

World Regional Geography

This course fulfills a Social Science group requirement and an International culture CORE Ed requirement.

This course uses a free online textbook. There are not other costs associated with this course beyond your tuition.

Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Leslie McLees

Email: lmclees@uoregon.edu

Office hours: Tues 9-10am; Thurs 2:30-3:30pm

GE Teaching Assistants

Tues discussion sessions: David Bachrach	Wed discussion sessions: San McLaughlin
Email: dbachra2@uoregon.edu	Email: smlaug8@uoregon.edu
Office hours: TBA	Office hours: TBA

Why are population growth rates declining in Japan even as they remain high in Afghanistan? What are the responses by Kenyans to the environmental challenges they face? How have post-colonial states in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America adapted to neocolonial political and economic systems? How has increased consumption of disposable goods in the United States influenced resource extraction and waste disposal in other parts of the world?

This course is designed to give you tools that will help you address questions like these. **This class is not simply facts about places, but instead asks questions that compel us to look at the political, economic, social and environmental processes shaping places in different regional contexts.** Throughout this course, you will develop tools that will help you continue learning about the world far past the final project. Geographical concepts will provide you with a deeper context for comprehending the processes through which places are shaped and importantly, develop an understanding of current events playing out right now.

You will not be required to memorize trivial facts in this class. Instead, I expect you to engage with a geographical approach to understanding and explaining how spatial phenomena (i.e. economic, political, social or environmental processes) shape places in different human and physical geographic contexts. Geographers examine how and why people interact with and transform the areas in which they are situated to create specific places (cities, states, parks, etc.). It delves into how power dynamics, histories, globalization, identity and more are mobilized and situated in places to explain the disparities and patterns that constitute the world in today's headlines.

There are no exams in this course. Instead, there will be a variety of formats to ensure you can develop breadth about the regions of the world, and depth in some of the key processes shaping each region. This course by nature is a whirlwind around the world, and as such, we will focus on a few specific themes through the regions to help center the course. Those themes all intersect with places in different ways. Understand those different ways is a central feature of geography. Examples of themes we will address throughout this course are globalization, gender, human-environment interactions, legacies of colonialism, agricultural practices, economic reforms, ideas of development.

Course objectives

XXX

Expected time commitment

Each university credit indicates three hours of work per week, for a total of 12 hours a week for one four-credit course. This course requires four hours a week of in-class time. Since there are no exams, your work will be spread out more over the term. I highly suggest that you stay up to date, as each week's assignment will be a part of your final project. Therefore, committing at the beginning of the term, incorporating feedback along the way, will make the end of your term much easier. And bonus: You'll learn more, too.

Requirements

- **Read the assigned pages in the textbook before class and review the slides after class.** Read the book first in order that you will be better prepared to understand the concepts in in class. Lecture WILL NOT be a repeat on the text. I promise. But you will understand lectures much better if you've got the background material.
- **Take the weekly quiz on the material covered in the textbook and the content slides by the end of the week.** You will need to take this quiz each week in order to access the following week's module. You will not be able to access the following week's materials unless you take this quiz.
- **Participate in your discussion sessions.** Discussions for this class will prepare you to complete the weekly projects, the assignments, and the final project. You will have a chance to discuss applications of themes AND the logistics of completing the assignments (making maps and storymaps).
- **Complete two other assignments: mental mapping?**
- **Complete the weekly blog assignment.** This will be outlined on the assignment page. You are welcome to use your discussion group to float ideas and come up with ideas.
- **Complete the final storymap project.** You will receive a link to create an account in ArcGIS online and tutorials will be available to create this product. See the assignment sheet under the Course Documents Module for details.

Required books

World Regional Geography, by Caitlin Finlayson. [This is a free online textbook that can be downloaded or viewed here \(Links to an external site.\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#)

Communication and etiquette

I expect that each student will check their uoregon email at least once a day. If you miss clarifications that we previously emailed out, you will not be granted an excuse and we will ask you to refer to previous emails.

Make sure that your settings in canvas push announcements to your email. You can do this by:

- clicking on your profile picture on the top left of the canvas homepage
- clicking on notifications
- clicking the checkmark next to Announcements
- go through and check any other reminders that you want to receive to remind you about deadlines

We will respond to emails usually within 48 hours (although on weekends it may take longer). Please be prompt in your response to any inquiries made by the instructors or GEs.

This course requires a significant amount of participation, discussion, and reflection in your discussion groups. All students are expected to be engaged and share experiences. Please address each other respectfully.

- **Free speech is a cornerstone of the academic environment. You will not agree with everything that the instructor or your classmates say. You are not graded on your level of agreement, but your understanding of concepts and ability to apply critical thinking skills to issues around the world.**
- Expect contributions from the instructor and GEs. We may ask provoking questions to encourage a response, or we may correct an idea if it looks like something is being misinterpreted or misunderstood.
- The instructor reserves the right to remove students from discussion groups if they:
 - Engage in speech that is disruptive and not relevant to the class discussion; or
 - Engage in speech that threatens the rights, safety, dignity, and worth of other people
- You are also expected to complete tasks on time. Your group-mates' are depending on your contributions for their own development of ideas.
- When emailing your colleagues, the GE teaching assistants, or the instructor, please use proper names, grammar, and salutations. In addition, **put the course name in the subject of the email.** It's also helpful to say what class you are in and your own name.
 - For example:

Subject: *GEOG 201- I enjoyed the class!*

Hi Dr. McLees,

I just wanted you to know that I really enjoyed this week's world regional geography lecture. I can't wait to learn more next week!

Thanks,

Leslie

Academic Integrity Code

All students are expected to complete assignments in a manner consistent with academic integrity. Students must produce their own work and properly acknowledge and document all sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases). Students can find more complete information about the University of Oregon's Policy on Academic Dishonesty at the University of Oregon Student Handbook. Find links on the Canvas to clarify what is meant by plagiarism and to find proper ways of using sources.

If you are found to have plagiarized (copied) off a classmate or from other materials for an assignment of any sort, your first warning will be a zero on the assignment. Your second incident will result in an F in the course.

Disability Statement

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me at the beginning of the term if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the [Accessible Education Center](#) (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Statement on Privacy

We are utilizing several online platforms for this course. You are welcome to use aliases if you are not comfortable sharing your work through these platforms. Know that none of these platforms can be accessed by the public, and access is limited to the instructor, GEs, and other students. If you have any issues regarding privacy, please bring them up with the instructor as soon as possible and we can make accommodations.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is an important part of a student's educational experience. Much of the content for this class can only be found in lectures and discussions. Students are expected to attend every meeting of their classes and are responsible for class not only being in the class but participating. Regardless of what reasons there may be for absence, students are accountable for all academic activities, and I reserve the right to require special work or tests to make up for the missed class or classes. Unexcused absences from class cannot be made up.

Grading

Attendance and participation	50 points
Discussion sessions	100 points
Weekly quizzes (10 @ 10 pts ea)	100 points
Weekly page assignments (10 @ 10 pts each)	100 points
Final project	50 points
TOTAL	400 Points

**** note that any assignment submitted late will receive a 10% total deduction on the grade for each day it is late ****

World Regional Geography

Weekly schedule

This schedule is preliminary and subject to change. Any updates will be announced in class and emailed out to the class.

Week 1

Oct 1st and 3rd

Introduction to the course expectations and content: What is geography? How do stories define our world and in turn influence how we act towards and within that world?

Read chapter one [in the text](#)

Week 2

Oct 8th and 10th

Europe: Nation-states, borders, colonialism, globalization, migration, acid rain

Read chapter 2: Europe

Week 3

Oct 15th and 17th

Russian Realm & Central Asia: Legacies of Communism, nuclear legacies, climate change, territories claims and conflicts, deforestation, gender

Read chapter 3

Week 4

Oct 22nd and 24th

Middle and South America and the Caribbean: Columbian Exchange, el Nino, un-natural disasters, political-economic development

Read chapter 5

Week 5

Oct 29th and 31st

South Asia: Climate change, famine, deforestation, demographics, gender

Read chapter 8

Week 6

Nov 5th and 7th

Sub-Saharan Africa: Desertification, famine, deforestation, gender, resource conflicts, debt and economic development, urbanization

Read chapter 6

Week 7

Nov 12th and 14th

Southwest Asia (a.k.a. Middle East) and North Africa: Water, hydropolitics, legacies of imperialism, conflict, gender, migration

Read chapter 7

Week 8

Nov 19th and 21st

East Asia: Climate change, un-natural disasters, legacies of Communism, gender, economic development

Read chapter 9 (note that this book combines East and Southeast Asia. You will have this chapter for two weeks)

Week 9

Nov 26th (28th is Thanksgiving!)

Southeast Asia: Deforestation, agricultural practices, legacies of colonialism, economic development

Re-read chapter 9: East and Southwest Asia

Week 10

Dec 3rd and 5th

Australia and Oceania: Climate change, nuclear legacies, mineral exploration, introduced species, un-natural disasters

Read chapter 10