COQUITLAM COLLEGE
Established 1982

COURSE OUTLINE

Effective Semester: Fall 2026

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title: Introduction to Physical Geography **Course Number:** GEOG 104 **Credits:** 4

Course Delivery:	**Hours:**	**Weeks:**
Lecture	24	14 (Fall, Spring)
Laboratory	24	12 (Summer)
Field Experience	4	
Total	52	

Course Level: ☒ First Year ☐ Second Year
☒ New ☐ Revised Course
☐ Replacement Course

Department: Geography **Former Course Codes and Number:** N/A

Pre-requisites: None **Co-requisite Statement:** N/A **Precluded Courses:** N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to physical geography and examines the powerful environmental forces and events that influence our daily lives, and in turn, the ways that humans are altering Earth's systems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Distinguish between endogenic and exogenic systems that shape the Earth and the driving forces behind them.
- Integrate how the four spheres interact with each other—hydrosphere, atmosphere, lithosphere and biosphere.
- Diagram the rock cycle, including the processes involved in forming the three rock types.
- Diagram plate tectonics, volcanic landforms, and earthquake fault mechanisms and their impact on the physical landscape.
- Explain how weathering and erosion processes create physical landforms and the types of mass movement.
- Connect the processes involved in fluvial and glacial action and the subsequent landform alterations.
- Integrate the dynamic nature of processes that constantly alter coastlines.
- Critically analyze the human impact on Earth systems.
- Describe basic atmospheric systems and weather systems and impact of climate change on those systems.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENTS

Grading System: Letter Grades **Specify passing grade:** 50%

Assessment Activities and Weighting:

Participation	0-10%	Tests/Quizzes	0-20%
Assignments/Projects	0-20%	Midterm	20-30%
Field Trip Report(s)	10-20%	Final Exam	20-30%
Lab Work	15-20%		

Assessments are based on Coquitlam College's Assessment of Student Learning policy. Specific assessment criteria will be provided on the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

TEXT(S) AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

Reading selections vary by instructor. Sample of texts for this course at the time of the effective date:

- Christopherson, R., Birkeland, G., Byrne, M. and P. Giles, 2018: Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography, Updated Fourth Canadian Edition. Pearson Canada Inc., North York, Ontario, Canada, 669 pages.

COURSE TOPICS

- Geography themes and mapping
- Atmospheric Layers and pollutants
- Solar energy, energy balance, circulation systems, and temperature
- Hydrological cycle and humidity
- Atmospheric Forces and weather
- Climates and climate change
- Structure of earth and earth materials
- Earth energy system and plate tectonics
- Folding, faulting, earthquakes, and volcanoes
- Weathering/Erosion and mass movements
- Fluvial systems and landscapes
- Glacial and coastal landscapes
- Ecosystems and environmental issues

See instructor's syllabus for the detailed weekly readings, activities, and assignments.

NOTES

1. Students are required to follow all College policies. Policies are available on the website at: Coquitlam College Policies
2. To find out how this course transfers, visit the BC Transfer Guide at: bctransferguide.ca,
3. Coquitlam College offers a variety of course delivery methods. Definitions and expectations for each delivery method can be found at: Definitions of Course Delivery Methods
4. Midterm and final exams must each include 10-20% lab-based questions.