

GEOG 201: World Regional Geography

Winter Term 2015, MW 2:00- 3.20 pm, 220 HED + discussion sections



We live in an interconnected world, yet most people lack much understanding of what other places and regions are like. This course offers an introductory exploration of Earth's diverse character. What is it like to live in Russia, Sub-Saharan Africa, or East Asia? What accounts for similarities and differences in the physical and human landscapes of Europe and South Asia? What are the principal challenges facing the people of the Middle East, South America, and Oceania? Grappling with such questions offers critical insights into the world we inhabit.

Instructor: Prof. Alexander B. Murphy, 173 Condon Hall, abmurphy@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10:00-noon or by appointment

GTFs: TBA
Discussion sections: TBA
Office Hours: TBA

TBA
Discussion sections: TBA
Office Hours: TBA

Course description: A fundamental geographical proposition is that *where* something happens affects *what* happens. The idea behind this proposition is that geographical context matters. Understanding how geographical context shapes what happens requires appreciation of the characteristics of different world regions—the physical, cultural, social, economic, and political features of different parts of the planet. This course provides an introduction to the world’s regional diversity. The goal is to provide students with a framework of understanding that will help them appreciate how and why parts of the world are similar or different from one another, how the world looks from different places, and the opportunities and constraints associated with the physical and human circumstances found in different world regions.

During the course of the term we will take a tour of the world—seeking an understanding of the basic geographical features of its major subdivisions. The course is not simply about memorizing place facts, however. Instead, the aim is to develop an appreciation of the forces that give rise to geographical differences, as well as the significance of those differences in the contemporary world. As part of our consideration of each world region, then, we will explore not only the major characteristics of that region. We will also consider a theme that has particular significance for the region, but that also has broader implications for understanding the world at large. This approach will help us understand how individual regions fit into the larger global picture.

Class meetings will involve a combination of lectures, discussions, videos, and periodic quizzes. Lectures will NOT repeat material that is in the textbook. That material serves as a backdrop for the circumstances, ideas, and concepts we will explore during class meeting. As such, it is essential to do the assigned readings from the textbook before they are taken up in class.

Text: Marston, S. A., P. L. Knox, D. M. Liverman, V. Del Casino, Jr., and P. Robbins. *World Regions in Global Context: Peoples, Places and Environments*. Prentice Hall, 2014.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify key physical and human features of major world regions
- Understand the principal forces shaping basic differences among and between world regions.
- Comprehend how broad differences in geographical context can shape socio-economic and political developments
- Appreciate some basic differences in the ways the world looks from different world regions
- Grasp the nature and importance of geographical ways of thinking and analysis

Requirements and Grading:

- Read the assigned pages in the textbook before coming to class
- Attend class meetings and participate in class activities
- Take periodic in-class quizzes (25 % of grade; lowest quiz grade will be dropped)
- Attend and participate in discussion sections (10% of grade)
- Complete three exercises outside of class (15% of grade for each exercise)
- Take a cumulative final exam (20% of grade)

Note: All three of the exercises must be completed in order to pass the course. Penalties will be assessed for late exercises unless the circumstances are exceptional. To ensure a level playing field for everyone, there will be no options for extra-credit work. Instead, everyone's grades will be based on the items enumerated above.

Learning Environment: Everyone should respect the class as a place for learning. Showing respect for your peers is absolutely essential to a good group learning process. That means tolerance of differing opinions, listening as well as talking, and refraining from personal attacks. Violations of academic integrity, such as plagiarism and cheating, are unacceptable (see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>). Suspected violations will be reported to the Director of Student Judicial Affairs. If that office finds the student to be guilty of a violation, it may result in a failing grade for the course. Electronic devices such as smart phones must be turned off during class unless they are being used for an in-class activity. Research shows that most students learn better by taking handwritten notes rather than typing on a laptop. If you nonetheless decide to use a laptop, you must sit in the first two rows of the classroom and use your computer only for note taking. Violation of this policy will result in the loss of points that count toward the final grade in the class.

Class Sessions and Reading Assignments:

DATE	TOPICS	READING FROM TEXT
Jan. 4	The regional concept, the geographical perspective	pp. 2-21 of Chapter 1
Jan. 6	Introducing Europe	Chapter 2
Jan. 11	Europe continued (Theme: Globalization)	pp. 21-26 of Chapter 1
Jan. 13	Introducing Latin America and the Caribbean	Chapter 7
Jan. 18	NO CLASS – MLK DAY	
Jan. 20	Latin America and the Caribbean continued (Theme: the Colonial Imprint)	pp. 27-31 of Chapter 1

Jan. 25	Introducing South Asia	Chapter 9
Jan. 27	South Asia continued (Theme: Patterns of Culture)	pp. 34-43 of Chapter 1
Feb. 1	Introducing East Asia	Chapter 8
Feb. 3	East Asia continued (Theme: Urbanization)	
Feb. 8	Introducing Southeast Asia	Chapter 10
Feb. 10	Southeast Asia continued (Theme: The political organization of space)	pp. 31-34 of Chapter 1
Feb. 15	Introducing Russia/Central Asia	Chapter 3
Feb. 17	Russia/Central Asia continued (Theme: Geopolitics)	
Feb. 22	Introducing the Middle East/North Africa	Chapter 4
Feb. 24	The Middle East/North Africa continued (Theme: Regionalization)	
Feb. 29	Introducing Sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 5
Mar. 2	Sub-Saharan Africa continued (Theme: Environment and Development)	
Mar. 7	Australia and Oceania (Theme: Migration)	Chapter 11
Mar. 9	Overview	pp. 43-46 of Chapter 1
Mar. 16	Final exam (2:45 pm)	

SCHEDULE FOR EXERCICES

1/6	EXERCISE # 1 HANDED OUT IN CLASS
1/25	EXERCISE # 1 DUE IN CLASS
1/27	EXERCISE # 2 HANDED OUT IN CLASS
2/15	EXERCISE # 2 DUE IN CLASS
2/17	EXERCISE # 3 HANDED OUT IN CLASS
3/7	EXERCISE # 3 DUE IN CLASS