

## World Regional Geography Online Syllabus 2013

Instructor: John Cusick, Ph.D.

The most efficient means to contact the instructor if you have a question or comment is by email through the class website.

Textbook: Bradshaw, M. et al. Contemporary World Regional Geography, 4th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies. ISBN 978-0-07-305150-5.

### **Course description**

Geography is more than the concern of place names and knowing where things are located. One objective of this course is to develop student understanding of Geography as an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge with relevance to a wide range of academic subjects and current events. This course introduces concepts and terms that explain the world we live in by recognizing and exploring human-environment relationships in the context of world regions. An emphasis is on comparative analysis of world regions and the connections between local places and the processes of globalization.

The readings in the textbook facilitate your own independent investigation of multimedia resources in this increasingly interconnected world. Online discussions provide an opportunity to critically analyze observations and understanding of your worldview and question and critique what you are learning with others in the course. A goal of this course is to encourage your lifelong interest in learning about the places each of us inhabit and to become competent in the skills of spatial analysis and critical thinking.

### **Course Competencies**

Demonstrate an understanding of historical, social and environmental processes shaping the world's major world regions. Demonstrate knowledge of geographic terms, locations, concepts, theories, and methodology.

Critically analyze local, national, regional and international issues and events within the framework of the course using appropriate geographic methods and tools. Demonstrate the ability to perform designated tasks in an accurate, professional, scholarly and timely fashion.

Demonstrate effective use of information technology.

### **Course Assessment**

Course evaluation: (A=90%, B=80%, C=70%, D=60%, F=below 59%)

### **Assignments (20%)**

Four short writing assignments will be posted on the class website that allow students to

make use of the textbook's many resources. These will allow you to explore your own geographic place and worldview based on the Point-Counterpoint, Personal View, and Geography at Work essays in the textbook. Each student is required to post a 300 word minimum commentary per assignment that is informed by the reading and your own personal observations. You are then required to post a comment, question, analysis, or critique (100 word minimum) to at least 4 posts by other students. These assignments do not necessarily have "right" or "wrong" answers since they reflect your ability to critically think and to make observations based on geographic literacy.

### **Quiz (30%)**

The quiz is multiple choice and true/false questions taken from the textbook's Computerized Test Bank for Chapters 1, 2 and 13.

### **Final Exam (40%)**

The final exam is multiple choice and true/false questions taken from the textbook's Computerized Test Bank for Chapters 3-12.

### **Online discussion participation (10%)**

In a classroom setting, part of the final grade is generally determined by attendance, participation, and preparation. In the online format, Discussion forums help create a learning community and allow class members to respond to, build on, and interact with the information others have provided to the discussion. Keep in mind the difference from fact and opinion, and it goes without saying that all communication is to be respectful of others. Discussion forums are a space for students to learn from one another where comments such as "good job" or "interesting" are insufficient. Students are encouraged to post expanded commentaries, term definitions with examples, observations, and/or current events to further explore and understand world regional geography.

### **Schedule**

Please post an introduction of yourself in Week 1 of the term, including your degree major and interest in/reason for taking this course. The chapter content questions can be responded to after reading the relevant sections of the textbook during the corresponding week of the term, but there is no absolute due date. Each student gets from the class what time and effort they are individually willing to make toward understanding what is potentially an overwhelming amount of information regarding world regional geography. Discussion questions serve as a study guide to the quiz and final exam, so the more you stay current the better you will be prepared for them. Student posts are to be based on information provided in the textbook and elaborated upon with information based on current or historical events, personal observations and local examples, as appropriate.

### **General Content (Chapters 1, 2 and 13)**

What is an interdisciplinary approach to learning and how does Geography achieve this? Which region(s) interest you and why?

How are the concepts of environment, culture, resource, and development relevant to the study of world regional geography?

Why is regional geography relevant to understand contemporary societies?

What human and physical characteristics help to define world regions? Provide examples of what constitutes a border between one region or country from another.

How is globalization affecting – and affected by – the roles played by multinational corporations?

How is the region you live in similar or different from other regions of the world?

#### Terms

place	Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	globalization
outsourcing	demography	natural resource
absolute location	scale	biome
greenhouse effect	human development index	renewable resource
relative location	spatial analysis	central business district
cultural hearth	indigenous	orographic lifting
region	world region	latitude and longitude
climate	tectonic plate	global warming
ecosystem	natural hazard	physical geography
cultural geography	language	religion
diaspora	megacity	nation
migration	political geography	governance
sustainable development	human rights	responsible growth

#### **Europe (Chapter 3) and Russia and Neighboring Countries (Chapter 4)**

How does climate change from north to south, east to west in these regions?

What helps explain Western Europe's historical success as a globally dominant regional

power?

Which factors promoted European migration and colonization in the 17th-19th centuries?

What are some of the challenges posed by expansion of the European Union and NATO into Eastern Europe and countries linked to the former Soviet Union?

Compare and contrast the spatial patterns of economic development in Europe and Russia.

Identify the locations of each subregion of Europe and Russia and the associated historic linguistic and religious characteristics of each subregion.

What are some of the physical geographic challenges to economic development in Russia? How do these challenges, in addition to contemporary environmental degradation, impact human settlement patterns and ecosystem health?

What are sources of political conflict in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia?

Terms

Industrial Revolution	imperialism	communism
European Union	contintentiality	acid rain
estuary	colonialism	nation-state
capitalism	socialism	NATO
gentrification	guest worker	fjord
ethnic cleansing	CIS	tundra
permafrost	taiga	Russification
central planning	gulag	glasnost and perestroika

### **Asia (Chapters 5, 6 and 7)**

Define the term monsoon and describe its impacts in Asia. Why and how can East Asia be defined as “the Chinese realm”?

What European countries were involved in the colonization of Asia and what were the purposes of their colonial activities?

Compare and contrast the current population trends and global economic positions of China and India in the 21st century.

What countries provide China with fossil fuels? What are the geopolitical implications of these economic relationships?

Compare the military spending of China and the United States and their respective military presence in East Asia. What are some of the root causes for military tension in East Asia?

What are the obstacles to a reunited Korean Peninsula?

How does Japan remain a leader in the global economy?

What world religions originated in Asia?

What natural hazards face the people of Southeast Asia?

Identify the subregions of South Asia and the physical features that dominate the region.

What do Jammu and Kashmir have to do with peace in South Asia?

Terms

demilitarized zone (DMZ)	Cultural Revolution	domino theory
primate city	caste order	monsoon
collectivization	cultural diversity	Bollywood
ethnicity	Three Gorges Dam	buffer state
Green Revolution	transmigration	Shinkansen
ASEAN	APEC	ecotourism
import substitution industry	call center	Tibet
special economic zone	typhoon	Wallace Line
tsunami	archipelago	plantation
alluvial fan	remittance	microcredit

### **Africa and Southwest Asia and Africa South of the Sahara (Chapters 8 and 9)**

Identify the regions of the African continent and describe the general physical and cultural patterns of each region.

What are the major public health and safety concerns that currently impact many African

societies?

Describe the politics of water in these regions. What are the implications for civil stability?

What are some of the physical characteristics that create subregional borders in these regions?

What world religions originated in these regions?

What are some of the obstacles to peace between Israelis and Palestinians?

Terms

Arab League	oasis	Mesopotamia
tribe	resource extraction	cradle of civilization
agricultural revolution	salinization	rift valleys
HIV/AIDS	arid	Sahel
irrigated agriculture	genocide	apartheid
blood diamond	OPEC	slave trade
religious fundamentalism	PLO	kibbutz
bush meat	post-colonialism	desertification
medina	The Maghreb	diversified economy
World Bank	International Monetary Fund	petrodollar

### **Australia, Oceania, and Antarctica (Chapter 10)**

Identify the major geologic and climatic features of Pacific Islands.

Locate the three subregions of Pacific Islands, Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Explain why the Pacific Ocean has been referred to as the “blue continent.”

Discuss the human migration pattern to Polynesia. Where did the people who settled these Pacific Islands originate?

Explain the settlement pattern of Australia by Europeans and link it to climatic conditions.

How does the international community manage Antarctica?

Terms

barrier reef	Antarctic Treaty	South Pacific Forum
volcanic hot spot	trade winds	ozone hole
Southern Ocean	coral atoll	global climate change
International dateline	rain shadow	marsupial
Aborigine	Micronesia	Melanesia
Polynesia	South Pacific Forum	afforestation

### **The Americas (Chapters 11 and 12)**

Review the physical geography of North America and discuss links to human settlement patterns, agricultural land use practices, and urbanization.

As in Asia, European powers colonized Caribbean islands. What countries were involved and what island(s) did each dominate? How does that history influence contemporary island societies in terms of dominant contemporary language, religion, and economic activities?

Compare and contrast the physical geography of countries in South America, particularly the influence of the Amazon River basin and the Andes mountains on natural resources and economic activities.

Compare and contrast the location, historic time period, and regional influences of the Aztec, Maya, and Inca civilizations.

How do the main economic activities of Mexico compare with those of Central American countries?

Terms

altitudinal zonation	maquiladora	conquistador
conservation	coca	gringo
Canal Zone	Monroe Doctrine	suburbanization
altiplano	drug cartel	El Nino

biological diversity	banana republic	Southern Cone
economic leakage	street children	Fordism
First Nation	service economy	favela
Canadian Shield	ethanol	NAFTA
edge city	watershed	Homestead Act
Dust Bowl	cultural hegemony	Nunavut
uneven development	El Nino	Treaty of Tordesillas
protectionism	ejido	deciduous forest
economy of scale	G8 nations	ghetto
agribusiness	TVA	Francophone