Physical Geography, a rich, interdisciplinary, spatial science, represents one of the major branches of Geography as a discipline. Physical Geography provides a deeper knowledge and understanding of the planet’s four major spheres – the atmosphere, the lithosphere, the hydrosphere, and the biosphere – and humanity’s relationships with and impacts on these spheres, all of which are necessary to participate in Global society. Possessing geographic literacy and applying geographic knowledge is critical and fundamental for 21st century learners in order to further understand the world around them.

Physical Geography should be a part of the Life and Physical Sciences core curriculum because:

- It utilizes scientific inquiry and tools such as maps to help understand, describe, explain and predict natural phenomena such as climate change and El Nino.

- It examines different aspects of the natural environment and explores natural hazards such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, volcanic eruptions and droughts.

- Students of Physical Geography gain a better understanding of the science behind these phenomena along with spatial patterns associated with each, providing a more comprehensive knowledge of how, why, and where these occur, and acquire insights as to what humans can do when it comes to preparedness and planning for these forces of nature.

- Physical Geography’s emphasis in studying the interaction between people, places, and environments serves as an avenue for environmental understanding, which leads to good decision making made by responsible and informed global citizens.

- Physical Geography embodies the spirit of Houston Community College’s mission of preparing “individuals in our diverse communities for life and work in a global and technological society” while meeting the Life and Physical Sciences core objective of equipping students with an “understanding of interactions among natural phenomena and the implications of scientific principles on the physical world and human experiences”.

- It provides students with a well-rounded foundation for understanding the natural world around them and prepares them with applications and strategies for addressing modern environmental challenges as they advance to the next steps in their educations, careers, and as citizens of the world.