

Physical Geography of the Global Environment Research Paper Requirements and Guidelines

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Total Points for this Paper: 25

Paper Topic

Regionalize any country, state, province, or region of the world according to its physical geography. Create regions based on specific physiographic phenomena. The country or area must be broken into at least **three distinct physical regions**, but no more than six regions. I expect detail rather than a superficial overview of a physical area and more than six regions in a five-page paper would be more like an outline. If you select a region, such as Patagonia or the Gobi desert rather than a discrete political area (country or state) you must still break the region into its smaller physical provinces. **You must regionalize the entire country or area.** Do not just randomly select four regions out of the country or area and leave other sections unregionalized. However, the regions can be non-contiguous. Do not select a region to regionalize larger than the adjacent countries (your region should not be huge). There are two possible approaches to this paper and you may decide on which to take. The first approach utilizes many physical characteristics to create regions while the second approach focuses on a single physical characteristic.

Approach 1: Select a country or area and divide it into regions based upon a multitude of physical phenomena. Separate the regions according to distinct physical differences. You may divide a country or area into regions based on any combination of physical characteristics including: climate (temperature and precipitation), flora, fauna, biogeography, soils, tectonics, geomorphology (surface features such as hill, plain, mountain, plateau...), mountains landscapes, stream landscapes, glacial landscapes, karst landscapes, coastal landscapes... Basically anything that is physical geography. For example, region one is different from other regions because of its distinct geomorphology, climate, and soils. Discuss the differences and proceed to the next region. You may decide to create a theme and regionalize your area based only two or three physical characteristics such as climate and biogeography. Example topics include: "The Four Major Physiographic Regions of Nepal", "Physiographic Regions of the American Southwest", "Physiographic Regions of Egypt", and "Five Physiographic Regions of India".

Approach 2: This approach is more focused. Use only one physical characteristic as a means to regionalize your country or area. For example, select biogeography and use this physical descriptor to divide a country or area into three to six regions. Example topics might include "The Climatic Regions of Nepal", "The Geomorphic Regions of Nepal", "Soil Order and Regions of Hawaii", "New York State Regionalized by Temperature and Rainfall", "Biogeographical Regions of Patagonia", "Climatic Regions of California", "Soil orders of Appalachia", and "Five Landscape Regions of Tibet".

Paper Length

The paper must be at least **5 typewritten, double-spaced pages** in length, excluding references, maps, illustrious and/or photos. If your paper is not at least 5 pages long (within a paragraph), I will take points off for not fully developing the topic. Include a map in the introduction illustrating your country or area as you regionalized it. Clearly label the regions. Include, at a minimum, one other illustration (picture, graph...) in the body of the paper. Be sure to reference the map and illustration in the body of the paper. It does not make sense to include an illustration and not ever mention it. For example, refer to it in your paper as "see Figure One", having the illustration labeled as "Figure One". Be certain to include the source of the map and illustration. If you took it from a website, correctly cite the source. The map and illustration must be neat and clearly readable. Do not use a bizarre font or point size to make the paper appear longer – no point size larger than 12 and no Courier or Helvetica fonts. I like Times New Roman (the font that these directions are written in). Your margins must be set to 1" on all four sides.

General Paper Rules

Your paper must have a **purpose statement, introduction, body, conclusion, and bibliography** with illustrations and maps inserted throughout the text and not in an appendix at the end. The introduction clearly outlines the paper. Include the purpose statement, country or area to be covered, and list the regions in the introduction. **In the introduction include a map of your country or area.** Clearly labeled each of the regions you create on the map. Do not leave any part of your country or region unregionalized (no blank spots on the map). Do not draw the map by hand. **The entire map including regions have to be digital.** It is easiest to create the map in PowerPoint. Find a blank outline map of your country or region on the web. Digitally draw in your regions (or, find a map that utilizes the same regions you are discussing). When you are finished making the map select everything you created and group the image (right click "group"). Right click on the grouped image and click "save picture as." Select the ".jpeg" extension. Save it to your computer. You now have a JPEG image file that you can insert into Word (click "Insert", click "Picture" and then your file). Be sure to **reference the map** in the outline. It makes little sense to include a map and not ever mention it. Refer to it in your introduction as "see Map One", having the map labeled as "Map One". On the map, include a title, legend, and source (if used).

Preferably use subheadings to help organize the paper. Keep the paper organized with good flow. The paper is easily organized around your regions, as each region could be a subheading in the paper. Consider the use of subheadings for an example paper on "The Four Biogeographical Regions of Nepal": Subheading One - Introduction (with purpose statement and map); Subheading Two - Tropical Deciduous Monsoon Forest; Subheading Three - Subtropical Mixed Evergreen Forest; Subheading Four - Temperate Evergreen Forest; Subheading Five - Subalpine and Alpine Shrub and Grass; Subheading Six - Conclusion. The conclusion neatly sums all the major important points that you made in the paper. Do not bring new information into the conclusion. Use biogeography terminology from the text and lectures. Do not stray from your purpose statement.

The paper must have, at a minimum, **five** bibliographic entries in a correct format. Use citations in the paper (or you will be plagiarizing). Do not mix citation styles. The most common styles are MLA, APA, and Chicago. Complete citations for internet sources and illustrations must be included. Use at least **one** references taken from a primary source - i.e., original research reported in a journal or periodical. **Bold the journal article reference in your bibliography. Do not use encyclopedias, Wikipedia, sensational magazines, newspapers, nonacademic websites or reviews.** Once you have found one good article on your topic, use the article's reference page in order to help find source material. Please staple papers in the upper left-hand corner. No Folders! Make sure that you make a **copy** of your paper. In the event that your paper is misplaced (which should never happen), you will have a back-up copy. It will be very difficult for you to prove to me that your paper was lost. Without a back-up paper, I will doubt that you completed the paper. Do not email me your paper!

Basic Guide to Research Paper Writing

- 1) Write an introduction which clearly tells the reader the major points of discussion in your paper. The introduction explains how you will accomplish the purpose statement. The introduction includes the map of your regions. Do not just circle your regions on the map. **The regions must be exactly located.** Each region is exactly drawn using accurate borders. **No space on the map is left unregionalized.**
- 2) Have a purpose statement somewhere in the first paragraph of your introduction. Keep the purpose statement focused with no more than a few major objectives.
- 3) Write clearly, concisely, and professionally. Do not use informal language, such as "we, you, they, them, our, yours, you know, or ok". Avoid contractions.

- 4) Do not plagiarize!
 - a) Completely original ideas need no reference.
 - b) Things that are common knowledge need no reference. Example: World War II ended in 1945. Specific data sources must be referenced. Example: In the last 45 years, over 80 percent of Central America's rainforests have been cut (de Blij and Muller 2015).
 - c) Quotations exceeding one-half sentence in length must be referenced by source and page number.
 - d) Borrowed ideas which are not common knowledge must be referenced by source. Example: Some scientists feel that 2-4-5-T is a harmless product (Smith 2015).
- 5) Include a bibliography or references cited page (example style).

Owen, O., Chiras, D., and Reganold, J. 2016. *Natural resource conservation – 10th edition*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey:Prentice Hall.
- 6) Citations should be employed whenever you use someone else's work. Always put citations at the end of your sentence and inside of the period. For example: Ecotourism has accounted for approximately \$100 million of revenue per year in Costa Rica (Smith 2015). The following is an example of a citation style with one, two, or multiple authors: One author - (Smith 2015); Two Authors - (Smith and Jones 2015); Multiple Authors -(Smith et. al. 2015). Direct Quotations (which I do not encourage) - (Smith 2015, 26).
- 7) Use all of your sources in the bibliography. When you use all the sources, the bibliography is technically called References Cited. Do not over use one source. Evenly cite materials from the bibliography.
- 8) Do not overuse direct quotations. Think for yourself and at least reword and cite the source. If the direct quotation is longer than two lines, single space the quote and indent it on either side by an additional inch.
- 9) The paper should flow well and be very organized. If you are having trouble organizing your paper use subheadings. The subheading should appear in the introduction statement.
- 10) Include a one paragraph conclusion. The conclusion must summarize the important points of the paper. Do not introduce new material in the conclusion
- 11) Be insightful. Do not simply report cited knowledge - rethink the information, but support your opinion.

Paper Grading Rubric and Checklist - Staple this sheet to the back of your short paper.

<i>Physical Geography of the Global Environment: Concise Regional Paper Grading Rubric and Checklist</i>		
Value	Description	Points Deducted
Expected	Descriptive title	
Expected	Purpose statement; what is the point of the paper?	
3	Reference format (book/magazine); No encyclopedia references (be careful not to plagiarize -- use citations); use <u>at least 5</u> references, 1 of which must be a journal; you must bold your journal entry	
2	Introduction -- your one-paragraph introduction will clearly outline the paper; state the country and physiographic regions, insert the map of your regions into the introduction. Title the map (i.e. Map One) and refer to the map in the text; digitally depict and label all regions on the map	
3	Discuss and <u>define</u> your regions; you may create between 3 and 6 regions; define each region within the country based upon physical geography; Think, "Did I create accurate regions?"	
Expected	Is the topic relevant and legitimate (ask yourself, "Does my topic make sense?"); if you are unsure about your paper topic's relevance, come see me; have you created good regions; obviously, if the paper is not relevant, there will be problems elsewhere	
10	Overall insight and development of paper (avoid straight reporting -- be insightful); is the purpose of this paper clearly conveyed?	
2	General grammar, clarity, linkage, and style (when grammar and clarity are poor, they deduct from the paper's content); have someone proofread your paper	
Expected	Use geographic terminology from both the lecture and text	
2	Include a map of the country or area indicating your regions (digitally draw and label each region -no handwriting or drawing); reference the map in paper; map should be labeled "Map I" and inserted into the introductory paragraph; insert into the body of the paper at least one other graph, picture or illustration (no appendix); maps/pictures/graphs do not count toward the length of the paper	
1	How well is the paper organized? Does it flow?	
2	Conclusion -- your one-paragraph conclusion should summarize the important points of the paper; do not introduce new material in the conclusion	
Standard deductions (when applicable) – check each of the following deductions to prove you read this		
25 points	Paper is not about physical geography	_____
25 points	The selected country or area of discussion was not spatially regionalized	_____
1 to 25 points	Paper length (short papers cannot be adequately developed; graphics don't count toward length)	_____
1 to 25 points	Plagiarism (if plagiarism is clearly intentional your grade will be a 0)	_____
2 to 25 points	Late paper (2 points out of 25 will be deducted per day including weekends)	_____
1 to 10 points	No citations (use citations in the paper or you plagiarize; be careful of inadvertent plagiarizing)	_____
1 to 10 points	No point size greater than 12 and no strange font, including Helvetia or Courier	_____
10 points	No bibliography (without a bibliography you are plagiarizing)	_____
5 points	Selected an area to regionalize larger than a country (no continents or subcontinents)	_____
5 points	Regions are exactly located and drawn on the map; no space on the map is left unregionalized.	_____
3 points	Did not use physical geography terminology from the text or lectures	_____
2 points	No purpose statement	_____
2 points	Maps, graphics, and/or pictures are not given a title and caption and not referred to paper	_____
2 points	No title or the title does not adequately describe the paper	_____
1 to 2 points	Maps, graphics, and pictures are pixilated and hard to read	_____
1 point	Use of informal language for a professional such as "you", "us", "we"...I am OK with "I"	_____
1 point	Did not staple this sheet to the back of your paper (so I can determine if you read the directions)	_____
General Comments:		
<p align="right">Out of 25 possible points you received _____</p>		