

San José State University
College of Social Sciences / Geography and Global Studies
Geography 001-04, Geography of Natural Environments
Course #49209 - Fall, 2016

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Tiffany Seeley
Office Location:	Online Only
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Email:	tiffany.seeley@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Online – Tuesdays 7:30am – 8:30am
Class Days/Time:	Online
Classroom:	Online via Canvas
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	B1

Course Format

This course will be conducted entirely online so you will need regular access to a computer with a webcam and reliable internet connection to successfully complete this course. This course will utilize SJSU's course management system Canvas for all communication and assignment submission. Exams will use Respondus Lockdown and Responds Monitor. For information about Respondus, click here: <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/respondus/>

Course Description

Atmospheric, biologic and geologic processes that create the natural environments of the world. Discovery of local, regional and global patterns in the location and distribution of environmental phenomena, and the human modifications of natural environments.

In essence, this class provides an overview of the Earth's awe-inspiring physical landscape through introducing the processes and systems that have helped to shape it. The main emphasis of this course is on using geographic inquiry to investigate *how* and *why* something (in this case, physical processes and systems) happens *where* it happens. For an overview of the many fascinating processes we will be learning about this semester, please see the course schedule on page 6.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

GELO 1: use the methods of science and knowledge derived from current scientific inquiry in life or physical science to question existing explanations.

- On quizzes and exams you will not only be asked about the features of the natural environment and how they came to be, but also provide explanations on how these systems function.
- In assignments on the adiabatic process, clouds, climates, plate tectonics and others will provide constant opportunities to test, apply, and question the physical processes that are discussed in this course.

GELO 2: demonstrate ways in which science influences and is influenced by complex societies, including political and moral issues.

- The photo essays will provide an opportunity for you to discover our impact on the environment and physical geography of the Bay Area.

GELO 3: recognize methods of science, in which quantitative, analytical reasoning techniques are used.

- Exams and activities will include questions that test your ability to read and interpret data, graphs, and maps related to the topics we will encounter throughout the semester.
- One of your homework assignments includes collection and interpretation of weather data.
- You will need to use analytical reasoning techniques in order to successfully complete the final project where you will find real-world examples of the physical processes that we discuss in class.

This class has a writing requirement of at least 1500 words. Your photo essay project will have a minimum word requirement of 1,200 words. In addition to this, the Fog Log assignment (250 words) and at least 4 in-depth written exam questions (150-200 words ea). There may be other various homework and in-class assignments that include writing.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook: The textbook for this class is Physical Geography: A Landscape Appreciation by Hess, Publisher: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 9780321863966. You do not need to get the current edition! Any edition between 10 and 12 is fine. The book can be found at the SJSU book store and various sources online.

Other materials: It may be helpful to have different colored pencils, pens, or highlighters to help with your note-taking assignments.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Note that University policy F6925 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F6924.pdf> states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Course Assignments:

The course assignments will follow a relatively rigid schedule in order to facilitate structure in this course. Here is the *general* weekly schedule weekly of assignments - see class schedule for exam dates:

WEEKLY FLOW OF ASSIGNMENTS						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Work on Chapter Notes and Activities (Due Fridays)						
				Post your peer-learning question.	Post responses to peer learning discussion questions.	
all assignments will always be due by 11:59pm on the due date						

A detailed description of the course assignments can be found below:

Cornell Chapter Notes and Reading Assignments - due every week on Fridays For many students, one of the biggest challenges of an online course is the switch from being a **passive learner** (just listening to lectures) to an **active learner** (learning the information on your own). Unlike a traditional lecture class, online learning often takes a lot more effort on your part to properly absorb and understand the material necessary for you to succeed in your course.

The main method of learning in this course is reading the textbook and taking Cornell-style notes. For each relevant textbook chapter, you will receive a list of sections that you need to study in-depth along with a guide on which information in the textbook is most important for you to understand. For each of these sections, you should be writing a 1/2 of a page to two pages of handwritten Cornell-style notes that cover the main points of the textbook sections. NOTE: If you prefer a different style of note-taking, I am happy to accept them in a different format. You must, however, email me to explain what your note-taking process is and why it works for you.

This assignment will help facilitate your learning in a couple of ways. Firstly, it will help provide the structure that is often lost in an online learning environment. The frequency and repetition of assignments should help you get into a good rhythm so that you are able to put in the amount of work necessary to learn the information. Remember, **this is a science class** - simply reading the textbook chapter once is not enough to absorb the information. Secondly, these notes will help you organize your own thoughts and understanding of the material so that you can properly participate in the [peer-learning](#) portion of this course and study for the exams.

Peer-Learning Discussions - every week Friday - Sunday

One of the advantages of online courses is the access that you have both to your instructor and your classmates. One way you will take advantage of this is through weekly peer-learning discussions. Each week you - after you have turned in your notes - you will solicit clarification from your classmates on a specific area of the readings that you didn't quite understand. Once these questions are posted by each of your classmates, you will all respond to at least 2 other questions that were posed. While some topics in the book are inherently more difficult to understand - there will inevitably be some topics that some students have a good grasp on while other students don't. Working together to answer the questions you guys have about the material will help you solidify the information for the exams.

Note: As your instructor, I will be monitoring these discussions and also participating in them if I notice that certain topics need clarification, correction, or guidance.

Exams - see course schedule for dates

In this class there will be a total of **4 online exams**. Your exams will not be cumulative, however, much of the

information you learn in this class builds on previous content. You will need to know the material and concepts from the early chapters in the book to understand the concepts you will be tested on later on in the course.

The exams will use multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, and short-answer questions that evaluate your comprehension and application of the major processes that are presented in the book. These questions not only test your ability to identify the concepts and processes, but also your ability to apply them. For this reason, it is imperative that you make sure you have a thorough understanding of the processes - the "study guides" in each module are a great resource for knowing what kinds of topics may be on the exams. Please do not hesitate to ask questions and utilize the resources that I have provided for you online!

All the exams in this course will use Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor. Both of these services will be used to maintain integrity for the exams by blocking the use of external sites and resources during your exam and will also record you throughout the duration of your exam to make sure you are using only authorized materials while taking the exam.

You WILL need access to a computer with a built in or external webcam. If you do not have access to a computer with a webcam, please make plans immediately with the computer center on your campus to take the exam with one of their computers. Please email me well before your first exam if you have an issues or questions with this.

Since there is a LOT of information in this class, I will allow you to use a 3X5 notecard that has been handwritten only. When you are beginning your exam, Respondus Monitor will ask you to show your surroundings to be sure there are no extra materials, cell phones, etc, near by. If you want to use the 3X5 card in the exam, you will also be prompted to show me the front and back of the notecard. Absolutely no other materials are allowed to be used for the exam.

Papers: Photo Essays of the Physical Geography of the Bay Area - due final week of class This assignment is designed to help you get out of the classroom to discover physical geography in the Bay Area! The vast majority of processes covered in this class be found right here in our own backyard. For this project, you will take photos of places in the Bay Area that demonstrate evidence of physical processes that we have discussed in class and provide an explanation of what is happening in that landscape. The assignment prompt can be found on Canvas.

Miscellaneous Assignments - approximately one each week On most weeks I will provide one or two "practice" activities that should help your understanding of the material beyond what is available in the textbooks. These will be worth 5-10 points each, depending on the effort involved to complete them.

Extra Credit, Make-up Exams, and Late Work

I will drop your lowest score for the Cornell notes, weekly discussion, and assignments. I don't accept late work beyond 2 weeks from the due date. Exceptions MAY be made on a case-by-case basis - usually only for verifiable and serious unforeseen circumstances.

If a scheduled exam time does not work for you, you need to email me at least a week in advance to set up an alternate time to take the exam.

Extra credit opportunities involve attending a geography related field trip or event during the semester and writing 350 word essay on what you learned and how it relates to the concepts or themes we've learned in this class. These will be graded at the very end of the semester. The total maximum number of points you can receive from this or any other extra credit assignment will be no greater than the equivalent of 2% percentage points.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final exam will be scheduled online and should be completed during finals week.

Grading Information

Your grade in this course is based on your performance on exams, weekly Cornell notes on readings, weekly

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	PERCENTAGE	LETTER GRADE
4 Online Exams	240 points (60 each)	90% - 100%	A
Cornell Reading Notes	Approx. 100 points (5-10 each)	80% - 89 %	B
Peer-Learning Discussions	70 points (5 each)	70% - 79%	C
Miscellaneous Assignments	Approx. 50 points (5-10 each)	60% - 69%	D
Photo Essay Project	100 points	59% and below	F
	560-600 total points		

peer-learning discussions, miscellaneous practice assignments, and a final project.

While I do my best to make sure that your grades are up-to-date and as accurate as possible, I do make mistakes sometimes. If you have any issues with a grade that I have given you, please log your concern/issue in the Grade Issues “assignment” on Canvas. This helps me keep track of any grade changes and keep them all in one space where they will not get lost or forgotten. **I will not process any grade changes via email - please do not email me about grade issues.**

This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

Classroom Protocol

Academic Senate policy on classroom behavior (S90-5), at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/s90-5.htm>, applies to this class.

Technical Difficulties If you are having difficulties uploading an assignment online you **MUST** message me the assignment by the due date. I **WILL NOT**, however, grade any assignments that are sent to me via email or the messaging app on Canvas. It is your responsibility to make sure that whatever technological issues you have are resolved and the assignment is either uploaded online or printed out and handed to me within **ONE WEEK** of the due date.

Guidelines for Email One of the best parts of using Canvas for this course is the opportunity to keep all of the resources for this course in one place online. While email is great, I actually prefer that you use the messaging system in Canvas so that I have a thread of all the communication we’ve had throughout the course. If you email me, I will send you a polite reminder to please message me through Canvas instead.

I will generally check Canvas the day between 10am and 7pm, Monday through Friday. I always do my best to try to message you back within 24 hours. Please note, however, that I may not be available to respond as quickly on the weekends.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>”

Geography 1, Geography of Natural Environments Section 4, Fall 2016
Course Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change: you should always follow dates for assignments or exams that are in CANVAS if there is a conflict in dates between Canvas and the schedule below.

CLASS WEEK	CHAPTERS COVERED	EXAMS AND PROJECTS:
Week 1	Introduction to the Course	
Week 2	Ch. 1 Introducing the Earth	
Week 3	Ch. 3 Introduction to the Atmosphere	
Week 4	Ch. 4 Insolation and Temperature	
Week 5	Ch. 5 Atmospheric Pressure and Wind	
Week 6	Ch. 6 Atmospheric Moisture	EXAM #1 - Ch 1, 3-5
Week 7	Ch. 7 Atmospheric Disturbances	
Week 8	Ch. 8 Climate & Climate Change	
Week 9	Ch. 11 Terrestrial Flora and Fauna	EXAM #2 - Ch 6 - 8
Week 10	Ch. 13 Intro to Landform Study	
Week 11	Ch. 14 The Internal Process	
Week 12	Ch. 15 Weathering and Mass Wasting	
Week 13	Ch. 16 Fluvial Process and Terrain	EXAM #3 - Ch 11- 15
Week 14	Ch. 20 Coastal Processes and Terrain	
Week 15	Ch 19 Glacial Modification of Terrain	
Week 16	<u>Finish up Final Project</u>	FINAL PROJECT DUE Sunday at Midnight
Week 17	FINAL EXAM	EXAM #4 - Ch 16, 19- 20