

The University of Western Ontario  
 Department of Geography and Environment  
**GEOG 1300B: Introduction to the Physical Environment**  
 Winter 2024

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## 1. Course Information



Winter Classes Start	Reading Week	Winter Classes End	Study Days	Winter Final Exams
Jan 8	Feb 17 – 25	Apr 8	Apr 9 – 10	Apr 11 – 30

Jan 16: Last day to add a second term half course

Feb 19: Family Day Holiday

Mar 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

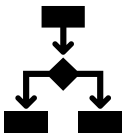
Mar 29: Good Friday Holiday



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office	Office Hours
Mark Moscicki	mmoscic@uwo.ca	SSC 2219	Mondays 2:00 – 3:30 PM

## 2. Calendar Description

### Course Description



An introduction to the phenomena and processes of the Earth-atmosphere system that underlie human-environment interactions and environmental change: the physical geography of Earth. The course introduces a variety of fundamental geographic concepts.

2 lecture hours, 2 laboratory hours, 0.5 course weight

Antirequisites: GEOG 1100, GEOG 2131 A/B

Prerequisite: None

### 3. Textbook



Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography (4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Edition), Pearson  
Authors: R. Christopherson, G. Birkeland, M. Byrne, and P. Giles

### 4. Learning Objectives

The objectives of this course are to provide students with:

- an understanding of the core themes and concepts in physical geography
- an explanation of the physical principles of atmospheric, lithospheric, hydrologic, and biogeographic processes and their mutual interaction
- a description of the spatial and temporal variations in the characteristics of the environment
- an explanation of the direct and indirect effects of human activity on the physical environment
- an introduction to numerical based geographical problem solving skills
- improved map reading skills and general geographic knowledge



### 5. Course Format

Attendance at lecture and laboratory sessions is expected. Question sets will be completed during class time in the classroom. Selected course material will be posted to [OWL](#).

[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 proper 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 are also available by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 6. Evaluation

The midterm exam will cover material studied from Jan 8 through Feb 12. The final exam is cumulative but weighted toward material studied in the second half of the semester. Exams will consist of multiple choice, definition, fill in the blank, short answer, and discussion questions.



<i>Component</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Value</i>
Laboratory Exercises	Weekly	32%
Question Sets	Weekly	5%
Midterm Exam	Feb 26	18%
Photo Portfolio	Apr 8	10%
Final Exam	TBA	35%

### Requirements

The evaluation methods above are essential requirements of the course. Students must earn a passing grade on at least 5 laboratory exercises to pass the course.

### Course Grades

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

### Late Assessments

Laboratory exercises submitted late without approved documentation will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day.

## 7. Lecture Schedule

<i>Lecture</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading: Chapter</i>
1	Jan 8	Introduction	
		Geographic Techniques	1
2	Jan 15	Solar Energy and the Seasons	2
		The Atmosphere	3
3	Jan 22	Energy Balances	4
		Wind	6
4	Jan 29	Global Circulations	6
		Atmospheric Moisture	7
5	Feb 5	Global Temperatures	5
		Global Climate Systems	10
6	Feb 12	Weather Systems	8
		The Water Budget	9
	Feb 26	Midterm Exam	
7	Mar 4	Water at the Surface	9
		Internal Structure of the Earth	12
8	Mar 11	Crustal Formation	13
		Weathering	14
9	Mar 18	Karst Landscapes	14
		River Systems	15
10	Mar 25	Floodplains	15
		Coastal Environments	16
11	Apr 1	Glacial Processes	17
		Periglacial Landscapes	17
12	Apr 8	Soils	18
		Ecosystems	19

## 8. Laboratory Schedule

There are eight lab exercises; each one will be introduced at the beginning of the lab session and is due one week later. Each exercise is worth 4% of the course grade. Students are encouraged to complete the exercises during the time allotted in the lab classroom.

Lab exercises are not accepted electronically; a completed paper copy of each exercise is required to be submitted by its due date to avoid a lateness penalty.

<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Date (Tue)</i>	<i>Date (Wed)</i>	<i>Date (Thu)</i>	<i>Topic</i>
1	Jan 16	Jan 17	Jan 18	Topographic Maps; Geographic Techniques
2	Jan 23	Jan 24	Jan 25	Earth-Sun Relations; Seasonality; Air Pressure
3	Jan 30	Jan 31	Feb 1	Radiation Balances; Wind
4	Feb 13	Feb 14	Feb 15	Weather Systems
5	Feb 27	Feb 28	Feb 29	The Water Budget; Groundwater
6	Mar 12	Mar 13	Mar 14	Landforms and Landscapes
7	Mar 19	Mar 20	Mar 21	Fluvial Processes
8	Mar 26	Mar 27	Mar 28	Google Earth Explorations

## 9. Communication



Students should check the course website regularly to keep up with announcements. E-mails to the instructor or to a teaching assistant must be sent from a UWO account and should contain the course code in the subject. E-mails will receive a response within 24 hours on weekdays.

## 10. Accommodation Policies

### Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education 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 Missed Assessments

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for missed *laboratory exercises* or missed *question sets* must contact the instructor within 48 hours of the assessment deadline.

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and

confidentiality in these matters. However, to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for the *photo portfolio*, *midterm exam* or the *final exam* shall only be granted in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities. This documentation must be submitted to an academic counselling office within 48 hours of the assessment deadline and the student must notify the instructor of the absence within 48 hours of the assessment deadline as well.

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#)

[Student Medical Certificate](#)

### **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](#).

## **11. Make-up Examinations**

A make-up exam will only be granted with approval from an Academic Counselling office. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to an Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the originally scheduled exam and students must notify the instructor of the absence within 48 hours of the originally scheduled exam. Otherwise, a grade of zero on the exam will be assigned. The content of make-up exams will differ from the originally scheduled exam. If a student is absent from both the midterm exam and its make-up exam for reasons that have been approved by an Academic Counselling office, then the weight of the midterm exam will be transferred to the final exam.

## **12. 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 graded multiple choice exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

The use of artificial intelligence tools including ChatGPT is not permitted in the photo portfolio. Representing an idea or expression of an idea that was generated by artificial intelligence will be considered an offence.

The photo portfolio is subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the university for the detection of plagiarism. All content submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of content subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

### **13. Use of Electronic Devices**

No electronic devices will be permitted during exams.

### **14. Commitment to Accessibility**

The Department of Geography and Environment 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 instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make the course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding [accommodated exams](#) is available. More information about [accessibility](#) is available as well.

### **15. Mental Health**

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources at Western to assist you. Please visit the University's [Health and Wellness](#) site for more information on mental health resources.

### **16. Support Sites**

[Student Support Services](#)  
[Student Development Centre](#)

### **17. Important Dates**

Jan 8: Winter classes begin  
Jan 16: Last day to add a second term half course  
Feb 17 - 25: Winter Reading Week (no classes; department office open)  
Feb 19: Family Day Holiday (department office closed)  
Mar 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without academic penalty  
Mar 29: Good Friday Holiday (department office closed)  
Apr 8: Winter classes end  
Apr 9 - 10: Study days  
Apr 11 - 30: Examination period