

Geography 101: People and their Environments

Tuesdays and Fridays– 11:10-12:25

Online through Blackboard (real-time lecture: Blackboard Collaborate)

Course/Section Number: 6207 – Section 02

Instructor: Ms. Ekaterina (Katya) Bezborodko

Office Hours: Mondays, 8:00 pm, Blackboard Collaborate; limited additional appointments might also be available

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Course Overview & Learning Outcomes, Texts

Course Overview

Geography is one of the most wide-ranging university disciplines, with its mission to explain the interactions of the human and natural worlds to produce our modern life, with its environmental and social complexity. This course is an introduction to both physical and human geography, with topics ranging from climate change and plate tectonics to globalization, political boundaries, and world cultures. It is an introduction to the major subfields of the discipline, major patterns of natural and human activity at the global level, and major theories and techniques for thinking spatially. A special emphasis is placed on the interrelatedness of these phenomena, with topics building upon each other throughout the course.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- Identify major forces of the physical world – atmospheric, biological, and geochemical processes and the resulting distribution of biomes, weather patterns, and landscapes.
- Identify major trends in human activities such as population dynamics, migration, cultural practices, economic activities, and impacts on the environment.
- Describe how these interact and impact each other to produce complex phenomena such as globalization and climate change.
- Read maps and related spatial graphics for basic information and to make inferences and connections.
- Analyze course topics using geographic concepts such as scale and spatial process.
- Understand the breadth of geography as an academic discipline with a variety of professional applications.

Required texts:

Short, John Rennie (2017) *Human Geography: A Short Introduction*. (2nd ed) Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780190679835

PLEASE GET THE SECOND EDITION; The first edition has substantial differences.

Goode's World Atlas, 23rd Edition. It is on sale for \$19.99 on the Rand McNally website (<https://store.randmcnally.com/goodes-world-atlas-23rd-edition-paperback.html>). If the price is too high when you go to buy it, you can find used copies online, and if you have to, you can purchase a used copy of the 22nd edition. Please note, Google Maps are not an adequate replacement for an actual atlas, especially for the physical geography component.

Other required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Learning Activities and Grading

Summary

Learning Activity	% of Final Grade
Homework Quizzes	10%
Discussion Questions	20%
Map Exercises	24%
Map Quiz	5%
Exam 1	12%
Exam 2	12%
Final Exam	15%
Surveys	3%

Detailed Descriptions

Homework Quizzes

Purpose:

- Check your understanding of assigned texts and pre-recorded lectures
- Demonstrate your independent learning efforts
- Identify terms and concepts to review in our flipped-classroom sessions
- Ideally – improve your study skills and gain confidence with independent learning

Description:

- Covers specific assigned readings and pre-recorded lectures
- Mostly covers introductory terms and main ideas, with a few higher-order conceptual questions
- Up to 15 multiple-choice and/or short-answer questions

How to do it:

- Quizzes are located in Blackboard in the Course Topics folders.
- You will have two untimed tries to complete each quiz.
 - An individual “try” is simply a single submission of a completed quiz.
 - You can log into an individual try multiple times before you submit the quiz.
 - When you submit your answers, you will see which *multiple-choice* questions you got wrong, but not what the correct answer is.
 - Write your answers on paper as you go, in case of technical difficulties.
 - This means if your first try goes poorly, you can review do a second try.
 - ****Do your very best on the first try – you only get two, and if you encounter technical difficulties, you will not get a third try.****
 - If you have technical difficulties during the first try and have to re-submit, go ahead and try again. If you have technical difficulties and you have run out of tries, contact me – I will determine how to grade your quiz and help you prevent future problems.

Evaluation:

- Your top eight scores of the semester will be counted for the final quiz grade.
- LATE HOMEWORK QUIZZES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Discussion Questions

Purpose:

- Apply basic terms and concepts to a detailed example of each major course topic.
- Deeply examine an event or ongoing situation using geographic concepts such as scale, movement through space, and the creation of place.
- Practice effective discussion strategies.
- Ideally - enjoy interacting with your classmates!

Description:

- You will discuss a journalistic or other non-textbook source provided for each course topic.
- A discussion prompt will be provided to you.
- You will answer the discussion prompt and comment on at least two group members' answers.

How to do it:

- You will be assigned to a semester-long discussion group of about 10 students.
- A separate discussion board has been set up for each course topic.
- Find the link in each Course Topics folder on Blackboard.
- Create your own discussion thread with your initial answer.
- Write a response in at least two other threads.
 - Try to actually read all the initial answers of your group members.
 - You are welcome to comment within more than two threads.
 - You are welcome to respond to your classmates' responses for a deep discussion.
- You cannot erase or edit your answer once you submit it.
 - The reason for this is so we can see the original text to which someone has replied.
 - If you've made an error or want to revise your answer, just create a reply to your own posting.

Evaluation:

- See the discussion rubric and discussion tips in the Course Topics and Course Information folders.
- Pass+ (Rubric score 5) /Pass (Rubric score 4) /Fail (Rubric score 3 or below)
- Your top 8 scores will be used. Note that you *must* participate in at least 10 discussions. If not, up to two zeros will replace your passing scores (in other words, if you only participated in 8 discussions, then two of your "top eight" grades will turn into zeroes.)

Map Exercises

Purpose:

- Experience reading and interpreting a wide variety of maps illustrating course topics.
- Consider the purposes and limits of communicating with maps.
- Learn to avoid common mistakes of map reading.
- Ideally – have a great aesthetic experience and appreciate cartography as science *and art*.

Description:

- There are three map exercises during the semester.
- Each exercise has a set of 10-15 maps and up to 50 multiple-choice questions to go with each map set (*not* 50 questions for each map!).
- The map sets follow the sequence of course topics.
 - Some maps will also appear in lectures.
 - Others will be new to you - they illustrate an important event/situation, are made in particularly interesting or unusual ways, or just seem like fun maps to look at.

How to do it:

- Map exercise materials are located in the Map Exercises folder.
- Each map exercise includes a PDF of numbered map slides, a PDF of the questions, and a link with the exercise portal where you will again see the questions and enter your answers.
- Protect your work – write down your answers on a piece of paper as you go along.
- You will have two untimed tries to complete each map exercise.
 - After you submit each try, you will see which answers you got wrong but not what the correct answer is.
 - See the “two-tries” explanation for homework quizzes -the same procedures apply.
- I highly recommend completing these exercises in several work sessions – if you rush through it all at once, you are not likely to do well.
 - One strategy is to divide the maps by course topic and complete the associated questions as we introduce the topics in class.

Evaluation:

- Your highest score for each map exercise will count as your final score.
- Each map exercise is worth 8% of the final grade.
- There are usually a couple of extra-credit questions identified for each map exercise.
- You will see the correct answers and associated commentary *after the due date* (not always *immediately* after the due date).

Map Quiz

Purpose

- Learn the location of a variety of countries, cities, and physical features such as rivers and mountain ranges, with a focus on places mentioned in other class materials.
- Test your learning through a quiz at the end of the semester.
- Ideally, gain confidence in your general knowledge of the world's political & physical geography.

Description

- A comprehensive list of locations organized by continent and tested through one 40-item timed quiz at the end of the semester

How to do it

- Find the list of locations and blank practice maps in the "Map Quiz" folder on Blackboard.
- Use your atlas (*not* Google Maps!) to identify items on the list. Practice filling in the provided blank maps. Study tips are provided in the materials.
- The quiz will take place during the final exam period in a separate timed quiz portal on Blackboard, available in the Map Quiz folder.
 - Must be completed in one sitting over the course of 15-20 minutes.
 - You will see the exact copies of the practice maps, labeled with letters, and a list of 40 places to identify. This will be a subset of your practice list.
 - In the indicated place, type in the letter that corresponds to each item on the quiz list.
 - I will have a mini practice quiz in the Map Quiz folder shortly before the final exam week, so that you can become familiar with this format.
 - This is an *open book* quiz; however, you will not be successful without prior studying because it will be timed. You will not have time to look up more than a few answers.

Evaluation

- For a score of 100%, you will need to receive a score of 35 out of 40.

Exams

Purpose

- Demonstrate your knowledge of basic factual and conceptual knowledge of course material.

Description

- Each third of the course will be tested with a *timed, open-book*, exam on Blackboard.
 - You will not have adequate time to look up each answer in your course materials; please do not rely on the open book format to avoid extensive studying.
- There will be approximately 30 questions in multiple choice, short answer, and True/False format. Each student will need to explain their answer for a random sub-set of multiple choice and True/False answers in an open-response section. An additional five extra-credit questions will be available.
- A study guide will be provided ahead of time.

How to do it:

- On the exam day, open the exam portal in the Exam Materials folder on Blackboard.
- You will have immediate email and telephone access to the instructor in case of technical difficulties during the entire exam period.
 - Write down your answers on paper as you go. In case of technical difficulties, you might need to start over, using only the remainder of the allotted time.
- Make-up exams are available *only* in cases of serious, documented emergencies. They will be completed in an entirely different format – a series of oral essays recorded on VoiceThread that you will need to prepare ahead of time.

Evaluation – total correct out of total score, no curves will be taken.

Surveys & Introduction

Purpose & Description

- Check your understanding of the syllabus and course website, introduce yourself to your classmates, and provide feedback to the instructor at the end of the semester.
- Two anonymous untimed surveys (multiple choice and open answer) on Blackboard and a VoiceThread recorded introduction.

How to do it

- Find these in the Surveys folder on Blackboard. The VoiceThread will have specific instructions for how to
- You will have unlimited untimed tries to submit these items.
- The two surveys will be anonymous – I will see if you completed them but will not see your individual answers. The VoiceThread introduction will be visible to all of your classmates.
- You need to listen to the introductions of your discussion group members, but you are encouraged to listen to as many additional introductions as you can. Who knows, you might find new friends with similar academic and career interests!

Evaluation

- You will get one point on your final grade for each item completed. None of these will be graded. Yes, the percentage points in the course sum up to 103%, not 100%.

Schedules of Topics and Due Dates

Topics – Mini Schedule

Tuesday	Subject	Friday	Subject
		Aug. 28	Introduction
Sept 1	Geographic Concepts	Sept 4	Mapping
Sept 8	Weather and Climate	Sept 11	Weather and Climate

Sept 15	Climate Change	Sept 18	NO CLASS - Holiday
Sept 22	Geology	Sept 25	Geology & Disaster Geography
Sept 29	NO CLASS – Monday Schedule	Oct 2	Biogeography
Oct 6	Biogeography	Oct 9	Energy & Environment
Oct 13	EXAM 1	Oct 16	Population Dynamics
Oct 20	Population Dynamics	Oct 23	Introducing Economics
Oct 27	Food & Agriculture	Oct 30	Food & Agriculture
Nov 3	Urbanization	Nov 6	Urbanization
Nov 10	EXAM 2	Nov 13	Economic Globalization
Nov 17	Political Geography	Nov 20	Political Geography
Nov 24	Political Geography: Special Topics	Nov 25	Wednesday that follows a Friday schedule (no class Fri. 27th) Culture: Introduction
Dec 1	Religions	Dec 4	Languages
Dec 8	Catch-Up/Special Topics		
Dec 15, 9:00 – 11:00 Final Exam and Map Quiz			
Date is subject to change as per the registrar; pay attention to Blackboard announcements.			

Assignment Due Dates

Sunday Midnight	Items	Monday Midnight	Items
Sept 6	Syllabus survey	Sept 7	Recorded Introduction
Sept 13	Discussion question: Geographic Concepts and Mapping	Sept 14	HW Quiz: Weather and Climate
Sept 20	Discussion Question: Weather and Climate	Sept 21	HW Quiz: Geology
Sept 27	Discussion Question: Climate Change	Sept 28 Thurs Oct 1	HW Quiz: Biogeography
Oct 4	Discussion Question: Geology & Geohazards	Oct 5	HW Quiz: Energy & Environment <i>Map Exercise One</i>
Oct 11	Discussion Question: Biogeography	Oct 12	None –Study for Exam 1.
Thurs Oct 15	Discussion Question: Energy & Environment	Oct 19 Thurs Oct 22	HW Quiz: Introducing Economics
Oct 18 (Sun)	HW Quiz: Population Dynamics		
Oct 25	Discussion Question: Population Dynamics	Oct 26	HW Quiz: Food & Agriculture
Nov 1	Discussion Question: Food & Agriculture	Nov 2	HW Quiz: Urbanization <i>Map Exercise 2</i>
Nov 8	Discussion Question:	Nov 9	None – Study for Exam 2

	Urbanization		
Nov 15	Discussion Question: Economic Globalization	Nov 16	HW Quiz: Political Geography
Nov 22	Discussion Question: Political Geography	Nov 23	HW Quiz: Culture
Nov 29	Discussion Question: Special Topics/Cultural Geography	Nov 30	HW Quiz: Languages, Religions
Dec 6	Discussion Question: Languages and Religions	Dec 7	<i>Map Exercise 3</i>
Dec 13	Survey: Course Reflections		

Course Rules, Procedures & “Netiquette”

The Flipped Classroom and Study Time

In a “flipped classroom” course, students are responsible for studying introductory material ahead of time. The instructor does not review basic concepts unless students request them specifically. This saves precious class time for more complex topics and for in-depth discussion. It develops independent study skills that are crucial to college success. Most importantly – it allows for a more interactive, engaging, and interesting course. We will start with a more traditional approach to a lecture class and move to a more flipped-classroom format as we transition to human geography.

For each hour of lecture time, expect to spend 2-3 hours on independent study. This means you might need up to nine hours a week for reading, discussion questions, map exercises, quizzes, exam study etc. This is a standard requirement for college courses. Some students might require more or less and some weeks might be more or less heavy. This is just an estimate to help you plan your schedule.

Grading and Attendance Policies

- There are no curves and no additional extra credit assignments in this course.
- In the fall of 2020, Hunter has returned to the pre-pandemic grading rules with respect to INC and CR/NCR
 - An INC will be given only under exceptional circumstances.
 - A CR/NCR needs to be requested *prior* to the final exam.
 - Please talk to your advisors or with advisors in Student Services to see if this is the best option for you. Some professional programs and majors have their own rules about CR/NCR.
 - CR/NCR grades are available *only for those who have completed all assignments*, or at least 60% of the course content. You cannot skip map exercises or exams and then ask for CR/NCR to make up for that.
- A WU will be given to students who unofficially drop the class – that is, students who simply “disappear” from class, stop completing assignments, and do not get in touch with me before the end of the course. This can have serious consequences for financial aid. Please get in touch if you run into difficulties rather than abandon the course.

Attendance

This course is synchronous and will always meet during the assigned times. Attendance is highly encouraged but will be taken for record-keeping purposes only. In light of the ongoing pandemic, class lectures will be recorded and posted on Blackboard for people who occasionally must miss a class. If you run into consistent attendance problems, please get in touch with me immediately – I do not want anyone to end up with a WU or to fall seriously behind.

I will not review large quantities of material with students who consistently fail to attend classes but have no documented difficulties – I am happy to answer all of your questions, but I cannot conduct the equivalent of multiple classes. In a “flipped” classroom, your regular attendance is the best way to

A special note to the many freshmen in this class: I treat you as adults because you *are* adults rather than high school students. Please make wise use of this freedom and flexibility. The fact that attendance is not strictly mandatory and lectures are recorded might give you a false sense of security. I advise you to follow the schedule closely. If you miss a class, do not put off listening to the recorded lectures.

Communications

You are highly encouraged to get in touch with the instructor the moment you experience any difficulties in your course work. You are also very welcome to ask questions about the course content, geography, graduate school, and anything else I can help you with.

- Please use your Hunter email address, if you have one, to communicate with me.
- Include “Geography 101” in your subject line.
- Sign with your first and last name.
- Emails without a subject line and your name might not be answered. Instructors sometimes receive suspicious phishing, malware, and other harmful emails. We must be careful about the emails we open, so please do sign properly.
- I will make all efforts to answer emails within two business days. If you do not hear from me after three business days, please write again.

Netiquette

During live recorded lectures and while posting in discussion boards, let us observe good netiquette to create a smooth, welcoming and respectful experience.

During class time:

- Keep your microphone on mute when you are not speaking.
- Raise your hand virtually before speaking – click on the “raised hand” button at the bottom of your screen.
 - Don’t forget to lower your hand after being called on.
- If your microphone doesn’t work well, you can use the chat function in place of raising your hand.

- The chat is *not* for side conversations or sharing extraneous information. With one hundred students, a stream of chat messages can become distracting.
- You are encouraged to turn your camera on when speaking; however, this is never required.

On question discussion boards

- Conduct yourself as if you were having a live discussion in class.
- Treat your classmates the way you would want to be treated in a class discussion.
- Avoid obscene and disrespectful language.
- Think before you post- you will not be able to edit or erase your posts, just add to them.
- Ask each other clarifying questions – you might be able to avoid a misunderstanding.
- Feel free to disagree with each other – a healthy debate is welcome.
 - Make sure you are disagreeing with the *content* of your classmate’s writing, not making assumptions/comments about the person him/herself.
 - Explain why you disagree and offer an alternative view point rather than simply saying “you’re wrong.”
- I will read all discussion question threads. Also, please keep in mind anyone from our class has access to the discussion boards. However, no one outside of class has access to the boards.
 - Do not share other people’s comments together with their name/identifying information with people outside of class without their permission.
 - Be mindful of any personal information you share or receive.
- Feel free to get in touch with me if you run into difficulties and would like me to join in the discussion before the due date.

On class chat boards and the Blackboard “course room”

- We will have a discussion board set aside just for you to communicate with each other about practical matters – arranging group study sessions, asking questions, sharing interesting resources related to class topics.
 - “Subscribe” to the discussion board so that you do not miss your classmates posts.
- I will not monitor this discussion board and trust that you will use it respectfully and for class purposes. It is a resource
 - The board is visible to me. Please do not assume that I will never see what you write.
- The “course room” is always open on Blackboard Collaborate (except during exam times).
 - It works just like the class time.
 - You can log in together and talk to each other in real time.
 - Use it for group study sessions or other class-related tasks.
 - The course room is a whole-class resource; please do not set up meetings from which you exclude members of the class.
 - If you would like to have private conversations with your classmates, please exchange personal contact information rather than using the course room.

- Some of your classmates have kindly offered to set up non-Blackboard chat rooms. I will not be able to see or monitor these in any way. You are solely responsible for all your activities and the safety of your devices and personal information. I encourage you to use the Blackboard resources, which are safer from hacking etc., but it is entirely up to you.
 - In case some of your classmates do not want to share their phone numbers or join commercial chat services, please share group study session plans on the Blackboard discussion board and consider conducting those sessions in the Collaborate Course Room.

Hunter Policies

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990:

All students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation.

For information and an appointment contact the Office located in Room E1214B, or call 212-772-4857 /or VP 646-755- 3129 or contact accessability@hunter.cuny.edu

Policy on sexual harassment/misconduct: <http://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/Sexual-Misconduct.pdf>

Policy on academic integrity: <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/>