

Geography 101: People and their Environments, GEOG 10100 (CN1)

Saturdays– 10am-12:30pm

North Building, Room 1028

Instructor: Prof. Rafael A. Mutis García

Office Hours: Saturdays, 12:15-1:15pm in HN1032

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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 natural worlds 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/boundaries, world cultures and their interactions. 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. We will study the long colonial history of geography, and as importantly, the recent decolonial work of the last fifty years. **Our central question as geography students will be - Why is this happening in this particular place at this particular time?**

We are here to learn together in a respectful classroom atmosphere and this will mean that we take each other seriously with respect, regarding our cultures, languages, and other 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 every one 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 a lot of very useful resources (see below), so please access them. One of the most important ones, if you need them, are tutors for geography courses, and I will give you that information at the beginning of the semester. This is in addition to talking with me during my office hours, on email, and in class. I am happy to go over any concepts that you may find challenging.

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/>

Plagiarism and cheating will entail serious consequences, following the CUNY and Hunter College rules of conduct. 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 thought-out 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 . *College Now will provide copies of the textbook for each of you, so you will be set.*

Other required and supplemental readings will be posted on Blackboard. We will go over how to use Blackboard, the College Now office will help you with this, and the Hunter IT people are very helpful and patient, and they offer good guidance in using Blackboard successfully. **You must have your Hunter email address as your contact on Blackboard.**

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

Learning Activities and Grading

<i>Learning Activity</i>	<i>% of Final Grade</i>
Class Discussion Participation	25%
Group Chapter Summaries	25%
Midterm Exam	10%
Map Quizzes	20%
Final Exam	15%
Extra Credit (on final grade)	Up to 5%

Expectations -

Class participation - Asking questions and helping make the class lectures and readings more interactive for all of us 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 discussing that day. 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 means that you attend classes, and attendance will be taken for every class we meet. I will excuse absences for emergencies only, or if there is a conflict with your high school schedules, but that should not be a problem because we meet Saturday mornings.

Discussion Groups Work & Chapter Summaries Posted on Blackboard - You will participate and post two types of required assignments in your Group Blog - two group reports to let us in detail know how your group is working together and progressing to presentation of your final project, and 8 group chapter summaries throughout the semester 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; 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.

We will select working groups on day 1, in which you will discuss each textbook chapter with each other (groups of five, and your group will then post your one-page chapter summary(ies) by 11:59pm on the due date, on Blackboard. 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. The due dates are the day after the chapter discussion in class (grace period) indicated below, by 11:59pm. So, for example, Feb 11 has discussion groups in bold, and your group chapter summary is due the next day, Feb 12 and so on.

Map Quizzes - Recognizing and being able to identify countries, regions and topographies, and our spatial relationship to each other on the planet is an important part in learning to think geographically. There will be 5 of these throughout the semester, and they will be based on the places we learn about in the textbook chapters, interactive lectures, videos and graphics we discuss throughout the semester. Our textbook has many, many maps and graphics, so studying these will be a great help. These map quizzes will be done in class, when you will identify particular places we just read about/discussed in a particular or immediately previous class, on a blank global map.

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 discussing.

Group Presentations - You will present what you learned about the class themes through your group discussion groups from the semester, and how these class & chapter themes apply to your group at the end of the semester. This will include what you learned in this class, how you worked together as a group, what you found interesting and surprising about geography, and how these apply to your group. I will give you the guiding questions in the lectures at the beginning of the semester. This will also be your discussion group 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 progresses.

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 the topics we are discussing on any particular class throughout the semester. When you present, from your desk, give details which 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 -

January 28 - Introductions of each other, to the course, requirements & expectations

February 4 - Chapter 1: Introduction to Geography

February 11 - Chapter 2: Weather, Climate, and Climate Change; **Chapters 1 & 2 group chapters summaries due Feb 12, by 11:59pm.**

February 18 - Chapter 3: Landforms, **group chapter summary due Feb 19, by 11:59pm.**

February 25 - Chapter 4: Biosphere; **first Group Report due; Map Quiz 1**

March 4 - Chapter 5: Earth's Resources and Environmental Protection; **Chapters 4 & 5 group chapters summaries due March 5, by 11:59pm.**

March 11 - Chapter 6: Population and Migration, **group chapter summary due March 12, by 11:59pm.**

March 18 - Chapter 7: Cultural Geography, group chapter summary due March 19, by 11:59pm; **Map Quiz 2**

March 28 - Chapter 8: Languages and Religions; **second Group Report due, Map Quiz 3**

April 1 - Midterm Exam

April 8 - Spring Break

April 15 - Chapter 9: Food and Agriculture, **Chapters 8 & 9 group summaries due April 16, 11:59pm; Map Quiz 4**

April 22 - Chapter 10: Cities and Urbanization, **group chapter summary due April 23, 11:59pm; Map Quiz 5**

April 29 - Chapter 11: A World of States & Chapter 12: Economy and Development, **group chapters summaries due April 30, by 11:59pm.**

May 6 - Group Presentations

May 13 - No Class: Reading Day

May 20 - Final Exam