

## Geography 1301.151 & 1301.451 – Fall 2020 Online

Instructor: Greg Ramzinski ([gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu))

**Office Hours by Appointment Only – e-mail to schedule a time**

### Course Description

- The course will provide the student with a general overview of the planet Earth by an examination of the climate, soil, flora, and fauna from the equator to the polar regions. The course will also examine the interaction of various processes on the planet and the impact of human interactions with the planet.
- The schedule of topics covered is located on the last page.

**Credit: 3      Lecture: 3      Lab: 0** (there is no lab associated with this course)

### Materials for the course

- There is not a textbook for this course.
- Students will need access to a computer with internet access.
- Materials will be found on Blackboard.

### Course Objectives:

1. Critical thinking: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication: to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Empirical & Quantitative Skills: to include the manipulation and analysis of data and observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.
4. Teamwork: to include the ability to consider different points of view and work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
5. Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.
6. Social Responsibility: to include the demonstrated knowledge and competence of local, national, and global issues, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

### Grading

- Grading will be based on:
  - Results of three examinations, each worth 100 points.
  - Results of quizzes held at the beginning of each class, each worth 5 points.
  - Scoring breakdown:
    - Exam #1 – 100 points
    - Exam #2 – 100 points
    - Exam #3 – 100 points
    - Quizzes – 125 points (25 quizzes over the course of the semester)

- Total possible points during the semester = 425 points.
- Exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions.
  - Exam questions will be taken from the course materials and videos posted in Blackboard. Take the time to watch the videos, they provide an excellent supplement to the materials presented in class. Most videos are 10 – 15 minutes in length and can be viewed on a smartphone, tablet, or computer.
- Quizzes will be multiple choice and/or true/false.
- Grades will be determined by division of the total possible points (425) divided by the total of points earned by adding the scores of each of the three exams and the total points obtained on the quizzes.
  - For example:
    - Exam #1 – 88
    - Exam #2 – 92
    - Exam #3 – 94
    - Total points earned on quizzes – 100
    - $88 + 92 + 94 + 100 = 374$  (total points earned)
    - $374 \div 425 = 88.0$  (B)
- The grading scale will be:
  - $100 - 90 = A$
  - $89 - 80 = B$
  - $79 - 70 = C$
  - $69 - 60 = D$
  - $< 60 = F$
  - If a student receives a final grade ending in .5 or higher, the grade will be rounded up to the next whole number (e.g.: 89.5 would be rounded up to 90).
  - If a student received a final grade ending in .4 or lower, the grade will be rounded down to the previous whole number (e.g.: 89.4 would be rounded down to 89).
- Extra credit will be offered at the discretion of the instructor. If extra credit is offered, it will be offered to the entire class.

### **Late Assignments**

- If extra credit is offered, it will be due on the specified day. If the work is late, the student will not receive credit for the extra credit work.

### **Instruction Delivery**

- Instruction will be delivered through lectures and supplemental materials.
  - You will need the following:
    - Appropriate technological skill and technology to access supplemental materials.
    - An up-to-date laptop or daily computer access.
    - Daily internet access.
    - Access to MySPC, Blackboard, and SPC e-mail.

- Students will take a brief quiz over the materials of the previous class before the end of each week. It is highly recommended quizzes be taken on a computer.
- Supplemental materials can be viewed on your smartphone.

### Attendance Policy

- Each student is expected to participate in each class. If a student is absent from class, proper documentation must be provided to the instructor to receive an excused absence. Excessive absences will result in the student being dropped from the class.
- This class is an online class and attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. Each student is expected to complete the quiz covering materials from the previous class before reviewing the materials from the scheduled class period.
- If a student obtains 5 unexcused absences, the student will be administratively dropped from the course.

### Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of scientific investigation as they apply to Earth's physical systems and processes.
2. Describe and explain the processes of Earth's physical systems: weather and climate, water, ecosystems, geologic processes, and landform development.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among the Earth's physical systems.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the modifications humans make to the environment through interactions with Earth's physical systems.

### Course Management

1. A student with a disability, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning, who wishes to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office within three weeks after the semester begins so appropriate arrangements can be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide appropriate documentation of the disability. For more information, please call or visit the Disability Service Office in the Student Health & Wellness Office or call 806-716-2577.
2. Assignment extensions and make-up examinations will be made on a case by case basis and granted at the discretion of the instructor. A significant and verifiable reason must exist. If an assignment or exam is missed, please contact the instructor by phone or e-mail. For consideration for an extension or make-up exam, the student must contact the instructor before the due date.
3. **Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated!** Each student is to be familiar with South Plains College's policy on academic integrity. Any violations of these policies will be dealt with in accordance with the current South Plains College policy. If there are questions regarding this policy, please contact your instructor.
4. The syllabus is a living document and can be changed at any time at the discretion of the instructor. If changes are made, the changes will be announced in class and the current syllabus will be posted on Blackboard.

5. Classes will be made available at the beginning of each week. Students are highly recommended to watch each week of classes as they are posted during the semester. Studies have shown class attendance and participation reflect a higher grade at the end of the semester. An excused absence does not relieve you of meeting all course requirements. If you are unable to attend class, please notify the instructor ahead of time and/or provide the instructor with an approved excused absence. Excessive absences can result in your dismissal from the course.
6. If you are unable to view a class due to unforeseen circumstances, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. Keeping the instructor informed will help you in the event you fall behind and need extra time to complete quizzes and/or exams. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask.
7. Plan ahead. This will help you balance your schedule during the entire course of the semester. If you need help in planning your schedule to balance school, work, and family, ask for help. If the instructor does not know, help cannot be provided.

### **Course Expectations/Policies**

1. The classroom is a learning environment. This space is understood to be a location where all are respected and all participants will conduct themselves in a mature and courteous manner permitting open and honest discussion no matter the mannerism, idea, opinion, or belief.
2. College is a privilege, not a right! Take advantage of this opportunity.
3. *Attendance in a college class means active participation in the class.* Ask questions, take notes, raise points for discussion, engage the instructor and your classmates. You will benefit the more you are engaged.

### **Course Materials**

- The materials for this course are all open source. The student will need access to a computer to be able to view the referenced materials and videos used during the course. The material and videos links will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Drops and Withdrawals**

- From the South Plains College Catalog page 21, "Any student withdrawing from all classes on the Levelland Campus must report in person to the Advising Center in the Student Services Building for a withdrawal form. Instructions for obtaining a clearance from some departments of the college will be given at this time. Students who wish to drop a course or withdraw from classes at the South Plains College Reese Center must report, in person, to the Advising Center at the South Plains College Reese Center building 8 for a withdrawal form. Students at the Byron Martin Advanced Technology Center should contact the advisor at the center for the withdrawal from. Students at the Plainview Extension Center must contact the Counseling Office in person for a withdrawal form. Students who stop attending a class should go through the procedure for dropping a course; otherwise they may be administratively withdrawn for lack of attendance and their record will show an "X" or "F" instead of a "W." Failure to follow college policy by withdrawing according to this procedure will be reflected on a

student's transcript by the presence of "X" or "F" marks, as determined by the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through his or her student online account with Campus Connect. A mark of "W" will be given for student-initiated drops or withdrawals that occur prior to and through "The Last Day to Drop" as indicated in the online academic calendar. A student who quits attending class and is administratively withdrawn from class will receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor through "The Last Day to Drop" as indicated in the online academic calendar. A student administratively dropped by the instructor may be reinstated, with the approval of the appropriate instructor. A student must initiate a request for reinstatement within seven (7) calendar days of the official date of drop by personally contacting the course instructor."

- Dropping the course: The student must drop this course at the South Plains College registrar's office (there is no on-line drop system so on-line students must take care of this in person at the registrar's office). This is an official procedure which is described in the South Plains College Catalog. No one but the student can initiate the drop and it must conform to the procedure for dropping a course. Failure to initiate and finalize the drop procedure will result in an F grade on your transcript. The drop cannot be made retroactive. The drop date can be found on the South Plains College calendar.

### **Academic Honesty & Integrity**

- Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor) or the attempt to commit such an act. This includes the submission of work completed by another individual or the purchase and submission of materials completed by another individual as your own work.
- *Any student found to be in violation of the academic honesty policy will immediately be dropped from the course.*

### **Student Code of Conduct**

- Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

- South Plains College does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

- Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement: If you are pregnant, or have given birth been within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations, you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Director of Health and Wellness. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Director of Health and Wellness at 806-716-2362 or email [cgilster@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:cgilster@southplainscollege.edu) for assistance.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

- Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php>
- Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

### **SPC Face Covering Statement**

- It is the policy of South Plains College for the Fall 2020 semester that as a condition of on-campus enrollment, all students are required to engage in safe behaviors to avoid the spread of COVID-19 in the SPC community. Such behaviors specifically include the requirement that all students properly wear CDC-compliant face coverings while in SPC buildings including in classrooms, labs, hallways, and restrooms. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the current class session. If the student refuses to leave the classroom or lab after being dismissed, the student may be referred to the Dean of Students on the Levelland campus or the Dean/Director of external centers for Student Code of Conduct Violation.

### **Blackboard Accessibility Standards**

- Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). A third-party conducts audits of our software releases to ensure the accessibility of the products. For Blackboard Learn 9.1's conformance with the accessibility standards under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act using the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template® (VPAT®) tool, see the VPAT for Blackboard Learn Release 9.1. For Blackboard Learn 9.1 SP11 conformance statement for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, Level AA see Learn Accessibility Conformance

Statement. To learn more about Blackboard's commitment to accessibility, see <http://www.blackboard.com/accessibility>. (These resources are available in English only.)

- All technological questions should be directed to the South Plains College technology center (their information is on the opening page of Blackboard). I do not solve technological/computer problems.

### **Student Privacy**

- South Plains College is bound by the Texas Open Records Law and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Information regarding these topics can be found in the South Plains College Catalog. As far as this class is concerned, the instructor will NOT release or discuss the student's class performance, grades, averages, or attendance with anyone but the student. This means that your parents, class counselors, principals, or any other interested party will not gain this information from the instructor – if they need this sort of information, they must ask the student for it. This provision does not apply to student athletes or those for whom a grade check is part of their scholarship support.

### **Contact Information**

- If you have questions during the semester, please contact me sooner rather than later. The sooner we resolve the situation and get your questions answered, the sooner you can proceed in the course. If the presentation of the material is not clear, please ask.

### **I am available to answer questions in the following manners:**

- Ask a question about content in the presentation in the comments section on Blackboard. If you have a question about something, someone else probably does as well but is too afraid to ask. Be the brave one.
- Send me an e-mail with questions if you do not wish to post in the comments section on Blackboard. My e-mail is [gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu](mailto:gramzinski@southplainscollege.edu)
- Send me an e-mail to set up an online meeting via Zoom or a face-to-face meeting if you prefer a live conversation. I will send you a link for the Zoom meeting or schedule the time to meet face-to-face.
- I will be available for questions before and after class. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

## Topic Schedule

- Week of August 24 – Course introduction & The Earth
- Week of August 31 – The Earth
- Week of September 7
  - The Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification System
- Weeks September 7 & 14 - Tropical
  - Tropical wet
  - Tropical wet and dry
- Week of September 21 – Review & Exam #1
- Week September 28 - Dry
  - Arid
  - Semi-arid
- Weeks October 5 & 12 - Moderate
  - Mediterranean
  - Humid sub-tropical
  - Marine west coast
- Week of October 19 - Continental
  - Humid continental
  - Sub-artic
- Week of October 26 – Review & Exam #2
- Week of November 2 - Polar
  - Tundra
  - Ice cap
- Week of November 9 - Highland
- Weeks of November 16 & 23 - Miscellaneous climates
  - Volcanic
  - Karst topography
  - Coastal
- Week of November 30 – Review & Exam #3