

Physical Geography



Dr. Jeanette K. Pope • Julian 213

Phone: 658-4105 • email: jpope@depauw.edu

Office Hours: MWF 10:30-11:30 or by appointment

Course Goals

- *Satisfy curiosity about the world around us by learning what controls natural phenomena like weather, earthquakes, and the seasons;
- *Understand the spatial features of the physical earth;
- *Become informed, science-literate citizens who understand earth processes.

Course Text *Geosystems 6th edition* by R. Christopherson , available at Fine Print or online.

Course Description

Physical Geography is the spatial study of natural events and phenomena. Typically this includes physical and biological features and processes that occur on Earth (for example, landscapes, climates, and the distribution of species.) In this class, we will explore not only why certain events happen, but also the consequences of those events. For example, you probably know that adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere can lead to a heating of the planet (i.e. global warming). Through lectures, readings, and activities, you will learn the physical processes of why this happens and investigate what effects it can have, including (paradoxically) a decrease in temperature in some places.

This is a particularly *fun* course because it provides answers to things that you always wanted to know (including "why is the sky blue?") In order to make this class as applicable as possible, I encourage you to come to class prepared by reading material ahead of time and actively engage with lectures and discussions. Furthermore, if you have questions about subjects not listed on the schedule, let me know and I will do my best to incorporate them into the class!

Grading

Grades will be based on your performance according to the following:

In class exams (total):	45% (15% each)
Homework:	15%
In class projects:	20%
Final Exam:	20%

The standard grading scale will apply unless a curve is justified. In no case will you receive a grade below the standard scale.

Course Policies and General Information

Your attendance in class is essential for you to learn the material, and therefore, **attendance is required**. If you need to miss a class because of sickness or personal emergency (see student handbook), please try to let me know ahead of time so we can arrange a time for you to make up the material. If I do not hear from you within 24 hours of a missed class, your absence will be considered unexcused and you will not have a chance to make up any graded material.

There will be three hourly exams worth 45% of your final grade. The dates of the exams are noted in the schedule. I will make every effort to keep the exams on the date listed. Make-up exams will not be given unless there is a documented emergency or unless we have arranged a make-up exam *in advance* because of exceptional circumstances.

Your final exam is scheduled for **Thursday, May 17 at 1:00 pm** and *must be taken at this time*. It is against University Policy to take final exams at other times. Please make your travel plans accordingly. The final exam will be cumulative.

Several homework assignments will be handed out during the semester, resulting in 20% of your total grade. The due date for homework will be announced when the assignment is handed out. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

In addition to exams and homework, there will be several in-class projects/assignments. Because these are designed to reinforce important concepts, they will contribute to your overall grade. This material can only be made up with an excused absence.

To be successful in this class, you will need to come to class prepared and actively participate in all class activities (including lecture!) This means you need to read the text, complete assignments before class, and perhaps most importantly, *ask questions about anything you don't understand!!* You can ask questions in class, during office hours, or via email. I am available to help you, but it your responsibility to figure out what you need help with! In addition, I would encourage everyone to go to the Academic Resource Center to find out what additional help is available to you.

*If you have any concerns about the class or your performance in it, please come see me. In addition, if you have any special needs that will facilitate your learning, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.

We will be using a web program called Blackboard throughout the course. The address for this site is <http://blackboard.depauw.edu>. Please be sure to check the site frequently for important announcements.

Class notes will be available on Blackboard and are provided to expedite lecture and to help you organize information. However, they are not a substitute for attending class. Also, they are not intended to replace your careful and attentive note taking. *I highly encourage you to annotate these materials with comments, diagrams, etc. that help you better understand and remember the information!*

****Academic Integrity**** Any activity which gives one student an unfair advantage over other students will be handled in accordance with established University procedures as described in the Student Handbook.