-Course Objectives-
This course introduces physical geography, broadly defined. Because the discipline of geography is unusual in encompassing biophysical sciences, social sciences, and humanities, this course takes a physical focus, but keeps living things, including human-environment dynamics, also in mind. We will take a process approach, learning not only terms and definitions, but causal relationships.

Upon completion of this course, students should:
- Understand how geography is different from other biophysical sciences
- Utilize systems thinking to identify mutually causal relationships across biophysical variables
- Demonstrate familiarity with key processes and terms relating to weather, climate, atmosphere, landforms, water resources, rivers, oceans, soils, coasts, biodiversity, agriculture, and natural resources
- Analyze environmental problems from an integrated and process-based perspective

-Required Text-

The vast majority of our course content appears in this textbook, mostly in similar sequence. Not all material covered in class will be in the textbook, however, and not all textbook material will be covered in our course. We will cover a relatively small amount of additional material in lecture, perhaps with additional readings, especially toward the end of the semester. When in doubt about what will be covered on tests, rely primarily on the lecture content – both slides and any additional notes or activities, including films.

Note that there is a new edition of the text available but it is >95% identical and much more expensive, so we will use the older edition above (used copies are available at abebooks.com for about $30). Updates in the new edition are mainly regarding climate change, so I will provide an updated chapter for that topic and you should trust the accuracy of the updated slides over the text.

Do you need to buy the text? On the one hand, most of lecture closely follows the text, chapter by chapter, so if you want a good grade, I would certainly get it and keep up with the chapter readings. I also won’t give extra study help outside of class to anyone who hasn’t read the material, taken lecture notes, and honestly tried to understand. On the other hand, if you don’t care so much about your grade, and/or if you find the topics we cover to be easy, I will not
be assigning specific homework assignments from the text, so I am unlikely to know if you buy it or not. One option is to share a copy with a friend.

**-Course Topics-**

Topics will be covered in roughly the following order:

- Introduction to Physical Geography
- Solar energy
- Earth’s energy-atmosphere system
- Earth’s water cycle and water resources
- Weather and climate
- Earth-atmosphere connections
- Climate change
- Geologic processes
- Landforms
- Rivers
- Ice & glaciers
- Oceans and coasts
- Soils
- Ecosystems and biomes
- Human-environment relations

**-Class Policies-**

**My office hours and contacts:**

I am often available to meet with students immediately following our class, if that happens to fit your schedule. I am often (but not always!) available in my office between 10:15 and 12:30 on MWF and I can also meet other times. It is always best to schedule an appointment, especially if your issue is time-sensitive. I am also generally available to meet by phone. I may or may not be available on campus during the time period between our last class and our exam, but I will be available by phone or skype.

My e-mail is [jennifer.brewer@unh.edu](mailto:jennifer.brewer@unh.edu). Like many people, my inbox is often very full. If you want me to notice your message promptly, you might begin your message subject line with “GEOG 572.” I often answer within a few hours, but if you don’t hear back within 48 hours, feel free to re-send.

My office is at 102B Huddleston Hall in the Geography suite, located on the east end of the building. You can find Huddleston on any campus map, near downtown, between Holloway Commons and a few dormitories.

**Attendance:**

In this class, as in most others, there is a clear correlation between attendance and grades. I may occasionally take attendance, conduct in-class assignments or pop quizzes, or verbally announce changes to the course schedule, assignments, or tests. If you miss any part of class, it is your responsibility to check with other students to find out what you missed, and ask to borrow notes. If you do not attend class, you should not expect a good grade, or expect me to make you aware of any changes in content or scheduling.

I **rarely allow make-ups of missed tests, exams, or missed in-class or homework assignments, unless you have a letter from a UNH Dean, DSS, or SHARP.** UNH club activities, conferences, job interviews, or field trips for other classes do not necessarily qualify for an excused absence, and I also cannot arrange make-ups for brief illnesses. On the other hand, if you have a serious family or health emergency, especially one that extends over some
period of time, I would hope to accommodate, because I realize that such issues are sometimes more important than school, so feel free to let me know of such issues as far in advance as possible, and I will probably suggest you get a letter from the Dean. **Religious holidays are an exception.** If I inadvertently schedule a test, in-class assignment, or due date on a holiday, or a test or due date on the day immediately following a holiday, please don’t hesitate to point it out immediately so I can reschedule or make alternate arrangements.

I strongly recommend that in the first few days of class, you get to know a few people in class, and exchange contact information, in case you need to borrow notes, ask for missed information, or help each other to study. This may require talking to people you don’t know, which may feel intimidating, but is among the skill set of most successful working professionals. On the other hand, if someone asks you for more than a couple days of notes, particularly if there seem to be no extenuating circumstances, you can certainly refuse.

**Courtesy:**

If you do not intend to participate fully and actively in your own learning, and help create a supportive learning atmosphere for other students, you do not belong in this class. To ensure a climate of learning for all, disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in exclusion (removal) from this class. Arriving late or leaving early without suitable explanation and/or apology are rude and are unacceptable; such behavior can be distracting to the instructor and students. Congruent with campus policy, the following distracting activities are not appropriate during in this class and will not be tolerated: **sleeping, inappropriate talking/socializing, reading non-class materials, voice or text use of digital devices such as cell phones, music players, laptops, or other distractions.** It is my job to provide you with college level educational content, not to talk aloud to myself while you check messages or surf the internet. Old fashioned pen or pencil and paper are less distracting to yourself, to me, and to others, and evidence shows that for most people it improves the retention of information. For these reasons, I do not allow use of laptops or other electronic devices during class, not even silently for note taking -- unless you sign a release that commits to sitting in the front row and using it only for taking notes. That release is available online if you wish to sign it and e-mail it to me. Research shows that the presence of a smart phone inhibits learning, even if you are not using it (Ward et al. 2017). This means that your neighbors may be easily distracted as well. It is therefore only fair that you keep your phones out of sight with all sound and vibration functions off. If you do not comply, I may tell you to leave class. In the rare event that you need to keep your phone on for some emergency purpose (such as an urgent family health matter), let me know and we can agree that you put it in silent mode.

I do not allow audio or video recording or taking pictures of class without the permission of everyone in the room, including me. Violating this policy is immediate grounds for course failure. My tolerance for non-compliance is extremely low.

**Grading:**
Tests total 85% of your grade. We will have three major tests and a final exam. Each count equally. While the three tests are not specifically designed to be cumulative, the earlier course content provides the foundation for later course content. The final exam is cumulative. **I will drop your one lowest major test or final exam grade** when calculating final course grades. This means that you can miss or mess up one test or exam and your overall grade will not be affected.

The remaining 15% of your grade is based on any in-class or homework assignments. Each of these is worth a few points and may be graded as full credit, no credit, or partial credit. Some will be unannounced in-class exercises, while others you may have a few to several days to complete. Given the relatively strict make-up policy, I realize that there are times when students are absent for a legitimate purpose. For this reason, during final grade calculations, after adding up the total number of possible points from in-class and homework assignments throughout the semester, I will multiply that number by .75 before comparing it to your completed points. This means **you can miss 1/4 of the total assignments points** and still get 100% for this portion of your grade. (Any points exceeding 100% after this adjustment do not count as extra credit.)

Per the registrar’s schedule, our final exam is on **Monday May 14 at 1:00-3:00** [http://www.unh.edu/registrar/general-information/exams.html](http://www.unh.edu/registrar/general-information/exams.html). It is not possible to take the exam early.

I reserve the right to curve grading scales, either up or down. I have never curved grades in this course, however, and I would only curve down in a very unusual circumstance. Assuming there is no curve, the standard grade distribution is as follows.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 and up</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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**Investing in your own learning:**

If you aren’t quite getting the grades you’d like, you are not alone! Many of us struggle at some point with test anxiety, note taking, organizing our time/thoughts/priorities, or just feeling overwhelmed. Do NOT hesitate to ask for help at the UNH Center for Academic Resources [www.unh.edu/cfar](http://www.unh.edu/cfar). They offer free academic support via one-on-one mentoring, small group workshops and resources for subject area tutoring. **If you encounter words in lecture or reading that you don’t understand, I strongly suggest that you jot them down to look up later. Building your vocabulary is a lifelong skill and asset.**

**Note taking:**

Taking notes is a basic skill for life and learning. Research shows that taking notes by hand instead of electronically improves learning outcomes. In this course, I find that many students find it helpful to draw diagrams. The UNH Center for Academic Resources can offer tips, but most people find they have to develop their own individualized approach and style.
Course website:

I use Canvas MyCourses to post additional readings, assignments, and grades, and to collect out-of-class assignments. The way Canvas projects final grades can be misleading, however, since it calculates points instead of percentages and does not easily weight or drop grades as described above, so do not rely on its final grade projections. In rare instances the gradebook will be temporarily inaccessible, when grades are being entered or calculated.

If you encounter difficulties with the website, it is best to contact IT help https://itsupport.unh.edu/ (though they are not necessarily available evenings or weekends). There are also online website help resources at https://www.unh.edu/it/kb/. These folks are more familiar than I with the intricacies and glitches of the software, and may be more immediately available.

Academic integrity:

Students in this class are bound to the university policy on academic honesty linked here: http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/academic-honesty. Violation of this policy may result in course failure. The policy applies to all assignments, including any extra credit options. I take these issues seriously and will take action when warranted. Students who have cheated, plagiarized, lied, or misrepresented the truth in my classes later wished they hadn’t.

You may find this college tutorial on plagiarism to be helpful: http://Cola.unh.edu/plagiarism-tutorial-0. If you have ANY questions about whether something constitutes an academic integrity violation, ASK. I view such issues through the lens of fairness and respect, considering the considerable effort put forth by most students and instructors. If you violate this policy, you lower the value of all our academic diplomas, of this university as a commons for social learning, and the larger civic merit of higher education. That is a long term social cost, not just an individual ethical breach.

Equity and accessibility:

If you have a special need or disability, even a minor one, and if you desire appropriate accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services to provide me with the necessary documentation in advance of any anticipated need http://www.unh.edu/studentaccessibility/

Students in this class are expected to conform with university policies on discrimination and harassment http://unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/affirmative-action-and-equity-policies

Personal issues:

Most people encounter some kind of mental health issue over the course of our lives, particularly during college or other periods of transition. Your tuition and fees already pay for campus counseling resources, so please don’t hesitate to contact them for any reason, even just for help managing your time or the inevitable stress of school https://www.unh.edu/counseling-center/homepage. You can also contact them if you are concerned about another student.

Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) provides free and confidential advocacy and direct services to survivors https://www.unh.edu/sharpp.
Unforeseen emergencies:

If some unforeseen emergency conflicts with our class meeting or exams, such as a weather event or public health or safety issue, you can expect general information to be provided by the university. In such an event, you may also receive an e-mail from me with follow-up information about any necessary rescheduling, so you’ll want to be attentive for any such e-mail communications.

Work cited