



Course Syllabus for GEOG 103 Online

This course is code RED for Generative AI (AI tools not allowed)

COURSE NAME Introduction to Physical Geography: Landforms and Soils	TERM/YEAR: Winter 2026
CLASS SCHEDULE ONLINE: https://rossway.net/ccc103/ The course is asynchronous with the exceptions of (1) two mandatory office hours (on Zoom), (2) a set date and time midterm exam (on Canvas and Zoom), and (3) an in-person, on-campus final exam; the date and time set by the Registrar	
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Bruce Martin	CONTACT INFORMATION: bmartin@corpuschristi.ca
OFFICE HOURS: I will respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays. I am available by Zoom, by appointment.	

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

A study of the physical and biological processes governing the evolution and distribution of landforms, soils, and vegetation of the Earth, and the impact of humans. Laboratory exercises required.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to geomorphology, the scientific study of landscape. In the course, students will be introduced to earth materials, the nature and formation of major landform features on the earth's surface, processes that continue to shape the physical landscape, and soils.

This course will provide students with a foundation for further courses in physical geography. The course will also be very beneficial for students interested in other disciplines which consider the natural environment (such as agriculture, ecology or engineering), or fields which deal with human-environment interaction (for example environmental studies, education, social sciences, planning, history, anthropology, or architecture).

Course Pre-requisite(s): None.

Geography 103 is complementary to Geography 102. Neither course has any prerequisite.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the successful completion of this course the student should have:

1. An understanding of physical processes that have shaped, and continue to influence, the natural landscape.
2. An understanding of issues around human interaction with the natural landscape and natural environment.
3. Reflection on social and personal ethical issues related to the landscape and natural environment.

4. An awareness of basic techniques and skills used in physical geography, including tools such as topographic mapping and geographic information systems.
5. An introduction to the discipline of physical geography and its relevance to other fields of study.
6. A basic understanding of Christian perspectives on the natural sciences.

REQUIRED TEXTS & RESOURCES:

1. Christopherson, R.W., Birkeland, G.H., Byrne, M-L., and Giles, P.T. *Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography, 4th (or 3rd) Canadian Edition*. Toronto: Pearson. ISBN 9780134854052. This is now only available digitally (although there may be resale paper copies available. Details are on Canvas and the course website. Once you have purchased the eBook (good for 24 months), you can choose to purchase a paper copy for a reduced cost. This is also the text for GEOG 102. If you take (or have taken) GEOG 102, you will not have to buy another text.

To get the text, follow the instructions at <https://rossway.net/cc103/>. There is also a link to the instructions in the “Welcome” section on the course Canvas page.

2. Online notes are posted on the website. A schedule of readings is in the Course Calendar.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

This course is a Distance Education course. Most students respond very positively – they can work on their own time and in their own way. But it does require a different approach to learning. You will have the privilege (or challenge, depending how you look at it) to be more self-directed in your learning. There are several implications of which you need to be aware as you commit to the course:

Practical and Personal Implications:

- The workload for this course is equivalent to any other 3 credit hour class offered on campus -- approximately 4-5 hours of reading (textbook) and 2.5 hours of lecture (online notes) per week.
- You must be diligent in reading the course notes and text as these are the chief sources of information.
- You will not spend as much time in class as a traditional course, but more time in personal study.
- You will have the opportunity to direct your own learning times and styles.
- You will learn some invaluable skills and discipline in time management and self-directed learning.
- You will need to be self-directed and disciplined to complete the course requirements.
- You will need to complete assignments ***absolutely on time***.
- Study Groups can be one of the most effective – and enjoyable – methods of learning. You are welcome to get together with other students.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

The grading schema for the course is as follows:

	GRADE %
ID	1
Reading Assignments	3
Labs	19
Midterm Exam	33
Final Exam	33
Zoom Attendance	4
Online Discussion	7

Please note that the grade totals on Canvas are unofficial. Official grades are calculated at the end of the semester using Excel to ensure all assignments are properly weighted.

COURSE POLICIES

It is the responsibility of every student to read and understand the College Policies. The College Policies on Attendance, [Academic Honesty](#), Academic Standing, [Academic Concession, Final Exam](#), [Grading Practices](#), [Student Conduct](#), [Technology Usage](#), and more can be found here: <https://corpuschristi.ca/current-students/#Policies>

In addition to the College Policies, this course also upholds the following specific policies and practices:

ATTENDANCE / PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to “attend” all classes. In the online environment this means reading all the content and participating actively in the discussions. **It also includes attendance in Mandatory Office Hour, the Midterm Exam (set date and time) and the in-person, on-campus Final Exam – date and time scheduled by the Registrar.** Students should advise their instructors of anticipated absence from the course or absence due to illness.

As per the college Final Exam policy, students who miss more than 25% of course assignments may be barred from writing the final exam.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with documented disabilities who may require accommodations must contact the UBC Centre for Accessibility (<https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility>) as soon as possible.

PERMISSIONS FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING:

By continuing in this course, you acknowledge and agree to the utilization of online video conferencing for academic purposes only. The video conferencing system complies with all requirements of the Personal Information Protection Act SBC 2003, c.63 (PIPA) regarding collection use and disclosure of information. You acknowledge that collection and possible use of data by Zoom for allowable activities under PIPA. For “Zoom Best Practices” see UBC’s [Zoom student guide](#)

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI):

Students are expected to meet the standards of academic honesty set by Corpus Christi College. As the College’s Academic Honesty Policy states, “[a]cts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on a test, midterm, or examination, improper collaboration, or duplication of the work of another. Some of these actions are so serious that they may lead to expulsion or suspension, while others may result in a grade of zero on an assignment or for a course.” [Please familiarize yourself with policy here.](#)

Academic dishonesty also includes the use of generative AI for coursework you are submitting as drafts or for grading purposes. **This course is Code Red for generative AI= AI use is completely forbidden. Any AI usage (whether in assignment draft or not) means a '0' for the assignment and may result in a failure for the course. The professor will use tools that detect large amounts of copy/paste in documents and discussion posts.**

ASSIGNMENTS:

To satisfy the requirements of this course, students will carry out the following assignments:

1. ID Requirement

Students **MUST upload a PDF of their photo ID** (in English) through Canvas using the folder provided. This is essential to verify your identity for exams. Acceptable ID is your student card, driver’s license, Canadian residency/work permit or equivalent.

It is College policy that all students must provide photo ID to verify your identity when you write exam. If you do not send this, we cannot verify your identity, and you will receive “0” on the exams.

Please save it with **its title** being **YOUR NAME with which you are registered on Canvas**, so I know it’s you. Please put your surname (family name/last name), a space, then your first (given) name. For instance, I would save my ID pdf as “Martin Bruce.pdf.” All files will **ONLY** be used for ID during exams and will be deleted at the end of the course.

2. Reading Assignments

There will be regular reading assignments from the course notes and text, as indicated in the calendar. You will be asked, as part of every lab, to indicate whether you have or have not done the readings. Because this will be the chief source of information in the course, reading is essential.

3. Mandatory Office Hours

There are required office hour sessions throughout the semester. See the Course Calendar and Canvas for details. Attendance is required and will be recorded.

- a. **Monday, January 12, 6-6:45 pm** (not graded),
- b. **Either Thursday, February 5, 6-7 pm OR Friday, February 6, 6-7 pm** (graded)
- c. **Either Tuesday, April 7, 6-7 pm OR Wednesday, April 8, 6-7 pm** (graded).

4. Labs

Laboratory exercises are required and will be evaluated. Labs are “Quizzes” on Canvas. You will have to do each lab in one sitting as there is no way to allow a restart. Allow 2-3 hours per lab. You will need your online notes and your textbook to be successful. Yes, these are open book. **Late labs are not accepted.**

There are links to the maps for the labs on Canvas.

5. Mid-term examination: Thursday, FEBRUARY 12, 6-7 p.m.

Please clear your schedule. The timing is tight before the Winter Break. Other arrangements are impossible.

- The mid-term exam will be based on lecture material and readings covered in the first half of the term. It will be based on Chapters 1, 12-15 of *Geosystems* and online notes 1, 12-15
- The exam will be a Quiz on Canvas. As per College policy, the exam uses a lockdown browser.
- You will be monitored by Zoom (using a second device like your phone, showing you and your desk). If you are NOT on the Zoom call, or I cannot see you and your workspace/desktop on Zoom, you will receive “0”
- Watch for more details closer to the exam/ We’ll go over the specifics in the Mandatory Office Hours.

6. Participation in a moderated discussion group

Over the term you will be expected to join in an online discussion with your classmates. During the year you are responsible for participating in and keeping an eye on the discussion. You are responsible to make one entry per week (see the calendar for any exceptions). I will post suggested topics. Or you can create your own. There is no set time you must be online. Rather, interact with other posted comments or post your own (it is more of a forum for posted comments than a live chatroom).

Please do NOT use AI, like CHAT GPT. I am NOT interested in an AI-generated answer. I am interested in your PERSONAL reflections. A personal answer will get maximum points. **An AI answer will result in a “0” and your name being passed on to the Dean for potential discipline.**

7. Final examination – In-person, on-campus (date and time scheduled by the Registrar)

The **date and time of the exam will be announced in the Final Examination Schedule** prepared by the Registrar’s Office. **This exam will be written ON CAMPUS, in person.** Please note instructors are *not* at liberty to reschedule final examinations. Students who propose not to take a final examination at the scheduled time must apply for rescheduling to the Registrar before the last day for withdrawal from classes. Otherwise, an exam can only be rescheduled due to an official exam conflict or exam hardship. College policy is *that “An exam conflict happens when multiple exams are scheduled on the same day at the same time. An exam hardship is defined as three or more end-of-term exams in a 24-hour period.”*

- The final exam will be based on lecture and lab material and readings covered from the mid-term exam until the end of the term. The final exam will cover: Chapters 16-19 of *Geosystems 4CE* and online notes 16-19, Eolian and Deserts online notes, Theological Issues online notes.
- The exam will be **ON CAMPUS. Please bring photo ID.** Any academic dishonesty will result in a “0” on the exam and an “F” in the course.

LATE PAPERS

Late assignments, including labs, reading reports, and discussion posts are not accepted. If a student misses a test or assignment because of unexpected illness, they must provide the instructor with a note signed by a physician stating the date and time of the visit to the doctor's office.

EXTENSIONS

Extensions are only permissible due to illness, with a doctor's note. Please plan accordingly.

MISSED TESTS

Exams can only be rescheduled due to medical reasons, with a note from a physician.

AVAILABILITY

Appointments via Zoom can be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. Please note that I will check email messages at least once per day, Monday-Friday. Therefore Monday-Friday you should receive a response within 24 hours (approximately). I do not do course work on weekends. (Note your labs are due on Tuesdays so you don't have to work Sundays, either! 😊)

GRADING SCALE:

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL EQUIVALENTS	GRADE POINT	GRASP OF SUBJECT MATTER	OTHER QUALITIES EXPECTED OF STUDENTS
A RANGE:		Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, broad knowledge base.		
A+	90-100	4.33	Extraordinary	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base. Superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89	4.0	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base. Strong grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of broad knowledge base.
A-	80-84	3.67	Very, very good	
B RANGE:		Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.		
B+	76-79	3.33	Very good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good evidence of familiarity with literature
B	72-75	3.0	Good	
B-	68-71	2.67	Satisfactory	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.
C RANGE		Acceptable to minimum.		
C+	64-67	2.33	Acceptable	Very basic critical capacity and analytic ability; some

LETTER GRADE	NUMERICAL EQUIVALENTS	GRADE POINT	GRASP OF SUBJECT MATTER	OTHER QUALITIES EXPECTED OF STUDENTS
				understanding of relevant issues; some evidence of familiarity with literature.
C	60-63	2.0	Barely Acceptable	
C-	55-59	1.67	Needs Improvement	
D	50-54	1.0	Minimum Pass	
FAILED				
F	0-49	0		Failure to meet the above criteria

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following schedule may be altered according to the instructor's judgment. See the online course calendar on the website, <http://rossway.net/cc103/>, for specific dates.

Week	Date(s)	Course Content	Readings For Each Class	Other Information
1	Jan 5-10	Website, syllabus, and Introduction to Geography	1a/1b online notes/text Chapter 1	
2	Jan 12-17	The Dynamic Planet	12 online notes/text	
3	Jan 19-24	Tectonics/earthquakes/volcanos	13 online notes/text	Lab 1 due
4	Jan 26-31	Weathering/mass movement	14 online notes/text	Lab 2 due
5	Feb 2-7	Rivers	15 online notes/text	Lab 3 due
6	Feb 12 6-7 pm	Midterm Exam		
7	Feb 16-22	Winter Break		
8	Feb 23-28	Oceans and coastal landforms	16 online notes/text	
9	Mar 2-7	Glacial/periglacial landforms	17 online notes/text	Lab 4 due
10	Mar 9-14	Soils	18 online notes/text	Lab 5 due
11	Mar 16-21	Eolian landforms and Deserts	online notes	Lab 6 due
12	Mar 23-28	Ecosystems	19 online notes/text	
13	Mar 30-Apr 4	Theological Issues	online notes	

Appendix

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RELATED COURSES AT CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE:

- **GEOG 102 (3): Introduction to Physical Geography: Weather and Climate**
- **GEOG 206 (3): Geography of British Columbia**
- **GEOL 105 (3): Introduction to Physical Geology**