

Introduction to Human Geography

GEOG 142 * Summer 2018 (Online) * Olivia Molden

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How do people manage essential resources? Why do resources become scarce? Pictured here is a “tanker” filling a community-led water distribution system in Chyasal’s ancient Saraswati Hiti complex (Patan, Nepal).

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION + AIMS

In this course, we will look critically at the geographic dimensions of our globalized world: why places and regions are interconnected, how they are unique, and how the movement of people, ideas, and things transforms our bodies, places, and worlds.

This course aims to provide you with the conceptual and empirical tools to *think like a geographer*. Geographers study the **flows of things**: people, money, rivers, technologies, rainclouds, commodities, or animals across space and time, especially as these flows become fragmented, uneven, or planetary (such as in the process of **globalization**). Geographers use **maps** and geospatial tools to make sense of these flows. The unique convergence of flows in a certain location is what geographers call a **place**; the interconnections and flows between places create what we call **space**. All places are inhabited, experienced, and traversed by human **bodies**; and bodies are differentiated in society according to cultural and political systems of **difference**—such as gender, sexuality, and race. In short, the study of human geography is more than reciting the list of state capitals; we explore the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of **spatial interconnections**.

By grounding spatial interconnections in real-life examples and stories, in this course you will gain conceptual tools for making sense of how and why the world changes around us. This term, we will focus on: the roots of globalization, the dynamics of urbanization, the human geographies of climate change, food economies and water supplies, and our role in the age of urbanization. Within these areas, we will explore how social and cultural systems of difference are implicated in globalization. Because of this focus, GEOG 142 is a gateway to the Geography major/minor, and fulfills multicultural requirements for the International Cultures (IC) category and general education requirements for the social sciences (<2).

Welcome!

2. LOGISTICS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Define and explain key concepts, themes, and approaches in human geography;
- Recognize and interpret the influence of globalization at different scales and in different sites;
- Characterize and critically analyze the changing interconnections among people, places, and things;
- Research an original topic from a geographic perspective using a mix of popular and academic sources.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

Please email me through Canvas, otherwise, my email is: omolden@uoregon.edu. You may address me as Olivia.

3. TEACHING + LEARNING

Our job is to explain, to spark **curiosity**, to provoke new ways of thinking. We care about how, what, and why you learn. Being capable of asking questions (remember there are NO stupid questions) is the first step at becoming a more critical thinker. If you remain silent, we get worried, because most learners don't “get”

everything straight away--trust us, we've been there. If you are struggling with course content or concepts, please talk to us: in class, via email, or during office hours.

Studies also show that critical thinkers are more aware of their own individual **mental models**: that is, how we each construct knowledge. By the time we reach college, students have thousands of mental models: schemas that enable learners to comprehend new information and make sense of sensory inputs. Some folks are visual learners; others learn best by listening. Some students are list-makers or note-takers; others probe material for assumptions and gaps. Mental models change slowly, and not all work for every situation. So in this course, our goal is not to 'cover' material, but to give students the space and tools to construct ideas, find data, craft arguments receive feedback, and try again. Part of this course is dedicated to helping students develop their own unique mental models, to become better, self-conscious learners.

We will work closely with you and other students in an interactive environment to ensure that course content--such as concepts presented in lecture, or narratives that thread through the texts--is digested and understood. We will use a variety of learning techniques through Canvas to encourage students to 'think aloud' in a more intimate learning environment.

The **Canvas** website is indispensable tools for managing course content, deadlines, for helpful links, and for remaining up to date on your grades. Our Canvas page will provide key announcements, assignment descriptions, places to submit certain assignments, and updated grades. Please follow directions provided in each module.

4. READING

There is one required **texts** for this course:

- Short, J. R. ***Human geography: a short introduction***. Oxford University Press. (Preferably the second edition)

All texts are available for purchase at The Duck Store. Short's textbook serves as our "reference guide" for geographic concepts: it contains organized chapters with bulleted main points, a very helpful glossary, good maps and timelines, and a fairly diverse set of illustrating examples. We recommend purchasing the **e-version** of this text.

5. WRITING & RESEARCH

One of the cornerstones of this course is the research and production of an **original research paper**. All writing follows certain rules and conventions, and the kind of writing that you will learn in this course is **academic writing**. A social-scientific paper may be different from what most of you wrote in English class. Not to worry, though—we will help you become better researchers and writers through class activities and workshops.

- Each student will write a research paper that investigates the **geographical connections** of a particular **object**—chosen by student. The contemporary world is constituted through a dense web of connections among people and things, and students will select an object of interest and investigate its spatial interconnections and implications. For example: what are the economic and social relations facilitate the availability of bottled Fiji Water at Trader Joe's stores in the US? Who drinks this stuff, how much do they pay, and who (or what) benefits? How might an analysis of Fiji water shed light on the growing bottled water industry? In what ways does the success of bottled water signal new relations between

people and the environment? More assignment details will be provided in class.

- Academic writing contains an easily identifiable and original **argument** [also called a thesis]. This is the point *you* are making and trying to convince the reader about supported by evidence. You will formulate a particular problem about your object and discuss it with your GTF; then you will conduct research in a systematic and careful manner; the research leads you to certain conclusions; finally, you make your argument in the research paper.
- A research paper is **well-structured**, with a clear introduction telling the reader in brief what to expect; what you will argue and how you will do that; a middle in which you develop the argument through a number of sections highlighting various aspects of the problem and telling the reader what evidence you found; and a conclusion, in which you summarize the evidence and reiterate the argument.
- A social-scientific paper is supported by **references**, and often quotes from primary and secondary sources. Effective academic writing shows readers what has already been written on your problem. We ask you to provide a minimum of 8 high-quality sources (e.g., books, journal articles) in your research paper. We will help you learn how to distinguish between popular and academic titles during discussion section.
- You will have opportunities to get feedback on your writing skills in discussion section. If you seek additional help, please visit the Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) Writing Lab, which offers free writing assistance to all UO students. The Writing Lab is located in 72 PLC. Drop in or make an appointment. See: <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/learningservices/labs/labs.html>
- Academic writing must conform to the principles of academic **honesty**. On the flip side: any form of cheating, fabrication, or plagiarism [i.e., taking someone else's product, words, ideas, and data as one's own work] will result in a failing grade for the writing assignment. Find out more about academic honesty at: <http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

6. ASSESSMENT

Your performance in the course will be evaluated on a variety of activities online in Canvas. The final grade is based on the total cumulative points you earn over the quarter. Think of each course component as an opportunity to earn points toward your final grade. There are a total of 100 points available, divided as shown:

Component	Points	Total Points
Attendance & Participation (A&P)	2.5 x 6	15
Canvas Quizzes (2 total)	5 + 5	15
Research Paper (4 components)	5 + 15 + 20 + 10	50
Final exam	20	20
TOTAL		100

As all due dates and exam dates are provided in advance. Furthermore, it is our overall course policy that **no late assignments will be accepted** unless proper documentation (sports or band attendance, or medical appointments) is provided in advance.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION OR A&P (15)

Your individual attendance and participation (A&P) is essential to the overall success of the class, as well as to your own achievement.

CANVAS QUIZZES AND FINAL EXAM (15)

You may use course notes and materials to answer these questions.

RESEARCH PAPER (50)

Each student will write a research paper that investigates the geographical connections of a particular object. More details and requirements for the paper will be provided in lecture and section.

FINAL EXAM (20)

In addition to your responses, we will grade your exam outline.

7. THE SCHEDULE

Short = *A Short Introduction to Human Geography* (Ch. = Chapter); check Canvas each week for your readings

Please follow the Modules in Canvas. Each week a new module will be available.

<i>Module</i>	<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignments Due</i>
1	June 25	Introduction	A&P 1 – Understand course expectations
2	June 26-29	Population Dynamics	Short (Ch. 3) and canvas readings A&P 2 – Choosing a paper topic
3	July 2-6	Food and Water Security	Short (Ch. 4) and canvas readings <i>July 4th is a holiday</i> A&P 3 – Researching water security
4	July 9-11	Energy Security	Short (Ch 5) and canvas readings Research paper part I - Brainstorm
5	July 11-13	Political ecology	Short (Ch. 6) and canvas readings Canvas Exercise 1
6	July 16-20	Uneven Development	Short (Ch. 7 and 8) and canvas readings A&P 4 – Course check-in Research paper part II - Outline
7	July 23-27	Urban transformation	Short (Ch. 16, 17, 18) and canvas readings A&P 5 – Researching urban resilience
8	July 30-31	Globalization	Short (Ch. 12) and canvas readings Canvas Exercise 2
8	Aug 1-3	Geopolitics	Short (Ch. 14 and 15) and canvas readings Research paper part III – Full paper
10	Aug 6-10	Cultural Geography	Short (Ch.10, 11, 13) and canvas readings A&P 6 – Creating exam questions
11	Aug 13-15	Migration	Short (Ch. 9) and canvas readings Research paper part IV – Sharing your work
12	Aug 16-17	Becoming a Geographer	Short (Ch. 2) and canvas readings Final exam

Notes: Should any changes be made, you will be provided with a revised schedule on Canvas.

8. CODES OF CONDUCT

AFFIRMATION OF COMMUNITY STANDARDS

The University of Oregon community is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and the development of integrity. In order to thrive and excel, this community must preserve the freedom of thought and expression of all its members. A culture of respect that honors the rights, safety, dignity, and worth of every individual is essential to preserve such freedom. We affirm our respect for the rights and well-being of all members.

We further affirm our commitment to:

- Respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals
- Promote a culture of respect throughout the University community
- Respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others
- Reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidations of any kind
- Practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others
- Promote the diversity of opinions, ideas, and backgrounds, which is the lifeblood of the university

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with Olivia and bring a notification letter from Disability Services outlining your approved accommodations. For more information, see: http://ds.uoregon.edu/DS_home.html

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Above all, students should conduct themselves as adults. Classroom discussion (online or in person) should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing. For more information, see the UO Student Conduct Code: <https://studentlife.uoregon.edu/conduct>

ABSENCES

There are two main types of excused absences:

- (1) You are traveling to an official university-sponsored event (e.g. an academic conference or an event for Intercollegiate Athletics, Club Sports, or the Oregon Marching Band); or
- (2) You have a prescheduled medical appointment.

If you foresee an absence due to one of the reasons described above, you must contact your instructor a minimum of one weeks in advance of the anticipated absence with appropriate documentation from your coach, instructor, professor or employer. For health appointments, you do not need to provide details or documentation, we will trust you, however, please let us know in advance. Failure to submit an assignment on the date it was scheduled will result in a grade of zero, unless you communicate with us in advance.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, and data as one's own work. Fabrication is the intentional use of information that the author has invented when s/he states or implies otherwise, or the falsification of research with the intent to deceive. Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that s/he has mastered information on an academic exercise (i.e., a test) that s/he has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help. **Any case of possible plagiarism, fabrication or cheating will result in a failing grade on that course component.**

AND FINALLY, SUBJECT TO CHANGE STATEMENT

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading policy and course standards, may be subject to change with advanced notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.