

# SYLLABUS      Geography of California

## Online

GEO351 01 (72099) Fall 2009

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## 1. GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

### Catalog Description: GEO 351 Geography of California (4)

Location and description of California's natural and human resources. The influence of physical features upon the economic activities and sequence of occupation of California, with particular attention to the relationship of current California problems to their geographical causes. 4 lecture discussions. **Prerequisites:** One course from each of the following Sub-areas: A1, A2, A3 and B1, B2, B3 or permission of instructor. **GE Synthesis course for Sub-area B4 or D4.**

### Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course, students will be able to

- Observe, identify, and articulate basic geographic facts that are crucial in understanding and appreciating the diverse physical and cultural environment of the state.
- Analyze and explain physical and cultural geographic phenomena and events in the state based on scientific principles and geographic theories.
- Recognize and define physical and cultural environmental problems or opportunities in various locations in California; identify resources, strategies, and solutions to mitigate these problems or to utilize the opportunities.
- Improve observation, critical and logical thinking, writing, communication, and **team working** skills.

## 2. REQUIRED TEXT AND OTHER SOURCES

Required Textbook: Hyslop, Wu and Garver: California Eclectic – A topical Geography (This is a new book scheduled publishing date in mid-September by Kendall Hunt Publishing. The book should be available in the Bronco Bookstore when the school starts. ) Other reading and course materials are listed with lectures, assignments, and references in the Blackboard. These materials can be found in the library or online.

## 3. SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

### Week 0 (Sept 24 – 25)

Complete the **online orientation**. In-class orientation is only required when you cannot complete the online orientation. Detailed information will be posted online.

### Week 1 (Sept 28 – Oct. 2)

**Lesson 1** Geography of California - An Introduction

**Lesson 2** Geo-demographics

### Week 2 (Oct. 5 – 9)

**Lesson 3** Diverse Climates and the Governing Forces

### Week 3 (Oct. 12 – 16)

**Lesson 4** Earthquakes and the Underlying Geological Structure

**Lesson 5** Physical Landscapes and Their Formation

### Week 4 (Oct. 19 – 23)

- Lesson 6** Culture Landscapes
- Lesson 7** Biogeography
- Week 5** (Oct. 26 – Oct. 30)  
Review & **Midterm on Thursday Oct. 29**
- Week 6** (Nov. 2 – 6)  
**Lesson 8** History from Geography Perspectives  
**Lesson 9** Urban and Rural Geography
- Week 7** (Nov. 9 – 13)  
**Lesson 10** Water and Water Resources
- Week 8** (Nov. 16 – 20)  
**Lesson 11** Economic Geography  
**Lesson 12** California's Sustainability
- Week 9** (Nov. 23 – 25 Holiday Nov. 26, 27)  
**Lesson 13** Regions of California
- Week 10** (Nov. 30 – Dec. 4)  
**Lesson 14** Into the Future & Review
- Final's Week** (Dec. 7 – 11)  
**Final Exam on Tuesday Dec. 8**  
**Complete class survey by Thursday Dec. 10**

#### 4. GRADING

<p><b>Grades Distribution (1,000 points possible)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Essay                      100 points</li> <li>• Field Trip                         150 points</li> <li>• Group Project                    150 points</li> <li>• Midterm                            200 points</li> <li>• Final                                200 points</li> <li>• Quiz 1 - 5                        100 points (20 each)</li> <li>• Discussions/Participation    100 points (Discussion 60, Orientation (quizO) 20, Course survey 10, Other participation 10 )</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grades:</b></p> <p><b>A:</b> 900 points +  <b>B:</b> 800 – 899  <b>C:</b> 700 – 799  <b>D:</b> 600 – 699  <b>F:</b> &lt; 600                  "+" and "-" may be given</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The class will not be curved</li> <li>• Grades are final once assigned (except error corrections)</li> <li>• No extra credit will be given</li> </ul>
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#### 5. QUIZZES AND EXAMS

**Midterm and final exams** are intended to assess your knowledge related to the course subjects. You are responsible for the materials assigned in the textbook readings as well as covered by online lectures, discussions, and assignments (papers, field trips, group projects, etc.). **Midterm is on Thursday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week (October 29, 2009)** and **Final is on Tuesday of the final's week (December 8, 2009)**. The exams will be given online. You will have 1 hour to complete 50 multiple choices. You can take the exam any time during the test day between 8 am and 10 pm. Although you will be allowed to use books or notes for quick references, the tests are designed primarily as closed book tests. You will not have enough time to go through the books or notes to find answers. You should prepare for the exams as closed book tests. You should complete the tests on your own and not discuss the tests with anyone until the test results are posted online. More information about the exams will be given before the exams.

**Quizzes** are very similar to the midterm and final; except that each quiz has only 10 questions and covers one or two lessons. The quizzes also have fewer points assigned to them; however, it is important for you to get feedback from the quizzes. If you do not do well on a quiz, you should look into it; study for what you missed; and prepare better for the midterm or final. A quiz will be available for a few days after the lessons are completed. You will have 15 minutes to complete a quiz.

All the quiz and exam days are prescheduled on the course calendar. You should mark the times to take the quizzes and exams on your calendar and use a reliable computer system for all the exams to minimize connection and technical problems. **No makeup will be given to missed quizzes or exams except for**

**circumstances described in the course policy section.** If you have concerns or if you need special accommodations for the exams, please let me know at the beginning of the quarter.

## 6. ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments are important learning activities. Assignments include short essays, self-guided field trips, and group projects.

The **short essay** requirement is designed to help you to develop and enhance concepts related to **spatial distribution patterns, quantitative data analysis** skills, and critical thinking and writing abilities. You will learn to obtain and use geographic data to analyze **distribution patterns** and other **geographic characteristics** and present your findings in a 750-1000 word short essay.

The **self-guided field trip** is intended for you to learn the course materials in a real world context and to gain some field working experience. You will do background study and plan the trip before you go out; conduct field observation and field data collection while you are out; and perform analysis and write field report after your trip. You will have options in choosing your trip location in Southern California. Students are encouraged to plan and go out in groups; however, each student should write the field trip report independently.

The purpose of the **group project** is to help you to gain knowledge about various geographic regions in California, to enhance research, writing, and presentation skills, and, most importantly, to develop **collaborative team working skills**. Each group (3 – 5 students) will be assigned one of the eight regions of California and develop a paper or other forms of presentation to be presented online. The group project may be the biggest challenges of the class that require patience and dedication. Online group working space will be provided; however, it is the group's decision to collaborate online, to meet in person, or to have a combination of the two.

Details of the learning objectives, requirements, directions, due dates, and grading criteria of these assignments will be posted in the assignment folder of the class. Again, if you have concerns or if you need special accommodations for these assignments, please let me know at the beginning of the quarter.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Online **discussion** is an integral part of an online class. It is intended to enhance/broaden your knowledge while improving writing/communication skills. Discussion topics are closely associated with the contents covered in the class. To make the discussion effective (to achieve more with less time for everyone), it is very important that you write **thoughtfully** and follow the directions **carefully**. Always post your writing under the appropriate forums and threads. You are encouraged to engage in the discussions in a **contributive and timely** manner. Post only information meant for the general audience on the discussion board and use Message or E-mail for a narrower audience.

**Discussion and class participation make up 10% of the course grade.** The grade will be assigned toward the end of the quarter based on the following criteria:

- Quality and quantity of subject related discussion entries: **Three well written entries under the “Forums for the Lessons” are required.** Detailed requirements are posted at the discussion board.
- **Timeliness** (Spread your postings throughout the quarter. Write and post your writing about a topic while we are learning the subject or while a related event is occurring in the real world.)
- **Netiquette: use languages that are appropriate for the academic environment at all times.**
- Complete non-graded entries (e.g. online orientation, class surveys) in a proper and timely manner.
- Check into the online classroom at least twice a week and be an active and contributing member of the class (many ways to demonstrate your good citizenship in an online class).
- Follow the class policy (see policy section).

## 8. TAKING AND TEACHING THE ONLINE COURSE

### Tacking the online course

1. Although this is a complete online class offered through the campus Blackboard, **it is NOT a self-paced, self-guided course**. The course is conducted weekly following the same calendar as a face-to-face class.
2. **Each week**, you will be given instructions on the tasks to be completed or to begin during the week. These tasks include readings, assignments, online discussions, quizzes, etc. It typically takes 6 – 8 hours weekly to complete the tasks.
3. **You are required to “visit” the online classroom at least twice a week, once at the beginning of the week and check in again during the middle or towards the end of the week. In addition, you need to check in to complete scheduled quizzes, exams, message postings, assignment submissions, and working with your classmates on projects.** You are responsible for checking into different areas of the online classroom to make sure that you receive instructions and updated information.
4. You should **plan the time you will be work on this course into your weekly schedule. Without marked time for an online class, you will not be able to complete the class.** Although you can choose your time and day to work on given tasks, you need to follow the class calendar carefully. An assignment (paper, field trip, and group project) may take weeks to complete and it is crucial that you plan and start them early. **Starting an assignment the night before it is due will not work for this class.** Follow the due dates for quizzes, exams, assignments and other activities closely.
5. **Open communication** is very important in an online class. Let me know when you have questions, concerns, or suggestions; however, please understand that it may take more than 48 hours for me to respond your questions (see below). Starting your work early will give you time to ask questions and to get feedback before something is due.
6. Although an online class provides flexibility and opportunity for many, it is not for everyone. Studies suggest that the keys to be a successful online student are:
  - o **Commitment:** An online class is not easier than a face-to-face one. You need to have the commitment and patience to overcome technical and other problems that often accompanying an online class.
  - o **Time management:** An online class gives you the flexibility of managing your time but may not save your time. You need to locate at least 6 to 8 hours each week for this course and check into the online classroom at least twice a week, sometimes, more often.
  - o **Study Skills:** You need to develop efficient study skills to master the required course material. The learning activities I designed for you would only work for you when you adopt and adjust them to fit your learning style, which may require you develop your learning skills to achieve that.
  - o **Technical skills:** You will need certain degree of technical proficiency and access to required technology to be successful in an online course. The technical guide section of the syllabus provides you with resources that will help you to solve certain technical problems. It is your responsibility to seek help and to solve problems in a timely manner.
7. **E-mail or message?** When you communicate with me on course related matters, you should send me a **“Message”** from the class blackboard, and check the **Message Box** in the blackboard for my responses. **“Message”** is a feature in blackboard that differs from E-mail. **“Messages”** are saved in the blackboard with the course. **“Messages”** have less chance to get lost and double as the records of the communication. If it is urgent, you can send **both a Message** and an e-mail to me.
8. **Discussion board or e-mail/Message?** Understand that if you post something on the discussion board, the whole class will see it. Please distinguish messages intended for public or private and use appropriate means to deliver them. **Only postings that contribute to (or seek) clarification and enhance the course contents should be posted on the discussion boards.** All the other messages should be sent as private e-mails or Message. For example, if you are not clear about a procedure for an assignment, you can either send me a Message or post one on the “Class Logistics” board. You probably will get a faster response from a classmate if you use the discussion board. If you see a question posted on the discussion board and you have an answer for it, use reply on the discussion board so others having the same question may learn from you. However, if you just want to thank a classmate who responded your question, you should send a private Message or e-mail. Again, **please use languages that are appropriate for an academic environment at all times when you post messages on the discussion board or e-mail classmates or instructors. You should not use the discussion board or the class e-mail list to distribute information or announcements that are not related to the class.**

9. **Blog** is a new feature in Blackboard 9 and it replaces the “homepage” feature in the earlier Blackboard versions. We will use the blog in the orientation process to create a personal introduction for the class to get to know each other (for details, see the orientation requirement). We may start to use it for other purposes if it fits, however, I would ask the class not to use it for purposes that are not directly related to the class.

**Teaching the online course** – A large part of my time for this course is spent on designing, developing, and improving the course; most of these activities took place before the class started. During the class, I will use combinations of the following to teach the online course:

1. I'll post **Weekly Instructions, Lesson Highlights**, and, sometimes, **Multimedia Lectures** to help you with your reading and learning activities.
2. I'll give **Announcements** to provide status of the class, to offer feedback, and to inform updates on schedules and other changes.
3. I'll monitor, provide summarize and, sometimes, respond to what you posted on the **Discussion Board**.
4. I'll assign and assist you with **Assignments** and other learning activities
5. I'll give **Quizzes and Exams** to assess your learning and provide you with feedback.
6. I'll evaluate your work, assign you **Grades**, and, sometimes, provide brief **Comments** about your work.
7. I'll maintain a **FAQ** section to clarify any question the class may have.
8. If needed, I'll provide you with individualized help via **Messages (see below) and in-office visits**. But please understand that I cannot be there 24/7 to provide you with assistance; your **Messages will be responded within 48 hours - most of them within 24 hours - during the workdays**. Appointments are not needed if you plan to call or visit me during my office hours; however, it is highly recommended that you let me know ahead of time. Occasionally, I have to change office hours or locations in a short notice. You can also set phone meetings with me if needed. **Please also note the mandatory furlough days posted on my office hour page when I would not be available.**

## 9. COURSE POLICY AND OTHER DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

1. **No make-up exams and quizzes will be given** unless special arrangements were made before the exam. Exceptions will only be given to unforeseeable circumstances with proving documents/evidence. Technical difficulties are not acceptable excuses for missing exams, excuses would only be given to rare circumstances when the school network or wide spread regional network is down for a prolonged period.
2. Additional in-class exams or oral exams may be required of some individual students for various reasons, including inconsistent class performances.
3. All the required course **work should be completed individually** unless it is indicated otherwise.
4. **No late assignments will be accepted.** (All the assignments are given weeks to complete – no reason to be late).
5. **Cheating and plagiarism will result in failed grades for all students involved.** If difficulties with the class arise, students should contact me to work out solutions within the course structure. See relevant sections in posted instructions regarding cheating and plagiarism for assignments, exams, and other class activities.
6. **No extra work for extra credit will be offered.**
7. **Appropriate languages should be used at all times in postings and communication.** Posting improper messages and use of offensive languages will receive no or negative class participation points and may subject to university disciplinary actions.
8. You should not use the discussion board or the class e-mail list for distributing information or announcements that are not related to the class.
9. Refer to current Catalog (<http://www.csupomona.edu/~academic/catalog/>) for the university disciplines regarding cheating, plagiarism and other serious academic offenses.

## 10. TECHNICAL GUIDE AND SOURCES

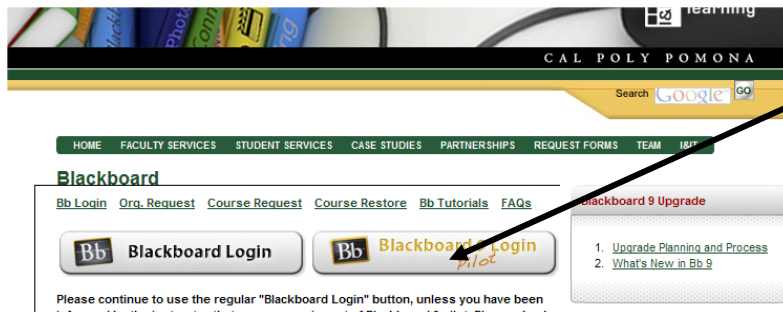
**The Help Desk** is located at Building 1-100 (909 869-6776). If you have Bb access or other technical problems, you may start with <http://www.csupomona.edu/~ehelp/> and contact them if you need.

**Blackboard (Bb)** page is <http://www.csupomona.edu/~ehelp/blackboard>. From there, you can log on to your Bb for all your Bb classes using your campus login ID and Password.

**Important Note:** this class is offered as part of the Blackboard 9 Pilot project. Your other courses may still be in the old Blackboard 7 system.

Two ways to log into Blackboard 9:

1. Go directly to <https://bbpilot.csupomona.edu/webapps/login/>
2. Go to the university' regular blackboard page <http://www.csupomona.edu/~iit/learning/blackboard.shtml> and click on Blackboard 9 pilot



Login with your broncoName and broncoPassword

Go to GEO351

If you are not an experienced Bb user, you may want to go through the step-by-step guides and the student manual linked to the above page. Please note that not all the functions listed on the manual are available for this course. You can always make an appointment during my office hours if you need help.

**The minimum Bb 9 functions you need to know for this class are:**

1. **Setting your browser and software needed to view posted files (see notes below)**
2. **Log-in and navigating in Bb 9**
3. Getting Bb 9 online help (many options)
4. Accessing and navigating **Course Contents**
5. Viewing current and past **Announcements**
6. Accessing and posting discussion messages on **Discussion Board**
7. Sending and receiving **Message** in Bb 9
8. Submitting **Assignments**
9. Using **collaborating** tools for **group** work
10. Creating a introductory personal **Blog** in Bb 9
11. Taking online **quizzes and exams**
12. Checking your progress through **My Grades**

**Browser and Software** Use the "Browser Compatibility" page linked at <http://www.csupomona.edu/~ehelp/blackboard> to check if your browser supports Blackboard. In addition, you may need the following software to view the course contents: Acrobat Reader and Flash Player (Most computers already have these installed. Free downloads at <http://www.adobe.com/downloads/>), Windows Media Player, PowerPoint and Word (2003 or 2007). In addition, you may need other software to develop your group project. **You always have the option to use the campus labs, which are equipped with all the software needed for the class.**

**File Format and File Name:**

1. The essay and the field report should be in doc, docx, pdf, rtf, or txt format. Almost all the software has options to save file in one of these formats.
2. If you need to submit or attach image files, use jpg format. (Image files used in your essay and field trip report should be in the file, not send separately – see assignment requirements for detail)
3. All the file names should be composed of letters, numbers, and underscore only. **Spaces, characters, and long names causing problems in file transfer.**

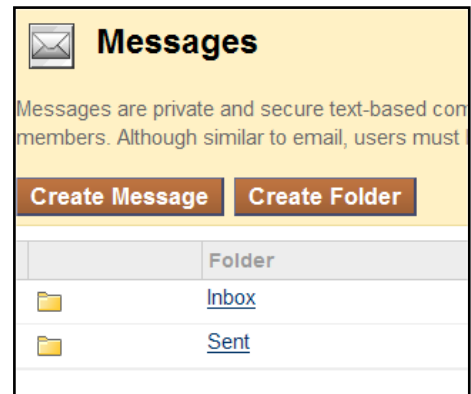
**Accepted file format:**  
**Doc**  
**Docx**  
**Pdf**  
**Rtf**  
**txt**

**Big files causing problems for all!**

4. Group project can be different from what specified above. See the directions for the group project for detail.
5. Always check your file size before you submit. **No files submitted should be more than 2 MB.** Reduce your image size before you insert into the file or use the compress function (available in word 2003, 2007 and other software found in the “format picture” menu) to compress your images in the file. For certain commonly used software, directions of reducing file size are posted in Bb. **Large file size will not go through properly in Bb; in addition, they use up the course quota and cause problem for other students to submit their work.** If, for some reason, you cannot reduce your file size and your file submission could not go through, you should submit printed copies on time.

**Blackboard Message Box and E-mail**

Messages are sent, accessed, and saved in the blackboard with the course. **They are not connected to e-mail.** You have to log into Bb in the course to send or read **Message**. As indicated in the above sections, I’ll use **Bb Message Box** instead of E-mail as the main communication tool with individual students.



E-mails sent through Bb go directly to the recipient’s Cal Poly E-mail account. Occasionally, I’ll send a copy of my announcement as e-mail to everyone; other times, your classmates may need to reach you via e-mail. It is important that you check your Cal Poly E-mail routinely or set mail forwarding function in your Cal Poly E-mail account (check <http://www.csupomona.edu/~ehelp/> for setting e-mail forwarding). If you use Bb E-mail, a Bb heading is automatically placed in the subject area. If for some reason you need to send me an e-mail outside of Bb, please state GEO351 in the subject area and add your full name in the message.

Let me know if you still have questions. This is probably the most tedious thing you have to read for the class; the rest should be a lot more fun!