



蘇州大學  
Soochow University

# GEO 109 Physical Geography

Winter 2024

**Course Credits:** 4

**Contact Hours:** 56 hours

**Instructor:** TBA

**Email:**TBA

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course provides an in-depth exploration of the physical processes and features shaping the Earth's surface. Students will investigate the dynamic interactions between landforms, climate, ecosystems, and human activities. Through a combination of theoretical study and practical applications, learners will develop a comprehensive understanding of physical geography and its relevance to environmental dynamics.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

1. Describe and explain the processes of Earth's physical systems: weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes and landform development;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the modifications humans make to the environment through interactions with Earth's physical systems;
3. Discuss the Earth's atmosphere, oceans, land surface and biosphere, and relate them to the dominant natural processes and to changes over time;
4. Develop an appreciation of the complex inter-relationships inherent in Earth's natural systems.

## **PREREQUISITES**

None

## **GRADING**

Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:



ITEM	POINTS
2 Assignments	20 Points
2 Quizzes	20 Points
Midterm Exam	25 Points
Final Exam	35 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$ .

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Texts:

Gervais, B. (2015). *Living Physical Geography* (1st ed.). W. H. Freeman & Company.

### Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:

None

## COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 1: Introduction to Physical Geography Topic 2: Portrait of the Atmosphere Topic 3: Solar Energy and Seasons Topic 4: Water in the Atmosphere <b>Assessments:</b> Assignment #1
Module 2	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 5: Atmospheric Circulation and Wind Systems Topic 6: Atmospheric Disturbances Topic 7: Climate Change Topic 8: Patterns of Life: Biogeography <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz #1



Module 3	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 9: Climate and Life: Biomes Topic 10: Ocean Ecosystems Topic 11: Soil and Water Resources Topic 12: Earth History, Earth Interior <b>Assessments:</b> Assignment #2 Midterm Exam
Module 4	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 13: Plate Tectonics Topic 14: Building the Crust with Rocks Topic 15: Volcanoes and Earthquakes Topic 16: Weathering and Mass Movement <b>Assessments:</b> Quiz #2
Module 5	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 17: Fluvial Systems Topic 18: The Cryosphere and Glacial Landforms Topic 19: Water, Wind, and Time: Desert Landforms Topic 20: Coastal Landforms <b>Assessments:</b> Final Exam

## ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.

If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.



## **LEARNING REQUIREMENTS**

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- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

## **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

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The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (eg., note taking, reading course documents).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

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Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed. The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

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Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a



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learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.