

## GEOG 1300B – Introduction to the Physical Environment Course Outline: Winter 2021



Although this academic year might be different, Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. We encourage you to check out the [Digital Student Experience](#) website to manage your academics and well-being. Additionally, the following link provides available resources to support students on and off campus: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

### 1. Technical Requirements



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer



Working microphone



Working webcam



Zoom application installed

Recommended technical specifications:  
<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/timetables.html>

Western Zoom webpage, including privacy  
information: <https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/index.html>.

### 2. Course Information



Delivery Mode	Dates	Time
Online (asynchronous lectures)	Online (synchronous labs)	Section 003 meets MON 2:30-4:30 p.m.
		Section 004 meets MON 7:00-9:00 p.m.
		Section 005 meets TUES 4:30-6:30 p.m.
		Section 006 meets TUES 11:30-1:30 p.m.

\*Details about design and delivery of the course are listed below in Section 5

Classes Start	Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 11	February 13-21	April 12	April 13	April 14-30

\* January 19, 2021: Last day to add a second-term half course

March 15, 2021: Last day to drop a second-term half course



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Dr. Rebecca Doyle	rdoyle25@uwo.ca	By appointment

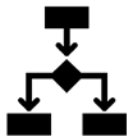
Teaching Assistant(s)	Contact Information	Office Hours
Brittany Brasier	bbrasier@uwo.ca	By appointment
Nils Mann	nmann25@uwo.ca	By appointment



- Office hours will be held remotely using Zoom
- Students will be able to sign up for an appointment by emailing the prof/TAs.
- Non-mandatory synchronous sessions will be held during lab periods when a new lab is not being assigned (designated as “work time” in the Lecture/Laboratory Timetable below). These sessions are a great time to ask the instructor and TAs questions, and to work on the lab exercises.

### 3. Calendar Description

Introduction to the phenomena and processes of the Earth-atmosphere system that underlie human environment interactions and environmental change: the physical geography of Earth. Topics include: the atmosphere and fundamentals of weather and climate, water in the environment, Earth surface processes, biogeography, and human appropriation and modification of earth-atmosphere systems



2 lecture hours, 2 laboratory hours, 0.5 course  
 Antirequisite(s): Geography 1100, Geography 2131 A/B.  
 Prerequisite(s): None  
 Prerequisite checking is the student’s responsibility

Senate Regulations state, “unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

### 4. Textbook



- All resources will be posted in OWL
- Recommended textbook: Christopherson, R., Birkeland, G., Byrne, M., and P. Giles. (2016). *Geosystems: An Introduction To Physical Geography, 4th Canadian Edition*. Toronto, Pearson, Toronto, Ont.

This textbook may be helpful for understanding concepts, but students do not need to purchase the textbook to be successful in the course.

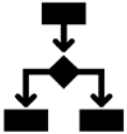
Earlier editions of the text are generally still suitable and may be available from a used bookstore or other sources. They can be used with some attention to the fact that page number references are likely to be slightly different.

## 5. Course Objectives and Format

The main objectives of this course are to:

1. familiarize students with foundational concepts in physical geography,
2. and teach applied skills in physical geography through laboratory exercises

Mode	Dates	Time	Frequency
Virtual asynchronous	N/A	2 hours	weekly
Virtual synchronous	Section 003 meets MON 2:30-4:30 p.m.	2 hours	weekly
	Section 004 meets MON 7:00-9:00 p.m.		
	Section 005 meets TUES 4:30-6:30 p.m.		
	Section 006 meets TUES 11:30-1:30 p.m.		



Attendance at synchronous sessions is required during weeks when a new lab is being assigned. Attendance is recommended, but not required, during weeks when no new lab is being assigned (designated as “work time” in Section 7, below).

A recording of the introduction to the lab will be provided for synchronous sessions

Closed captioning will be provided on audio or video recordings

All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class.

Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#). [Using the right browser is important, especially when using different features integrated with OWL]

If students need assistance, they can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 6. Learning Outcomes

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

- describe the scope, core themes and fundamental methods in physical geography
- explain the physical principles of important atmospheric, lithospheric (endo- and exogenic), hydrologic and biogeographic processes and their mutual interaction
- describe and explain spatial and temporal variations in the characteristics of the global physical environment
- discuss examples of the direct and indirect effects of human activity on the physical environment
- apply simple techniques to describe and analyze the physical environment



## 7. Course Content and Schedule

Wk.	Dates	Topic	Lab period	Deadlines
1	Jan 11 – 17	What's Physical Geography?	No lab period	Nothing due
2	Jan 18 – 24	Perspectives on Time and Space	New lab: Lab 1, Martian Maps (attendance required)	Nothing due
3	Jan 25 – 31	The Sun is like a Sun to me	Work time (attendance recommended)	Quiz 1 on content in weeks 1 and 2
4	Feb 1 – 7	T-Rex Tears and Brachiosaurus Breath	New lab: Lab 2, Radiation Budgets (attendance required)	Lab 1 due before the start of your lab section
5	Feb 8 – 14	Humidity and Severe Weather	Work time (attendance recommended)	Quiz 2 on content in weeks 3 and 4
6	Feb 15 – 21	Reading Week	No lab period	Nothing due
7	Feb 22 – 28	Hydrosphere	New lab: Lab 3, Environmental Change (attendance required)	Lab 2 due before the start of your lab section
8	Mar 1 – 7	Lithosphere	Work time (attendance recommended)	Quiz 3 on content in weeks 5 and 7
9	Mar 8 – 14	A River Runs Through It	New lab: Lab 4, Rivers and their Landforms (attendance required)	Lab 3 due before the start of your lab section
10	Mar 15 – 21	A Glacier Lay There	Work time (attendance recommended)	Quiz 4 on content in weeks 8 and 9
11	Mar 22 – 28	Biogeography	Work time (attendance recommended)	Lab 4 due before the start of your lab section
12	Mar 29 – Apr 4	Environmental Change	Work time (attendance recommended)	Nothing due
13	Apr 5 – 11	No lecture	Work time (attendance recommended)	Quiz 5 on content in weeks 10, 11 and 12



Note: Participation will be marked on Mon at 10 a.m. each week, starting in Week 2.

## 8. Online Participation and Engagement



- Students are expected to participate and engage with content as much as possible
- Students can also participate by interacting in the forums with their peers and instructors. Participation is worth 5 % of the final grade. Each week, students have the option to submit their “muddiest point” (*i.e.*, something that they did not understand from that week) or a potential quiz question. Quiz questions should require some thinking to answer. Links to these forums are provided in OWL in the “Course Content” tab.

## 9. Communication



- Students should check the OWL site every 24 – 48 hours
- A weekly update will be provided on the OWL announcements
- For any communication, the centrally administered **e-mail account** provided to students will be considered the individual’s official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts [here](#).
- Emails will be monitored daily; students will receive a response in 24 – 48 hours
- Frequently asked questions will be posted to the “FAQ” tab on the OWL site. Students should check this tab before emailing the instructor or TAs.
- Dr. Doyle and the TAs will endeavour to answer emails within 24 hours. *Please do not re-send emails within the first 24 hours.*

## 10. Evaluation

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated.

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Quizzes	45 % (top 4 of 5 marked)	On the week of a quiz, students can choose to take the quiz anytime from 9:00 a.m. on Mon to 5 p.m. on Fri. <i>However, once students begin the quiz, they will only have 30 mins-1 hr to complete the quiz.</i> In other words, the quiz is timed.
Participation	5 %	Marked on Mon at 10 am at the start of each week, beginning in Week 2
Lab assignments	40 % (top 3 of 4 marked)	On the week when an assignment is due (see section 7), the lab must be submitted before the beginning of your lab section.
Lab team contribution	10 %	End of term (exact date TBD)



Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text.

- Rubrics will be used to evaluate assessments and will be posted with the instructions.
- After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting their evaluator; to ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days.

### **Quizzes: 45 % (top 4 out of 5 quizzes marked)**

The material covered in the “Course Content” tab, and lab assignments, will be evaluated through three non-cumulative, open-book quizzes. “Non-cumulative” means that the quiz will only cover 2-3 weeks of material at a time. “Open-book” means that students can access all course material, and the internet, when answering the quiz questions. Because the quiz is administered in an open-book format, students should avoid memorizing tiny details. Instead, they should review lab exercises and make sure that they understand the larger concepts introduced in the Course Content tab. Students are also encouraged to take notes and summarize information in the Course Content tab so that they can find information quickly during the quiz.

Students are expected to complete each quiz independently, without the help of their classmates. While grading the assignments, the professor and TAs will identify any quizzes that look similar. If it is determined that two or more students completed the quiz together, all students involved will receive a mark of 0 % on that quiz. These quizzes will be

administered through the “Tests and Quizzes” tab on OWL. The top 4 out of 5 quizzes will be marked, meaning that one quiz can be dropped. The purpose of this system is to provide some flexibility in the event that a student is absent for one quiz due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances (*e.g.*, a death in the family, internet outage). **Although the lowest mark is dropped, students must complete all 5 quizzes.** On the week of a quiz, students can choose to write the quiz anytime from 9 a.m. on Mon to 5 p.m. on Fri. **However, once they begin the quiz, they will only have one hour to complete the quiz.** In other words, the quiz is timed.

Quizzes will be marked and returned to students within 1-2 weeks. Marking schemes will be used to assess answers to labs and exams. Partial marks will be awarded for incomplete answers.

**Participation: 5 %**

Participation will be assessed using forums on OWL. Students can choose to submit a quiz question or submit their “muddiest point” (*i.e.*, the point that they understood the least). Quiz questions should be “big picture” questions that cannot be easily addressed using a quick internet search. Suitable questions will appear in the quizzes. In order to receive full marks for participating that week, students must contribute to the forum by Mon at 10 a.m. of the following week (*i.e.*, students must post on the forum by Mon at 10 a.m. of week 2 to receive credit for participating in week 1).

**Lab assignments: 40 % (top 3 out of 4 labs marked)**

Labs are online and synchronous, meaning that students will login and complete the labs at a set time each week. This is a large class with four lab sections: 003, 004, 005 and 006. Each lab section takes place at its own time. It is important that students attend their assigned lab section unless given explicit permission to switch lab sections. Otherwise, there may be so many students in one lab section that the TAs and professor cannot effectively teach the lab or address each student’s questions. Students can find their assigned lab section in their course schedule.

Students will have at least 2 weeks to complete each lab report. On weeks when a new lab is assigned, students are required to attend the lab. On weeks when no new lab is assigned (designated “work time” in the lecture/laboratory timetable), attendance is recommended, but not required. During “work time”, the TAs and/or professor will be available to answer any questions about labs or the course material.

Students will complete four labs, but the lab with the lowest grade will be discounted, meaning that students can drop one lab. Students must, however, complete all four labs. The purpose of this system is to provide some flexibility in the event that a student is unable to complete one lab due to unforeseen circumstances (*e.g.*, illness, a death in the family). Students will work in groups to complete each lab exercise, so some similarity between lab reports is expected. Students are, however, still expected to answer each question in their own words. If it is determined that a student plagiarized their lab report, all students involved will receive a mark of 0 % on that lab.

Lab reports will be marked and returned to students within 1-2 weeks. Marking schemes will be used to assess answers to labs and exams. Partial marks will be awarded for incomplete answers.

### **Lab team contribution: 10 %**

To ensure that all group members are contributing equally to the lab assignments, students will evaluate their group members according to several criteria. These criteria will be determined as a class during the first lab period. Students will also evaluate their own contribution to their team. Together, the group evaluations and self evaluations will determine the overall “lab team contribution” mark, which is worth 10 % of the overall course grade.

### **Information about grades:**

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

### **Information about late or missed evaluations:**

- Late assessments without illness self-reports will be subject to a late penalty 10 %/day
- Late assessments with illness self-reports should be submitted within 24 hours of submission of the last illness self-report
- An assessment cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class; after this time, or the weight will be transferred to the remaining labs.
- Make-up quizzes will not be offered. Instead, the weight of a missed quiz will be transferred to the remaining quizzes.

**Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.**

## **11. Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).



## Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

## Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

## 12. Make-up Examinations

Makeups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to the Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the scheduled exam, otherwise the instructor will assign a grade of zero.

The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination.

### 13. Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

### 14. How to Be Successful in this Class:

Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful.

1. Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time.
2. Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
3. Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
4. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Treat this course as you would a face-to-face course. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively than just reading or watching the videos.
5. Connect with others. Try forming an online study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support.
6. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards or contact your instructor(s) and or teaching assistant(s).
7. Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.



### 15. Use of Recordings

**During weeks when a lab is being introduced to students, that introduction will be filmed and posted on OWL.** Students may be recorded if they ask a question during this introduction. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

### 16. Statements concerning Online Etiquette

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Please “arrive” to class on time

- Please use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, please turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak
- Please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor's request if the internet connection becomes unstable
- Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, use the "raise hand" function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question
- Remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking
- Self-identify when speaking
- Remember to mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise)

General considerations of "netiquette":

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. "Flaming" is never appropriate.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

## 17. Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## 18. Western's Commitment to Accessibility

The Department of Geography strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "Accessibility at Western" is available.

## 19. Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's Health and Wellness website for more information on mental health resources.

## 20. Support Services

Western's Support Services  
Student Development Centre

## 21. Important Dates

January 11: Classes resume

January 19: Last day to add a second term half course

February 15: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 13 to February 21: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

March 15: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

April 2: Good Friday

April 12: Classes end

April 13: Study day

April 14 to April 30: Examination Period