

# GEO 101.501 Atmospheric Processes

6:00 p.m. – 8:40 p.m. Tuesdays, ILB 140

Dr. Carol Sawyer

**Office:** LSCB 341

**Email:** sawyer@usouthal.edu (*preferred* contact method)

**Phone:** (251) 460-6169

**Course Webpage:** <http://www.southalabama.edu/geography/sawyer/geo101.html>

**Office Hours:** 9:30 am-11:30 am. Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 am & 4:30-5:30 Tuesdays, *or by appointment*

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to the natural science branch of geography. The course emphasizes earth-sun relationships, weather and climate. Also taught are the natural processes in the atmosphere that interact to produce the earth's varying physical environments. Relationships and explanations involving the basics of matter and energy transfer are emphasized throughout the course. This class provides students with an understanding of the natural environment in which they live and applies that knowledge to problems they are likely to encounter in their lives.

## COURSE CONTENT (see schedule for details)

Seasons

Earth-sun relationships

Atmosphere composition

Atmospheric pressure

Atmospheric circulation patterns

Atmospheric moisture

Extreme weather

Climate

Biogeography

Soils

## TEXTBOOK

Required: *Physical Geography: A Landscape Appreciation*, (9<sup>th</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall), by T. L. McKnight and D. Hess. The same textbook is used for Geo 102. Recent older editions are acceptable; but, any page references I make are for the 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Additional readings may be handed out in class or posted on my webpage. It is the student's responsibility to read these handouts in addition to the textbook in preparation for the exams.

## ATTENDANCE and CLASSROOM POLICIES

Students are expected to be on time and *stay* the entire time for ALL classes. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet when it is passed around the room. Please keep in mind that missing any lecture, excused or not, will likely have a detrimental affect on your grade.

Please adhere to the policy on classroom etiquette; these include no talking during the lecture, reading the newspaper or other non-course related material, coming late, sleeping, texting/messaging, or leaving early. Turn off all cell phones, pages, and any text messaging devices and **put them away!** You will be asked to leave if caught texting/talking during class.

## EVALUATION AND GRADING POLICIES

Grading is from course attendance, quizzes, and three examinations.

- Twelve quizzes are scheduled. Each quiz is worth 10 points (120 points total or 24% of your final course grade). Question material will be from previous lectures. NO MAKEUP quizzes are given for either excuses or unexcused absences.
- The first two exams are worth 100 points each (200 points total or 40% of your final course grade). Exam material will come from lecture material presented in class, and all readings, including material from the textbook, supplemental readings, handouts, images and diagrams. The exams will consist partially of questions from the weekly quizzes. The final exam is worth 110 points (or 22% of your final course grade). The material on the final exam will be primarily from the last portion of the course; however, some questions will be from the previous two exams and quizzes given throughout the semester. I make every effort to grade the exams in a timely manner.

- Attendance will be taken each time the class meets (12 times total) and counts 4.17 points each time (50 points total or 10% of your final course grade). Attendance may be taken at the beginning and/or end of class.
- A class assignment will be handed out on November 17<sup>th</sup>, to be completed Thanksgiving week and is worth 20 points or 4 % of the final course grade. The assignment will be due at the beginning of class on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Late assignments will **not** be accepted. Further instructions will be given when the assignment is given.
- Just a reminder, you receive separate grades for lab and lecture. Students must enroll in both GEO 101 lecture and lab to receive the natural science credit.

The *final* grades will be determined strictly based on the following rules and percentages:

A: 100 to 90                      B: 89 to 80                      C: 79 to 70                      D: 69 to 60                      F: <60%

<b>Course component</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Total points</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Quizzes (12)	10 each	120	24 (2% each)
Assignment	20	20	4
Exams 1-2	100 each	200	40 (20% each)
Final Exam	110	110	22
Attendance	4.17 each day	50	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **EXAM MAKE-UP POLICY**

If you have a valid excuse, you must contact me via email either before the exam or **within** 24 hours after an exam is administered to schedule a makeup exam. All legitimate excuses require written validation. Valid excuses include: illness (your's or a dependent's), a death in the immediate family, or participating in a university-sponsored event. Only exceptional excuses from work-related absences are accepted. Make up exams *will be different from the original exam. Quizzes cannot be made up.*

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The University of South Alabama provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act, students with bona fide disabilities will be afforded reasonable accommodations. The Office of Special Student Services will certify a disability and advise faculty members of reasonable accommodations. If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please notify me and provide certification from Disability Services (Office of Special Student Services). OSSS is located in room 270 of the Student Center (460-7212).

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

All members of the academic community are responsible for supporting freedom and openness through rigorous personal standards of honesty and fairness. The University of South Alabama is committed to the fundamental values of preserving academic honesty as defined in the Student Handbook: The Lowdown. Plagiarism is using somebody else's ideas in your writing without correctly identifying such sources. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty undermine the very purpose of the university and diminish the value of an education and must be avoided. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from receiving a zero on an exam to probation and expulsion.

### **CHANGES**

The class schedule is tentative and may be changed if necessary. Students will receive at least 48 hours notice if possible.

***Tentative Course Schedule\****

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>August 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Earth intro, Seasons, Geographical grid	Chapter 1	
<b>August 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Portraying Earth	Chapter 2	Quiz 1
<b>September 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Introduction to the atmosphere	Chapter 3	Quiz 2
<b>September 8<sup>th</sup></b>	Insolation and temperature	Chapter 4	Quiz 3
<b>September 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Temperature, Review	Chapter 4	Quiz 4
<b>September 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Exam I</b>		Exam I
<b>September 29<sup>th</sup></b>	Atmospheric pressure	Chapter 5	Quiz 5
<b>October 6<sup>th</sup></b>	Atmospheric winds	Chapter 5	Quiz 6
<b>October 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Atmospheric moisture & Air masses	Chapter 6	Quiz 7
<b>October 20<sup>th</sup></b>	Fronts & extreme weather, Review	Chapter 7	Quiz 8
<b>October 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Exam II</b>		Exam II
<b>November 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Major climates, Climate change	Chapter 8	Quiz 9
<b>November 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Climate types	Chapter 8	Quiz 10
<b>November 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Biomes, biogeography	Chapters 10 & 11	Quiz 11
<b>November 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Biomes assignment	Chapters 10 & 11	Assignment
<b>December 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Soils, Review	Chapter 12	Quiz 12
<b>December 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><i>Final Exam (Exam III), 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.</i></b>		<b><i>Final Exam</i></b>

**\*Course schedule may be adjusted as the semester progresses. Students will be notified of changes at least one week in advance.**

**Other important dates:** September 4<sup>th</sup> – Spring graduation application deadline      October 23<sup>rd</sup> – Last day to drop a course