

# **Geography 101: People and their Environment, GEOG 10100 01**

**Online Synchronous**

**Class Days & Time: Mon & Wed - 3:20-6:28pm**

**Invites for Hunter College Zoom to access this class  
sent to your Hunter e-mail from Blackboard**

Instructor: Prof. Rafael A. Mutis García

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays after class on Zoom, 6:30 to 7pm

Instructor's Email: [rm5322@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:rm5322@hunter.cuny.edu)

## **Course Overview & Learning Outcomes, Texts**

### **Course Overview**

Welcome! Geography is one of the most wide-ranging university disciplines to explain the interactions of the human and the rest of the environment to produce our lives, with its environmental and social complexities. This course is an introduction to both physical and human geography, with topics ranging from climate change, plate tectonics, globalization, political borders, world cultures and their interactions. It is an introduction to the major fields within 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. We will study the long colonial history of geography, and as importantly, the recent decolonial work of the last fifty years. We will use three central concepts of feminist geography – intersectionality (Crenshaw, Collins), positionality (Haraway) and topographical analysis (Katz). **Our central question as geography students is - Why is this happening in this particular place at this particular time?**

We are here to learn/work together in a respectful virtual classroom atmosphere and this will mean that we take each other seriously with respect, regarding our cultures, languages, and all parts of our identities making up who we are.

I am a Latinx non-binary person, not tied to the male-female dichotomy, so I welcome everyone and all of your gender expressions. I prefer not to use pronouns though I recognize this is a challenge, and if you do use pronouns, you can tell us which ones you prefer at the beginning of the semester.

In addition, Hunter College has many very useful resources (see below), so please access them if you need them. If you are having difficulties with concepts or assignments in the class, please don't hesitate to talk with me during my office hours, on email, or in class. I am happy to go over any concepts that you may find challenging because I sincerely believe that education is not a competition and we are all here to learn.

### **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](mailto: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/>

**Plagiarism and cheating** will entail serious consequences, following the CUNY and Hunter College policy on academic integrity (see above). Please be responsible for your education, and do not put any of us in a situation where disciplinary action will be required. We are here to learn together and debate your critical opinions based on verifiable facts as we will be studying physical and human geographies and their interactions.

## **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:**

**Dahlman, C and W. Renwick (2014) *Introduction to Geography: People, Places, and Environment*. (6th ed) Pearson. ISBN: 9780321843333 .**

**Shakespeare Books on Lexington half a block away, has e-books that are half the price of the physical textbooks. You might also find cheaper copies in one of the on-line bookstores, but be sure it is the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, and NOT the 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. regional one. There will also be two copies in the Hunter Library Reserve Book Room, but I would only count on those as a last resort.**

Other required and supplemental readings will be posted on Blackboard. There are many great concrete articles and book excerpts to read to help you understand geography robustly. Significant labor went into this, to give you a more complete idea of geography, aka, they are great references which I will mention in class, but we do not have time to study them too deeply in our interactive lectures.

If you need help with Blackboard, the Hunter IT people are very helpful and patient, and they offer good guidance on how to use Blackboard successfully. **You MUST have your Hunter email address as your contact on Blackboard to be able to access it. Access**

to Blackboard is also crucial to be able to participate fully in this class, to communicate between classes, and to post your required assignments.

## Learning Activities and Grading -

<b>Learning Activity</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
<b>Class Discussion Participation</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Group Chapter Summaries</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Group Presentation</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Extra Credit (on final grade)</b>	<b>Up to 5%</b>

### **Expectations -**

**Class participation** - Asking questions and helping make the class lectures and readings more interactive for all of us with your participation is a helpful way to learn and to enrich our classes together. This will require that you have done the readings for the particular theme/chapter in the textbook we are all discussing that day; see the dates below. Please be brief and to the point in your comments or questions, so we can all participate, throughout the semester, as much as possible. I encourage you to participate fully in our class discussions, that means no texting, no calls (you can step out to take them) nor surfing the web during our classes. This of course also means that you attend classes, and attendance will be taken at some point for every class we meet. I will ask that you have your camera on in class. I will excuse absences for emergencies only, including if there is a conflict with your work schedules, for example.

**Discussion Group Work & Chapter Summaries Posted on Blackboard** - You will participate and post two types of required assignments in your Group Blog - two group reports (see dates below) to let us know in detail how your group is working together and progressing to the presentation of your group project, and 12 group chapter summaries throughout the semester also on given class dates listed below. This requires that you have read the chapter for that class day and that you have thought critically about it, as a group and as individuals; notice the assignment due dates, two summaries are due on the same day. This is a great opportunity to share what you learned from the readings and the lectures with your peers, and is a great way to learn from different perspectives, to get a more complete understanding of the materials, and

to have sustainable conversations on what we are all learning. And working with others is very often a great skill to have.

We will select working groups on day 1, in which you will discuss each textbook chapter with each other. Working in groups of five is a requirement of this course, and your group will then post your one-page chapter summary by 11:59pm on the due date, on Blackboard (see below). Everyone will have the same guiding questions to be able to think through and articulate critically what you learned to share with each other and the larger class. You need to address these questions in each of your posts, and write each of your names in the () next to the contributions each of you make. You also need to cite the page(s) from the book where you found the information; for example (Dalman & Renwick 2014 15 if you are writing about topography, for example). You need to back up your points with examples, this is crucial, from the textbook and from the classroom discussions. The textbook and I will give you plenty of examples to ground vocabulary and arguments.

**The due date to post your group chapter summary is the day after the chapter discussion in class (grace period) indicated below, by 11:59pm; this grace period is also so you can integrate our class discussion on that chapter theme into your blog post. So, for example, June 7 has group chapters summaries in bold, and your group chapter summaries are due the next day, June 8, and so on. Notice that there are two summaries due on June 8 and June 29, so please plan accordingly.**

**Exams** - The midterm and final exams will be cumulative, covering work we have done up to the dates that these are taken in class, and will involve thinking critically about all the themes we are learning about and discussed. The group presentation is the final exam at the end of the semester.

**Group Presentations** – Each group will present what you learned about the geographic class themes through your group discussion groups, and how these class & chapter themes apply to your group at the end of the semester in a creative and inclusive, thought-provoking 8-minute presentation. This is called applied geography. This will include what you learned about spatial thinking in this class, how you worked together as a group to understand the themes, what you found interesting and surprising about geography, and how these apply to your group and to you individually. I will give you the guiding questions in the lectures at the beginning of the semester. This presentation will also be the result of your discussion group work for the semester, and I will give you more detailed information about content and how to post these on each group's Group Blog on Blackboard in a one-page breakdown as the semester begins.

**Extra Credit** - You can earn up to five (5) points on your final grade when you briefly articulate concrete experiences (personal, neighborhood, country, or related learning ones, something you read or saw) connected to/embodies the topics we are discussing on any particular class throughout the semester. When you present, in a loud voice from your desk, give details of how it is connected to the themes we study on particular days.

These will earn you these extra credit points. This is one of the ways to get a better grade for participation, as we all apply what we learn and can articulate it.

### **Class dates, topics and assignments due dates -**

**May 31** - Introductions of each other, to the course, requirements & expectations

**June 5** - Chapter 1: Introduction to Geography

**June 7** - Chapter 2: Weather, Climate, and Climate Change; **Chapters 1 & 2 group chapters summaries due June 8th, by 11:59pm.**

**June 12** - Chapter 3: Landforms, **group chapter summary due June 13, by 11:59pm.**

**June 14** - Chapter 4: Biosphere; **first group report due; group chapter summary due June 15, by 11:59pm**

**June 19** - Chapter 12: Economy and Development; **group chapter summary due June 20, by 11:59pm**

**June 21** - Chapter 5: Earth's Resources and Environmental Protection

**June 26** - Chapter 6: Population and Migration, **group chapter summary due June 27, by 11:59pm.**

**June 28** - Chapter 7: Cultural Geography & Chapter 8: Languages and Religions; **second Group Report due; group chapters summaries due June 29, by 11:59pm**

**June 28** - Midterm Exam

**July 3** - Chapter 9: Food and Agriculture, **Chapter 9 group summary due July 5th, 11:59pm**

**July 5** - Chapter 10: Cities and Urbanization, **group chapter summary due July 6, 11:59pm**

**July 10** - Chapter 11: A World of States, **group chapter summaries due July 11, by 11:59pm.**

**July 12** - Group Presentations