

Syllabus for GEOG 1700 (World Regional Geography)

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CLAS 417

Contact Information:

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Office Hours: Tu&Th 15:30—16:30.

Class Period: Tu&Th 14:00—15:15

Classroom: CLAS445

Course Description

We are living in an increasingly interconnected, fast changing world, comprising all kinds of different places and their people. Therefore, it is imperative to know about places and people all over the world if you would like to find a good job in business, government, the academic world, or somewhere else. This course “World Regional Geography—Geog 1700” aims to help college students understand the various world regions, how they appear, what people’s lives are like, and importantly, the underlying process shaping the regional pattern. Americans are widely criticized by educators for their lack of geographical knowledge. However, if you enroll in this class, attend regularly, and give some extra time, you have the potential to become an expert on this fascinating, globalized world.

This course adopts a regional perspective. The first part of the lectures provides a brief description of this complex and fast changing world, and provides a geography toolbox that you will need throughout the semester. In the second part, the world will be divided into twelve sub-regions, which geographers sometimes call realms. These twelve regions will be presented one-by-one in detail. For each realm, the boundary will be defined, the physical environment will be presented, and population and economic development will also be examined.

Requirements to Succeed in GEOG 1700

People know more or less about the world, and our knowledge levels are always different. But if you attend class regularly, read the text book, finish the exercises carefully, and prepare well for the exams, your grade will be good and you will be proud of yourself for expanding your knowledge. I always emphasize the importance of attending class regularly to success in this course (and perhaps any other course), and this is the responsibility of the student. Although attendance will not be counted directly, students missing classes usually have low grades. ***We cover so many places, people, and concepts that “cramming for tests” will not work well in this course.*** Finally, having some interest in world regional geography in your everyday life will make its study easier and more effective, and, more importantly, benefit your whole life. If you are observant enough, you can also find things related to this course in newspapers, internet websites, TV programs, etc. Keeping an eye out for related materials is an excellent complement to your studies in the course.

Required Textbook

De Blij & Muller (2010), *Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts (14th ed)*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Exercises

Exercises are not intended to keep you busy, but to help you digest the information learned in class. You will need to hand in six exercises during the whole semester. The majority part of the exercises will be drawn from the textbook and for a small part you may need to look for answers in other sources (internet or library).

Group Project

A group project (4 or 5 per group) will be required. It is intended to help students develop the ability to evaluate and analyze the social and economic development of a particular place using the knowledge, theories, and skills acquired during the course. By working as a group, students can also develop the ability to work in coordination and cooperation. Detailed information and policies will be given in class.

Exams

To finish this course, you need to take three mid-term exams and one final exam. Mid-terms will cover materials between exams (the first mid-term will cover the materials from the beginning to that exam). The final exam will cover the material from the whole semester. The exams will have multiple choice questions, short answer questions, and perhaps a short essay. ***I do not usually accept any excuses of missing exams without an official verification, and extra time won't be given to students who are late. Make sure you attend all the exams because there may be a permanent zero for those that are missed.***

Grading Policy

Twenty percent of the final grade will be based on the exercises. Each exercise will be worth up to four points, but the lowest one will be dropped in calculating the final grade. Exercises that are handed in one class after the due date will lose two points (that's why it is called the due date), and no credit will be given after one class later than the due date. Each mid-term exam is worth 10 percent of the final grade, and the final exam is worth 30 percent. The remaining 20 percent of the grade is for group projects. Grades will be based on a standard scale: 93 and above= A; 90-92= A-; 87-89= B+.....60-62=D-, 59 and below= F, unless otherwise noted in class. I will not usually curve grades so that if many students have high performance we may have a lot of A students, and if the average performance is low, the average grade will be low.

Academic Misconduct

Note the following remarks taken from the University's student code:

A fundamental tenet of all educational institutions is academic honesty; academic work depends upon respect for and acknowledgement of the research and ideas of others. Misrepresenting someone else's work as one's own is a serious offense in any academic setting, and it will not be condoned. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for academic evaluation (e.g.

papers, projects, and examinations) . . . [or] presenting as one's own the ideas or words of another for academic evaluation; doing unauthorized academic work for which another person will receive credit or be evaluated; and presenting the same or substantially the same papers or projects in two or more courses without the explicit permission of the instructors involved. The appropriate academic consequence for serious offenses is generally considered to be failure in the course. For less serious offenses regarding small portions of the course work, failure for that portion is suggested with the requirement that the student repeat the work for no credit.

Therefore, PLEASE do not copy exercise answers from others, and do not cheat in the exams. There will be no tolerance of such behaviors because it is unfair for the majority and for the instructor.

Date and Topics (Adjustment of topics may be made, but exam dates are fixed unless there is an emergency)

1/25 Introduction 1
1/27 Introduction 2
2/1 Europe 1
2/3 Europe 2/ Exercise 1 due date
2/8 Russia 1
2/10 Russia 2
2/15 North America 1/ Exercise 2 due date
2/17 North America 2
2/22 EXAM 1
2/24 Middle America 1
3/1 Middle America 2
3/3 South America 1
3/15 South America 2
3/17 Sub-Saharan Africa 1/ Exercise 3 due date
3/22 Sub-Saharan Africa 2
3/24 EXAM 2
3/29 North Africa/Southwest Asia 1
3/31 North Africa/Southwest Asia 2
4/5 South Asia 1/ Exercise 4 due date
4/7 South Asia 2
4/12 EXAM 3
4/14 movie
4/19 East Asia 1/ Exercise 5 due
4/21 East Asia 2
4/26 Southeast Asia/ Exercise 6 due
4/28 Austral and Pacific Realm
Final Exam (Covering the entire course)/Group Project due