

Cultural Geography Syllabus (Spring 2019)

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Office Hours: 3:30 – 4:30 TR

Course Description

This course introduces students to fundamental issues and concepts that will help them understand the world in which they live. It focuses on the dynamic and complex relationships between people and the environments they inhabit. Students will learn the basic geographical tools and concepts needed to understand the complexity of places and regions and to appreciate the interconnections between their lives and those of people in different parts of the world, preparing them to make the world a better place. The course provides not only a body of knowledge about the creation of places and regions, but also an understanding of both the interdependence of places and regions in a globalizing world, and the major changes that have taken place in global, regional, and local landscapes. The course is offered in an instructional environment designed and managed to encourage independent, creative, and interactive learning. This course will help make students better-informed, more able to understand the important problems faced by themselves and others, and better prepared to contribute to solutions.

Course Objectives and Specific Outcomes

- To understand and apply the key geographic themes, such as location, place, region, movement, and human-environment interaction
- To explore the spatial forms of social, economic, cultural, and political processes
- To develop geographical skills and knowledge helpful for understanding local, national, and world events and issues
- To develop skills for the observation and documentation of ordinary landscapes
- To develop map-based knowledge of key locations in world regions

Required Texts

1. Knox, Paul, and Sallie Marston. 2015. *Human Geography: Places and Regions in Global Context, 7th Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

This book can be purchased at the UTEP bookstore, or they can be ordered at www.powells.com, www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com. You can purchase the *Human Geography* text as an E-book at <http://www.coursesmart.com/9780321821324>. Supplementary web sites, with URLs, will be given in the appropriate unit.

Please buy the required texts immediately!! Don't wait until you use them in the course. Don't wait until the end of the semester. Also, if English is your second language, it is recommended that you purchase a dictionary for use while reading.

Being Successful in an Online Class

Online learning is not a spectator sport. It is everyone's responsibility to participate as fully as they can so everyone can get the most from the experience. Here are some simple rules to follow to ensure your participation and engagement in the learning process:

- Ask questions: If you don't know the answer, someone else will. The discussion board is the area for asking questions related to content OR any technical problems (related to the class) you are having. Make sure that you have clearly indicated the subject of your message.

- Reach out to others: Offer a fact, article, link, or other item that can help others learn something you can share.
- Be appropriate: The online classroom is not the place for insulting or insensitive comments, attacks, or venting. Inappropriate behavior can be subject to disciplinary action, as well.
- Be diplomatic: When sending messages on emotionally charged topics, I recommend that you write the message and then walk away for at least an hour before re-reading the message and then sending it. Re-reading emotionally charged messages ensures that they are constructive instead of destructive. Think of the person at the other end.
- Stay focused: Stay on topic to increase the efficiency of your learning.

Course Work

Course activities will consist of reading, written discussions posted on discussion boards, exams, and reading quizzes. In general, it is expected that the course will require on average 10 hours each week, including reading, discussion, and all other activities. Familiarize yourself with the Syllabus and Course Calendar to complete assignments in a timely manner. Please contact the instructor when needed with questions related to the course. The instructor will answer messages sent by students using the Blackboard Mail tool Monday through Friday normally within 24 hours of receiving them (and within 48 hours in rare cases).

Lessons/Learning Modules: The goal of each lesson is to give you a guideline for close, detailed reading of the book and guidance in completing assignments; this takes the place of lecture from the instructor. Take advantage of the lessons! They will help you in completing your course activities, including discussions and exams.

Discussion Participation and Guidelines: Each student is required to participate in online discussion as part of a 5-student group (note that group sizes may vary). Each lesson will require each student to write at least 200 words in response to a question or set of questions. Questions will be provided by the instructor at the top of each discussion forum as it is opened for the week. Each student will then be required to reply to the entries of each of the other students in their group (including at least one extended comment of about 50 words). Brief communications following the replies will often be appropriate. After members of your group have posted individual responses to the discussion question(s) and have replied to each other's postings, your group will collaborate in writing one response to the discussion question(s). In your group posting, you will incorporate what you have collectively learned in your reading and discussion. For each discussion, every student will receive a grade based on two forms of evaluation:

1. Through evaluation of your contribution to discussion by your peers (your fellow group members), and
2. Through the instructor's evaluation of your group's posting (see Course Grades and Policies below). Deadlines for discussion postings are listed in the Course Calendar. Please note that there are two deadlines per week: one for individual responses to the questions ("Discussion Question Due") and one for the posting of group responses and the completion of peer evaluations ("Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due"). Discussion items posted after the due date/time will not be graded (students will not receive credit). Please plan your work time carefully.

Discussion postings must be in English to ensure mutual communication among participants. Keep your messages concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop your thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter, clearer, messages than longer ones written in a stream-of-consciousness manner.

Here are some guidelines to facilitate your discussion activities:

1. Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It is fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
2. Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point". If you think someone has made an especially strong point and you want to say so, then explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point.
3. A discussion posting that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
 - a. **Reflection about meaning:** Describe thoughtfully what something means or new insights it provides, or raise a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.
 - b. **Analysis:** Discusses relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas. Or, identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.
 - c. **Elaboration:** Builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.
 - d. **Application:** Provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual classroom situations, or discuss the implications of theory for practice.
 - e. **Synthesis:** Integrates multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.
 - f. **Evaluation:** Assesses the accuracy, reasonableness, or quality of ideas.

Electronic Communication Guidelines: It is important to share a word of caution. When communicating electronically, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions is much more difficult. Only what is written carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. It is important that we all keep this in mind as we communicate. Words in print may seem harmless, but they could emotionally injure us when working at a distance. Therefore, it is important that we are conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance.

For example, avoid the use of all capital letters in your electronic messages, as wording in caps comes across as shouting.

The standard practice ("Netiquette") for participation in networked discussion requires that all participation be focused on the topic at hand, not become personalized, and be substantive in nature. (Translation: you may certainly disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully; you may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.)

More information on Netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, can be found at www.albion.com/netiquette.

Exams: There will be three exams in this class. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. They will be based off of the readings and lectures, and each will cover three to four chapters in the textbook. The instructor will make available Exam Review Electronic Handouts posted on the course content no less than one week before each exam. You will have ample time in which to complete each of the three exams. Exams are worth about one-third of your overall grade

Reading Quizzes: 10 quizzes (worth 10 points each) will be administered on the assigned reading during the semester. Reading Quizzes must be completed before the end of the day they are listed on the Course Calendar. To do well, students should complete assigned readings **before** taking the Reading Quizzes.

Grading

Course Grade Elements:	Points
Grades will be calculated on the basis of the following formula: Learning Activity	
Student Introductions in Groups	5 points
Syllabus Quiz	15 points
Discussion Participation (15 weeks x 10)	150 points
3 Exams (3 x 100 points each)	300 points
Reading Quizzes (10 x 10 points each)	100 points
Total Possible	570 points

COURSE CALENDAR

All reading must be done before class on the day it is listed below! All assignments are due on the day listed in the syllabus. In other words, the days listed below are always the due date unless the instructor changes the Course Calendar!

Date Topic Reading

Week 1 - Introduction to the Course —

January 23

(W)

Review Syllabus

Syllabus Quiz Due

Jan 25

(F) Introduce yourself to your Group

Introduction Postings Due

Week 2 - Why Geography Matters

Jan 30

(W)

Read Chapter 1 –Geography Matters

Chapter 1 Reading Quiz Due

Feb 1

(F)

Reply to others in your Group; Decide on Group

Team Name

Introduction Replies Due

Week 3 - The Changing Global Context

Feb 6

(W)

Read The Changing Global Context

Exam 1 Review (Electronic Hand-out Posted on Course Content> The Changing Global Context /

Population Geography)
Chapter 2 Reading Quiz Due

Feb 8
(F) Discussion
Discussion Question Due

Week 4 Geographies of Population and Migration
Feb 13 (W)
Read Geographies of Population and Migration
Chapter 3 Reading Quiz Due

Feb 15 (F)
Discussion
Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due

Week 5 People and Nature

Feb 20
(W)
Read People and Nature
Chapter 4 Reading Quiz Due

Feb 22 (F)
Discussion
Discussion Question Due

Week 6 – Exam 1

Feb 27 (W)
Discussion
Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due

Mar 1 (F)

Exam 1
Exam 1 Due (Chapters 1-4)

Week 7 - Cultural Geographies

Mar 6
(W)
Read Cultural Geographies
Exam 2 Review (Electronic Hand-out Posted on
Course Content > Cultural Geographies/Interpreting
Places and Landscapes)
Chapter 5 reading quiz due

Mar 8 (F)

Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due

Week 8 Interpreting Places and Landscapes

Mar 13

(F)

Read Interpreting Places and Landscapes

Chapter 7 Reading Quiz Due

Mar 15 (F) Discussion

Discussion Question Due

SPRING BREAK

Week 9 - Geographies of Economic Development

Mar 27

(W) Geographies of Economic Development

Chapter 8 Reading Quiz Due

Mar 29 (F) Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Week 10 - Exam 2

April 3

(W) Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due

April 5 (F) Discussion

(F) Exam 2

Exam 2 Due (Chapters 5,7 and 8)

Week 11 – Geographies of Food and Agriculture

April 10 (W)

Read Geographies of Food and Agriculture

Chapter 9 Reading Quiz due

April 12 (F))

Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Week 12 - Political Geography

April 17 (W)

Read Political Geographies

Chapter 10 Reading Quiz Due

April 19 (F)

Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Exam 3 Review (Electronic Hand-out Posted on

Course Content > Urbanization, City Spaces, and Urban Structure)

April 12 (F)

Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Week 13 – Urbanization and the Global System

April 24 (W)

Read Urbanization and the Global System

Chapter 11 Reading Quiz Due

April 26 (F)

Discussion

Group Posting/Peer Evaluations Due

Week 14 City Spaces – Urban Structure

May 1 (W)

Read City Spaces: Urban Structure

Chapter 12 Reading Quiz Due

May3 (F)

Discussion

Discussion Question Due

Week 15 – Exam 3

May 8

Exam 3 **Exam 3 Due**

(Chapters 9-12)

***This schedule is tentative; the instructor reserves the right to make changes as the semester progresses. Students are responsible for adhering to changes made during the semester**