

Geography 484 - spring 2007
An Introduction to Geographic Information Systems (GIS Primer)
Course Web Site:

http://geography.sdsu.edu/People/Pages/jankowski/public_html/web484/index484.htm

Lectures: M 11:00am-12:40pm in SH-338: until midterm: Prof. *Piotr Jankowski*, piotr@geography.sdsu.edu, Storm Hall 322, Office hours: M,T 2:00pm – 3:00pm; after midterm: *Arika Ligmann-Zielinska*, PhD Candidate

Labs: W 11:00am-1:40pm in SH-338: *Arika Ligmann-Zielinska*, PhD Candidate, ligmannz@rohan.sdsu.edu, Storm Hall 322A, Office hours: M,W 10:00am – 11:00am

Course Content and Organization

GIS Primer introduces you to basic concepts and techniques of geographic information systems. Specifically, the course content includes topics such as coordinate systems, spatial data models, data input, transformation, editing, and management methods, data display and visual exploration, and an introduction to GIS analysis. The concepts and fundamental GIS techniques will be explained during lectures. You will gain hands-on experience in using GIS techniques during labs. The GIS software used in this course will be ArcGIS 9.2. Throughout the course you will use different data sets working in the computer lab. The data sets and exercises are not selected for any particular discipline, but are used because they are easily understood by almost anyone. The data sets used during labs are on the CD accompanying the textbook.

A lab will accompany each lecture. The lab assignments will include a scripted part and a challenge part. The scripted part will provide step-by-step instructions on how to implement a given technique in GIS software and will not be evaluated. The challenge part will describe a task to be solved without providing step-by-step instructions and it will be evaluated. The solution of the challenge task will be based on concepts and techniques introduced during the lecture and practiced in the scripted part of the lab. The challenge solution will be due prior to the start of the next lab session (students will have up to one week to submit their solutions). Late submissions will not be accepted unless a valid excuse is presented to the lab TA prior of the due date (medical, family emergency, university-related field trip).

Required Textbook

Karl Chang, *Introduction to Geographic Information Systems, 4th Edition* (McGrawHill, 2008). Includes the CD-ROM with exercise data sets: <http://catalogs.mhhe.com/mhhe/viewProductDetails.do?isbn=0073312797>

Grading

- Two exams (midterm and final) containing a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions, each worth 25% of the course grade (25% midterm and 25% final)
- Thirteen challenge assignments worth 50% of the total grade

A: 100% - 90%
B: 89% - 80%
C: 79% - 70%
D: 69% - 60%
F: 59% and less