

GEOGRAPHY 120  
Course Title: Global Physical Environments  
Fall 2009

INSTRUCTORS: Jim Burt, 425 Science Hall, [jeburt@wisc.edu](mailto:jeburt@wisc.edu) (1<sup>st</sup> half of semester)  
Erika Marin-Spiotta, 373 Science Hall, [marinspiotta@geography.wisc.edu](mailto:marinspiotta@geography.wisc.edu) (2nd half)

REQUIREMENTS: Lecture 2 hours per week and discussion section 1 hour per week. Discussion sections elaborate the principal points of class lectures and provide opportunities to discuss topics of student interest related to lecture material.

CREDITS: 3 credits in physical science.

TEXT: *Physical Geography*, 9<sup>th</sup> Ed, McKnight and Hess, Pearson, 2008.

EXAMINATIONS: Four 50-minute in-class examinations will be given at roughly 4-week intervals. The last exam will be on the last day of instruction. Each exam will stress the material covered since the previous exam. There is no final comprehensive exam during the end-of-semester examination week.

GRADING: The final grade will be determined from a curve of cumulative points achieved on the class examinations, and in discussion section activities. Each class exam will be worth approximately 30 points and the discussion section grade will count 50 points. Discussion section points will be based on worksheets, participation in class discussion and short out-of class assignments. The potential total number of points for the course is 170.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

[www.geography.wisc.edu/classes/geog120/](http://www.geography.wisc.edu/classes/geog120/) Publicly available course website, which includes the syllabus and links to other resources.  
[learnuw.wisc.edu/](http://learnuw.wisc.edu/) Password-protected course materials, including 1) News, used by the instructors for class announcements, 2) Content, where the instructors post supplementary materials for download, 3) Discussion, containing bulletin boards for student questions and feedback, and 4) Grades.

PREREQUISITES: There are no prerequisite courses for this class, but students are expected to be geographically literate. You should know the location of the world's continents and oceans, the location of the 50 states and be able to read latitude and longitude on a map. Much of this information is included in the first two chapters of your textbook or in any student atlas.

HONORS: If you are registered for honors, please contact your TA early in the semester to discuss the project.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Instances of plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct have serious consequences for the students involved. To avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, you are strongly encouraged to consult the campus misconduct web page:

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>. There you will find explanations of what constitutes misconduct, instructor expectations, and related policies and procedures.

Please Note: Discussion sections will not meet until the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of classes. Monday sections will have their first meeting on September 14.

TENTATIVE LECTURE TOPICS:

Week 1	W	Sep	2	1) Introduction and Earth-Sun Fundamentals: Chapter 1
Week 2	M		7	2) Labor Day Holiday
	W		9	3) Atmosphere Fundamentals: Chapter 3
Week 3	M		14	4) Solar and Terrestrial Radiation: Chapter 4
	W		16	5) Energy Balance and Temperature: Chapter 4
Week 4	M		21	6) Atmospheric Forces and Motion: Chapter 5
	W		22	7) General Circulation of Atmosphere and Ocean: Chapter 5
Week 5	M		28	8) Atmospheric Moisture: Chapter 6
	W		30	9) *** <b>FIRST EXAM</b> ***
Week 6	M	Oct	5	10) Midlatitude Systems: Chapter 7
	W		7	11) Tropical Systems: Chapter 7
Week 7	M		12	12) Global Climatic Patterns: Chapter 8
	W		14	13) Global Climate Change: Chapter 8
Week 8	M		19	14) Terrestrial Ecosystems: Chapter 10
	W		21	15) Global Vegetation Patterns: Chapter 11
Week 9	M		26	16) *** <b>SECOND EXAM</b> ***
	W		28	17) Soil Systems: Chapter 12
Week 10	M	Nov	2	18) Characteristics of Earth's Surface and Interior: Chapter 13
	W		4	19) Characteristics of Earth's Surface and Interior: Chapters 13 and 17
Week 11	M		9	20) Earth's Tectonic Systems: Chapter 14
	W		11	21) Earth's Tectonic Systems: Chapter 14
Week 12	M		16	22) Volcanic and Earthquake Hazards: Chapter 14
	W		18	23) *** <b>THIRD EXAM</b> ***
Week 13	M		23	24) Mud and Debris Flows, Landslides and Related Natural Hazards: Chapter 15
	W		25	25) River Processes and River Morphologies: Chapter 16
Week 14	M		30	26) River Processes, Chemical Erosion, and Karst: Chapters 16, 17
	W	Dec	2	27) Arid and Aeolian Systems: Chapter 18
Week 15	M		7	28) Glacier Landforms and Sediments: Chapter 19
	W		9	29) Responses of Glacier Systems to Global Environmental Change: Chapter 19
Week 15	M		14	30) *** <b>FOURTH EXAM</b> ***