

BSc 531 Biogeography

Dr. Jeff Kopachena

Keith D. McFarland Science Building, Rm 258

Office Hours: MWF 9:00 – 11:00

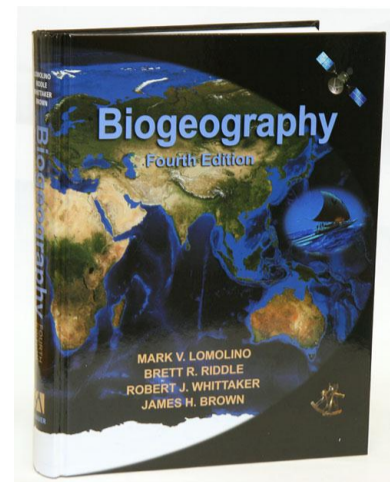
Phone: 903 886-5395

Email: Jeff.Kopachena@tamuc.edu



Textbook Required:

Lomolino et al. 2010. Biogeography, 4th Ed.
ISBN 978-0-87893-494-2



I. Course Material:

This course requires a fundamental understanding of biological processes, particularly those related to organismal genetics, evolution, and natural selection. You should have a basic understanding of cellular and population genetics. The course itself is about the distribution of life and ecological communities on a global scale.

There is a lot of material to cover in a very short time, so you are strongly advised not to let yourself get behind in assigned reading materials. You are going to be doing a lot of reading and must read comprehensively. Tests must be taken on the assigned dates and there will be no make-up tests. Tests are open book and will consist of critical thinking questions. All assignments must be turned in at the assigned time. There will be no tolerance of late assignments and there will be no extra credit assignments. **Be sure that you are familiar with the course schedule and keep on track.**

II. Student Learning Outcomes

1. You will understand the science of Biogeography.
2. You will be able to define the underlying geography of the biosphere and how geography influences life.
3. You will be able to identify the factors that limit geographic distributions..
4. You will be able to identify the earth's major biomes.
5. You will understand the geography and biology of dispersal.
6. You will be able to identify important events in the earth's geological history and how they affected today's biodiversity.
7. You will be able to describe how the spatial and temporal context of islands affects biodiversity.



III. There are 17 chapters in the course textbook and, obviously, we cannot cover them all adequately. Consequently, I have selected 12 chapters that highlight some of the most important areas of biogeography (as indicated in the objectives above). The course covers the following chapters in the textbook:

Chapter	Review Due	Quiz Due
Chapter 2:	September 4	September 4, 5
Chapter 3:	September 11	September 11, 12
Chapter 4:	September 18	September 18, 19
Chapter 5:	September 25	September 25, 26
Chapter 6:	October 2	October 2, 3
Chapter 8:	October 9	October 9, 10
Test 1: Covers chapters 2-6, 8		October 16, 17
Chapter 9:	October 23	October 23, 24
Chapter 10:	October 30	October 30, 31
Chapter 13:	November 6	November 6, 7
Chapter 14:	November 13	November 13, 14
Chapter 15:	November 20	November 20, 21
Chapter 16:	November 27	November 27, 28
Test 2: Covers chapters 9, 10, 13-16		December 4, 5
Article Review	December 10	
Final Exam: Covers all chapters		December 11, 12

IV. For each chapter, you will have to write a brief chapter review and there will be a chapter quiz. There are two term exams and a comprehensive final exam. In addition, all students will complete a review of a peer-reviewed journal article covering some topic in biogeography. A description of these assignments is provided below. The grading scheme will be as follows:

Grading Scheme:

Chapter Reviews	12 @ 2% each	24 %
Chapter Quizzes	12 @ 2% each	24 %
Tests	2 @ 10% each	20 %
Final Exam	1 @ 20% each	20 %
Article Review	1 @ 12% each	12 %
Total		100 %



V. Important note about Due Dates and Times:

Please make sure you keep close track of all due dates. You can turn in your reviews at any time up to and including the review due date. You cannot turn in the review after the due date. This will allow you to work ahead if you want. However, keep in mind that the whole purpose of writing the review is to help you study for the test, so if you work too far ahead you will probably defeat that purpose. Also, I will not grade any reviews until after the review due date.

All quizzes and tests are scheduled over two days. You can take the test on either of the two days that it is open. Please look at the schedule in the syllabus carefully. You will need to allow 30 minutes for the quizzes. You can only take the quiz once, so once you are done you are done.

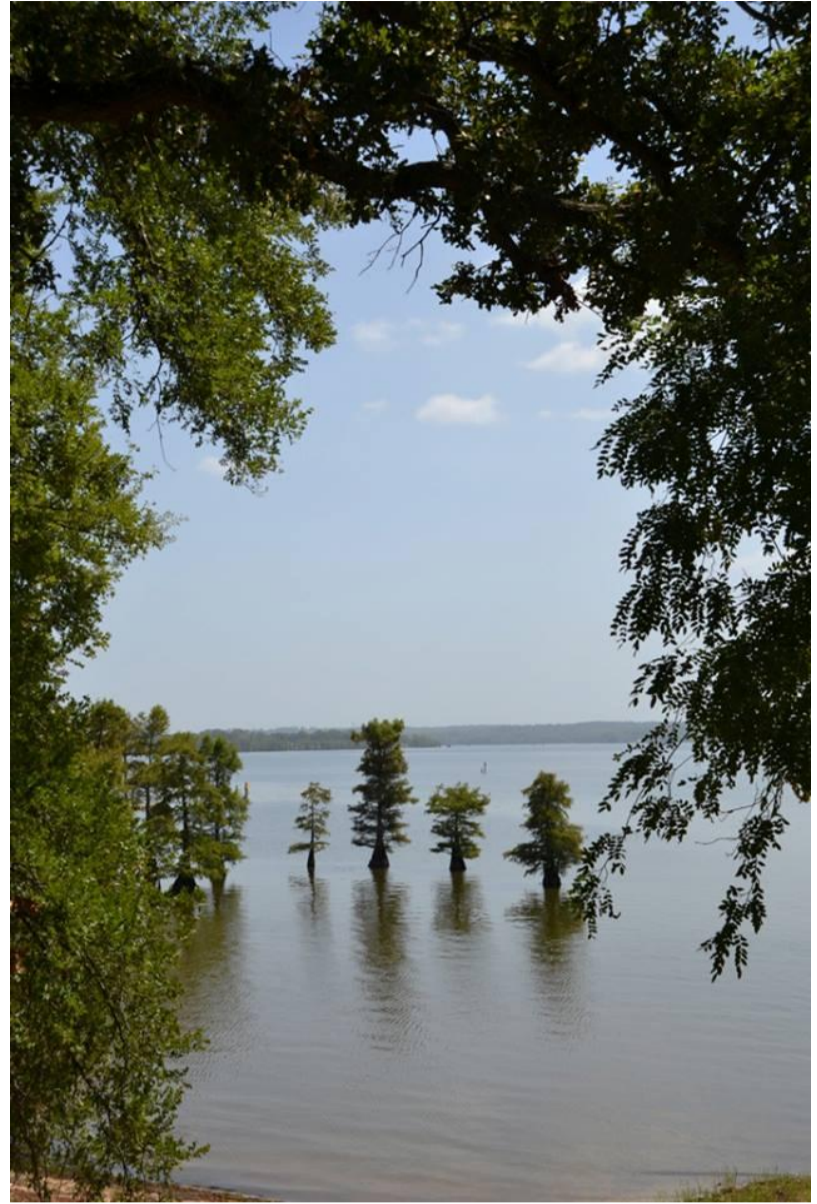
PLEASE NOTE: All students are responsible for having secure and reliable internet service. Nonetheless, internet services can be unpredictable at times. For this reason **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO TAKE QUIZZES OR TURN IN ASSIGNMENTS.** If you turn in an assignment or try to take a quiz after 11:00 PM, I will not re-open the assignment or quiz and you will lose points for that assignment or quiz.

VI. Chapter Reviews

For each chapter you will write, in your own words, a summary of the content of that chapter. **Do not use any quotes. You will lose points for using quotes.** Write everything out in the form of paragraphs: **Do not use point form.**

You must highlight the major points covered by the chapter and how these points are relevant to the topic of the chapter. Close each chapter review with a personal comment on what you thought about the material covered in the chapter.

Your chapter reviews must be in **MS-Word format** and submitted by the due date indicated on the course eCollege page. **Reviews not in MS-Word format will receive a grade of zero.** Put your name on your review. Reviews must be written using Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced, no extra spaces between paragraphs, with 1" margins on all sides. Include a title page with your name and the title of the chapter you are reviewing. You will lose points for not following this format.

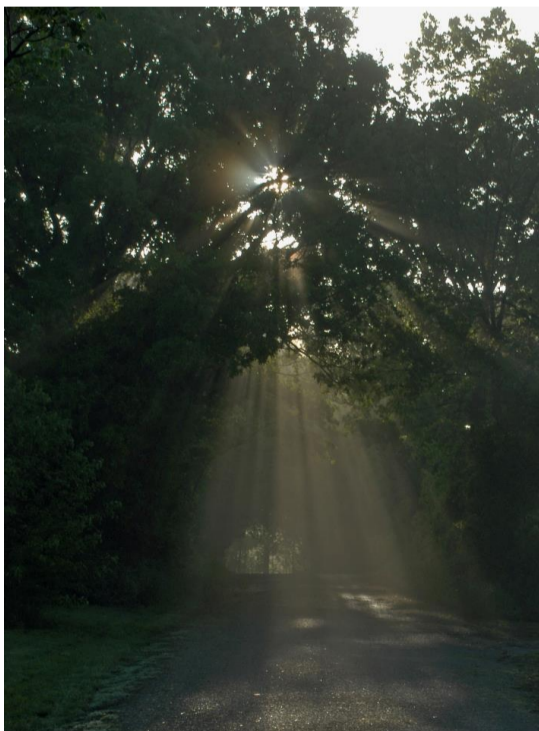


Your review should be **no less than three pages and no more than five pages**, not including the title page. **My experience shows that students who are closer to the 5-page limit tend to get higher grades because they cover the material more thoroughly.** Having said that, excessive verbosity and padding will get you nowhere. If you wish to include figures and tables, do so by appending them to the back of the review. Figures and tables do not count toward the page limit. All chapter reviews must be submitted through the Dropbox in eCollege.

Important Note: This course uses Turnitin plagiarism software. This software compares all course submissions (chapter reviews, article reviews, etc.) to all published and unpublished materials including the course textbook and other student papers. It calculates a percentage match to these materials. Any student whose assignment yields a 20% or higher match will get a zero for their assignment. In the case of a 20% or higher match among two or more students, all of the individuals involved will get a zero for their assignment.

Because of this:

1. Do not use direct quotes
2. Be extremely careful about sharing your assignments with **anyone** – yes, anyone. That includes friends, family members, co-workers, etc.
3. Do not use other sites that may already contain chapter reviews as a template. If you do, you will be penalized for plagiarism, because that is plagiarism.



VII. Chapter Quizzes

Each chapter will be followed by a chapter quiz. The chapter quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions. Quizzes will cover all material in the chapter, including information in text boxes, figures and tables. Quizzes will be timed, and you will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz. You will be expected to have full comprehension of the material. As a result, some questions will require that you apply concepts covered in the chapter to examples that are not specifically mentioned in the textbook.

VIII. Article Reviews

During the semester you will select a current peer-reviewed article related to the material covered in the textbook. You will be required to write a review of this article. It is extremely important that you choose a peer-reviewed journal article. Review articles are acceptable, but again, must be professional reviews. To approach this assignment, flip through the various chapters in the textbook that are covered in the course. Find a topic that interests you and look for recent articles (2010 or more recent) on that subject. Google scholar can be most useful for this purpose. Once you have found an article, please let me know so that I can evaluate its suitability. **You need to do this early just in case you have to use an inter-library loan to get the article.**



Start with a title page that includes your name, the date, the course title, and the full citation of the article you are reviewing. Using your own words, describe the important background literature relative to the article (**include citations**), the purpose of the article, the methods used, and the major findings of the article. Describe the significance of the work to the field of study and in the context of existing literature on the subject. In doing so, you should read some of the background articles related to the one you are reviewing. Make sure you cite these articles in your review. Also include your opinion on the value of the article and its methodology and its level of interest to you.



Your review must be in **MS-Word format** and submitted by the due date indicated on the course eCollege page. **Reviews not in MS-Word format will receive a grade of zero.** Reviews must be written using Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced, no extra spaces between paragraphs, with 1” margins on all sides. Include a title page with your name and the title of the paper you are reviewing.

Your review should be no less than six pages and no more than 10 pages, not including the title page. If you wish to include figures and tables, do so by appending them to the back of the review. Figures and tables do not count toward the page limit. All **reviews and a copy of the article** must be submitted through the Dropbox in eCollege.

IX. Tests

There will be two tests during the semester. They will consist of 25 multiple choice questions and you will have 1 hour to complete them. Each will cover the preceding chapters in the textbook. Test one will cover chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8. Test two will cover chapters 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, and 16.

X. Final Exam

The final exam will be comprehensive. It will consist of 50 questions and you will have 2 hours to complete it.

XI. Below is the course schedule in calendar format:

September						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	First Class	1	2	3	4 Chapter 2 Review Quiz	5 Chapter 2 Quiz
6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11 Chapter 3 Review Quiz	12 Chapter 3 Quiz
13	14	15	16	17	18 Chapter 4 Review Quiz	19 Chapter 4 Quiz
20	21	22	23	24	25 Chapter 5 Review Quiz	26 Chapter 5 Quiz

27	28	29	30			
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October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Chapter 6 Review Quiz	3 Chapter 6 Quiz
4	5	6	7	8	9 Chapter 8 Review Quiz	10 Chapter 8 Quiz
11	12	13	14	15	16 Term Test 1	17 Term Test 1
18	19	20	21	22	23 Chapter 9 Review Quiz	24 Chapter 9 Quiz
25	26	27	28	29	30 Chapter 10 Review Quiz	31 Chapter 10 Quiz

November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 Chapter 13 Review Quiz	7 Chapter 13 Quiz
8	9	10	11	12	13 Chapter 14 Review Quiz	14 Chapter 14 Quiz
15	16	17	18	19	20 Chapter 15 Review Quiz	21 Chapter 15 Quiz
22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving	26 Thanksgiving	27 Chapter 16 Review Quiz	28 Chapter 16 Quiz
29	30					

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 Term Test 2	5 Term Test 2
6	7	8	9	10 Article Review Due	11 Final Exam	12 Final Exam

XII. Obligatory Statements:

A. Plagiarism is a criminal activity. You must cite all sources of information. Copying of material, whether parts of sentences, whole sentences, paragraphs, or entire articles, will result in a score of zero for your assignment and can result in further disciplinary action.

****Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule of the class. Any alterations will be announced in class, in eCollege or via email by the instructor. Students who do not attend class, check eCollege or their email assume responsibility for missing adjustments to the course.**

B. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology in your web-enhanced course.

The following technology is required to be successful in this course.

Internet connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor (Microsoft Office Word – 2003 or 2007)

Access to University Library site

Access to an Email

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

C. ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Access and Log in Information

This course will be utilizing eCollege to enhance the learning experience, eCollege is the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

D. COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you experience issues while taking your exams or at any other point, feel free to contact the support desk.

- 1. Chat Support: Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.**
- 2. Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.**
- 3. Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.**
- 4. Help: Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working**

E. Withdrawal Policy

Every student has the right to drop the course without penalty until the drop-date. Students dropping the course during this period will be given a DP (drop while passing). A grade of DP is GPA neutral, but a grade of DF counts as an F on your transcript.

If you choose to stop attending class, you may be dropped from the course due to excessive absences. If you are not satisfied with your grade in the course and wish you to drop, it is YOUR responsibility to drop the course. Once a grade of DP or DF has been submitted, it cannot be changed.

A student may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled 'Drop a class' from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page.

F. Student Conduct

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. You are adults and will be treated as such. Discriminatory, rude, and inappropriate language will not be tolerated in this class and students will be asked to leave or drop the class (these same rules apply for online discussions). If a student continues to act in the same manner during future classes, the instructor reserves the right to drop the student from the course.

G. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly work free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution.

Texas A&M University-Commerce has explicit rules and regulations governing academic dishonesty and academic misconduct. As the University states, "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." These policies are stated in detail in the Student's Guide Handbook. Each student is expected to read this document and abide by the contained policies. These university policies will be followed in this class. The minimum penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be the assignment grade of 0 on the examination or homework assignment. The maximum penalty is expulsion from the University.

Texas A&M University-Commerce further does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Visit the following websites:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

H. Requests for Special Accommodations

Requests from students with disabilities for reasonable accommodations must go through the Academic Support Committee. An individual instructor cannot decide to make accommodations for you without that Committee's approval.

I. ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

[Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)