



Summer 2009 Syllabus

Applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Course number: GIS4048/5100

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: GIS3015/L and GIS4043/L

Term: Summer TERM A (May 11th – August 7th)

Instructors and Contact Information:

GIS 4048: Amber Bloechle, email: abloechle@uwf.edu phone, 850-857-6121

GIS 5100: Dr. Zhiyong Hu, all graduate inquiries are to be passed through Ms. Bloechle.

Graduate Assistant: Michael Johnson, email: mj5@students.uwf.edu

Course Description: Applications in GIS will introduce the applied use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the study of geohazards, natural disasters, urban planning, homeland security/law enforcement, health, and marketing/location decisions. The course is directed at giving students an understanding of and experience with the practical uses of GIS software and data. Laboratory exercises, case studies and course projects will use datasets to solve real-world problems. The course builds upon topics covered in Introduction to GIS (GIS 4043). Students are expected to gain an understanding of GIS theory, methodology and most importantly application.

Important UWF dates (drop/add, withdrawal, holidays): <http://uwf.edu/uwfmain/calendar/>

Course Format:

This is an online course and you will not be required to meet for class at any specific time. Instead, you will complete your lessons and communicate with your instructor and classmates using UWF email, course blog and eLearning website discussion board. All new students must activate their student account in ARGUS <https://argus.uwf.edu/cp/home/displaylogin>

eLearning: Access online through ARGUS or search elearning.uwf.edu

ArgoMail: Access online through ARGUS or search argomail.uwf.edu Starting Fall 09 – use Google mail for UWF!

Course blog: <http://appsgisuwf.blogspot.com/>

The course consists of a sequence of lessons. The first lesson includes an introduction to the course and associated websites. The remaining lessons each focus on a specific application of GIS such as natural hazards, urban planning and homeland security and law enforcement. To complete these lessons you will read from assigned readings, visit and learn from recommended websites, answer questions, take online quizzes and solve real-world problems.

The course assumes no previous knowledge of specified applications. However, all students must be competent users of ArcGIS software, email, word processing software, PowerPoint and an internet browser. You must have all of these skills to participate in this course. For a more specific ArcGIS knowledge expectations see the "Prior GIS Experience" document on the course website.

Text Requirement: N/A All readings are either scanned or otherwise provided in eLearning course website.

Other Requirements: Broadband internet access, UWF GIS Virtual Machine access, UWF student email account and Blogger.com account.

Software / Computer Skills:

This course has an expectation that all students will have access to a web-connected (Broadband/High Speed) computer capable of running Windows 98 (or greater), Internet Explorer (Version 5.0 or greater), and UWF's GIS Virtual Machine (software fee assessed). Students must understand the use of these software tools to be successful in this course. You will use Internet Explorer to access the course websites and submit many online assignments. It is up to you to acquire the skills to meet these requirements before enrolling in the course.

Responsibilities of Online Learners:

As an online learner, you will be responsible for determining the pace and schedule of your work. You can complete the readings and activities at any times that are convenient to you as long as they are submitted before the assignment deadline (late work is not accepted). You must also take the online quizzes at the specified times.

Although you might be completing your work hundreds of miles from the University of West Florida, you should expect to have frequent contact with your instructor and classmates via e-mail, blog and the online discussion boards. All of your assignments will be submitted using these tools. You can also use the online discussion board to ask questions, offer comments, and obtain advice from both your instructor and your classmates.

Lesson Format:

For each lesson, you will visit the course website in eLearning to obtain your instructions. You will then complete your work by doing some or all of the tasks listed below.

- Read assigned materials.
- Visit recommended websites to read or obtain data.
- Complete activities and projects designed to apply what you have learned or deepen your understanding of GIS applications.
- Write an essay that summarizes your knowledge.
- Take an online quiz on the lesson topic.
- Submit all work for that lesson as specified on the course website and course blog.

Your instructor and/or grad-assistant will respond to your work a few days after the lesson due date.

Module/Lesson Availability and Due Dates:

All lessons will be posted at least two weeks prior to the due date and you may begin working on a lesson as soon as it is posted. A list of the modules, due dates and quizzes are shown in the Course Assignment Schedule document on the course website.

Please Note: Because students in this course are from multiple time zones it is impossible to honor the time table of each different zone. The schedule will apply to the U.S. Central Time zone (Pensacola, FL) regardless of the time zone you live in/work from. It is up to you to figure out the time difference for your specific location. If you plan to be away from your studies at any time or while on vacation, it is your responsibility to work ahead and be certain that you meet the posted deadlines.

Participation:

The participation component of this class will be assessed through graded discussion posts and overall involvement in the class. There will be at least three occasions where I will assign a graded discussion post. The required post may be a written summary pertaining to additional readings or written results from a weekly project. Posts must be well written using proper grammar, spelling, etc.

Quiz and Weekly Project Policy:

Each weekly GIS project will include an associated quiz testing specific project results. A worksheet is provided for you to answer similar questions as you complete the project. These answers will then be imported electronically to the quiz for efficiency. Other project deliverables (maps, graphs, presentations, etc) are to be posted to personal blog or specified elearning dropbox and graded by hand by instructor and GA.

Quizzes are administered in eLearning course website. The quiz for orientation can be taken at any time before Sunday, May 17th at 11:59 PM. However, starting with Module 2, all quizzes must be completed by Wednesday (see course assignment schedule for specific dates).

To access quizzes, log on to eLearning, select Applications in GIS course and then select the Quizzes link. From here, a list of quizzes will appear (past, present, and future). Click on the appropriate quiz and select START. Make sure you are prepared before taking the quiz. Quizzes are timed based on length, so make note before you begin and notice the running clock.

Tips: You should take your quizzes on a reliable, freshly restarted computer with only one window open. This will minimize the possibility of computer crashes or freeze-ups during the quiz. After your quiz is complete, you may view results by going to the Quizzes link once again and selecting the appropriate quiz under the "Past Quizzes" section. Your grade will automatically be posted to the Grades link in most instances (hand-grading by your instructor may be necessary at times).

Quiz/Weekly Project problems will be handled in the following ways:

- You forget a quiz or are out-of-town: You can take the make-up quiz on August 5th.
- Your quiz is unsuccessful because of a computer problem or human error: You can take the make-up on August 5th.
- You exceed the time limit on a quiz: One minute of overtime is not penalized because the clock on the eLearning server starts before the quiz loads on your computer. One point will be deducted from your score for each additional overtime minute.
- Two or more of your quizzes are missed or unsuccessful: You can take a make-up quiz to replace the first quiz score. Other missed or unsuccessful quizzes will receive a score of zero.

Final Project:

The final project grade includes a project proposal/workflow and a final power point presentation including deliverables and conclusions of an approved topic/proposal. Students are expected to gather and prepare data, create a locational map, and perform geospatial analysis using ArcGIS software to solve a real-world problem. Full guidance is given within course content. This content will be released after Module 3 is complete. Two "on your own"

or “mini-projects” are assigned in advance to prepare you for the final project. Final projects must be submitted before the due date. Under NO circumstances can the final project presentation be submitted after the due date.

Graduate-Level Course Requirements:

Students enrolled at the graduate level will be required to complete extended and/or altered versions of the undergraduate weekly projects. Extended versions of a project may include further analysis or a written presentation. Altered or advanced versions of weekly projects will be a similar project scenario without step-by-step instructions. Grad-specific instructions are included within course material. Final Project: Along with undergraduate requirements, graduate students are to write a 1500 word paper corresponding with the project proposal and results.

Grading/Evaluation:

Grading Scale		
A	4.0	94-100%
A-	3.7	90-93%
B+	3.3	87-89%
B	3.0	83-86%
B-	2.7	80-82%
C+	2.3	77-79%
C	2.0	73-76%
C-	1.7	70-72%
D+	1.3	67-69%
D	1.0	60-66%
F	0.0	0-59%

Orientation: 5%

Participation: 10%

Quizzes: 20%

Weekly Project Deliverables: 25%

Final Project: 40%

Course Communication Policy:

Your instructor, Mrs. Bloechle, believes that communications about assignments, course policy and content should be available to all students in the course. It would be unfair for her to give advice by email or phone to one student and not to all others in the course. We will place all of these discussions in the open by using the "Helping Each Other" conference. Posting your questions in this conference will be your fastest method of obtaining assistance. Your instructor will read this conference at least once every 48 hours and respond to questions as needed. In many instances one of your classmates will know the answer and respond before your

instructor's next visit to the website. This is how things should work and your instructor encourages communications among students. Any questions about course content or course policy that are sent to the instructor will be returned to the sender with instructions to post them in the "Helping Each Other" conference.

Questions about grades or matters of private concern should be sent to Mrs. Bloechle by email messages from your UWF email account. This allows your instructor to communicate grades and other private information with some assurance that she is communicating with the proper person. Questions about such matters sent from outside email accounts will be returned to the sender without answers.

Instead of holding office hours a couple times per week, your instructor will normally check and respond to the "Helping Each Other Conference" a couple times per day. You can be assured that she will respond no less than once every 48 hours unless previously announced. This should be adequate to take care of nearly all typical communications. Because this is the summer semester she will rarely be in her school office. If you have a situation where email communications are not possible you can call 850-857-6121. If she is not in when you call please leave a clearly spoken message on the answering machine with your phone number and some potential times for her to return your call.

Your Study Schedule:

If you are coming into this course thinking that online study is a way to "click your way to three credits" then you will be in for a rude awakening. Be prepared to spend a significant amount of time completing this course. Students in previous sessions of this course reported spending between 8 and 10 hours on the typical lesson. A few reported spending a bit more time with challenging lessons.

When you take an on-campus course, you spend about 45 hours in the classroom over an entire semester. In addition, you should spend an even larger amount of time reading, going to the library, completing homework, writing, and studying for tests. Most students who have completed this online course report that they spent more time doing the work than they would have expected to spend in an on-campus course.

The key to success is self-motivation and perseverance. Set some special work hours every week and stick to them. Learning at home requires much greater dedication than learning on-campus. This course allows you great flexibility as long as you meet the inflexible deadlines.

You can begin working as soon as the first lesson is posted. Each week you must do enough work to complete one lesson. The amount of time needed to complete a lesson will vary depending upon the length of the lesson, your reading speed, and your writing ability.

Email Communications:

All UWF students are given an e-mail account that should be used for all electronic communications about academic matters. It is your responsibility to learn how to use your UWF/ArgoMail e-mail account and check it on a regular basis. You are responsible for any announcement or assignment that is sent to your UWF ArgoMail e-mail account. To assure that your academic information remains confidential, your instructor will not respond to requests for private information with a return address that is outside of the UWF e-mail system

Course Website:

All of your assignments will be posted on the course website in eLearning. Completed assignments will be submitted online via eLearning and/or blog. Every student should plan for regular and frequent use of personal computers to access this website and complete assignments.

Program Goals:

This is a required course for completion of a certificate in GIS.

Expectations for Academic Conduct/Plagiarism Policy:

Academic Conduct Policy: ([Web Format](#)) | ([PDF Format](#)) | ([RTF Format](#))

Plagiarism Policy: ([Word Format](#)) | ([PDF Format](#)) | ([RTF Format](#))

Student Handbook: ([PDF Format](#))

ASSISTANCE:

Students with special needs who require specific examination-related or other course-related accommodations should contact Barbara Fitzpatrick, Director of Disabled Student Services (DSS), dss@uwf.edu, (850) 474-2387. DSS will provide the student with a letter for the instructor that will specify any recommended accommodations.