 10%, completed online

The weekly review quizzes are an incredible opportunity for students to review and 'test' themselves on the relevant material relatively quickly. These quizzes, in total, are worth 15% of the final grade in the class. They are used to incentivize engagement with the course material one more time. So, if you skim the assigned readings before class, participate in class, take helpful notes on lecture material, supplement lecture material from the textbook, and finally review your notes each week, that is approximately six points of engagement with the material. Adding the quiz makes it seven points. These points of engagement with the material are vital to an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of complex concepts in GEOG*1300. So, the quizzes might feel like extra work – and they should – because the whole point was to get you to engage with the material one more time. Furthermore, the quiz questions help me gauge student comprehension and usually reflect the most important or challenging ideas and concepts covered during that week. Finally – quiz questions are often re-used on the exams – so in case you need one more reason to pay attention to them, they will likely help you out with the tests.

The lowest three quiz grades are dropped before the Quiz component of your final grade is calculated. I partly do this to cover instances where quizzes are missed due to losing track of time and missing the deadline, computer or internet issues, or brief illness. Therefore, **there are no extensions or second attempts.**

The quizzes are available from Friday 8 pm to the following Monday 2 pm.

Lab Assignments – 6% each, 30% total

These assignments are an opportunity for you to demonstrate that you understand key concepts. More details about these assignments will be presented at the beginning of each scheduled lab period by your GTA. Your lab assignments are due one week after your scheduled lab before midnight. For example, if you are in Section 101, your labs are scheduled for Tuesday at 10:30, and your lab is due the following Tuesday before midnight.

Your assignments must be submitted through Dropbox on CourseLink in PDF format. Late assignments (without prior approval by your GTA) will be penalized at a rate of **20%** of the assignment's value per day. This course uses Turnitin to help encourage academic integrity.

Extensions must be requested in advance and evaluated by the GTAs on a case-by-case

basis. Additional detailed information on [assignments, midterms, final exam Instructor or Department Policy on Late or Missed Assignments](#) is available in the Undergraduate Calendar

Your GTA handles all lab-related questions and grading.

Midterm exam– worth 25%, completed online

The midterm is scheduled for **Oct. 26**, during our regularly scheduled class time. It will be an online exam in the Quizzes section, written anywhere with a stable Internet connection. If you do not have your own laptop, I recommend borrowing one from the library. **DO NOT** attempt the exam on a cell phone as there will be diagrams to label and past students who disregarded this advice regretted it.

The exam will **start promptly at 3:30 pm**, and you will have **50 minutes**. The questions will be a mix of multiple-choice, multi-answer, fill-in-the-blanks, and short answers. The material covered includes all the lectures before reading week and the associated chapters from the textbook. Each exam will be composed of randomized questions drawn from a test bank. For example, from a pool of 5 questions covering heat transfer processes, 1 question is randomly drawn for each exam.

This is **not** designed as an open book or open internet exam. Therefore, you won't have time to look up the answers. This textbook is used for our class because of the excellent student resources such as the Key Learning Concepts Review sections at the end of each chapter and the Study Area. In the Study Area, you'll find chapter quizzes. Use the questions in these quizzes and the chapter review section as example exam questions.

Final exam – worth 35%, completed online

The final exam is scheduled for Dec. 16 from 8:30 -10:30am. The questions will be a mix of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blanks, and short answers. The material covered on the final exam focuses primarily on the second half of the course. Still, there is a cumulative component because the material from all 5 labs is covered.

COMMUNICATION

This course uses lectures, e-mail, CourseLink, Teams and Zoom as the primary tools for communication and distribution of course materials.

All e-mail correspondence will be sent to your University of Guelph e-mail address following university regulations. I usually respond to student inquiries within 24-36 hours during University Business hours. I **do not reply** to messages from off-campus e-mail addresses because they are often spam or phishing scams (indeed, the University forbids it).

Keep in mind this is a professional environment, and your messages should reflect this. For example, I do not normally answer e-mails that begin "Hey," or "Yo Prof" or include texting lingo.

Learning Services for First-Year Courses

Learning resources at the Library and Learning Commons offer free services to help you succeed at the University of Guelph.

These opportunities include:

- meeting with a peer helper to talk about study strategies or your writing assignments
- attending Supported Learning Groups
- getting assistance finding journal articles and books
- registering for academic workshops

Please visit the Library website www.lib.uoguelph.ca/writing-studying/studying-resources-workshops for more information.

University of Guelph Policy Statements:

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students must check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official communication route between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or a designated person, such as a GTA) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

Drop Date

One semester-long courses must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable backup copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student must first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required. However, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 7 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.

More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students are responsible for abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for finding guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

[The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

Recording of Materials

Presentations made about course work—including lectures—can not be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations, which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration. However, students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g. final exam or major assignment).

Safety Protocols

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/> and https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4Ntfm8k1oXAPssm

Please note, these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health, or government directives.

Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class e-mail. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website [<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>] and circulated by e-mail.