

**GEOGRAPHY 121**

**LANDS AND PEOPLES OF THE WORLD**

**BULLETIN INFORMATION**

GEOG 121: Lands and Peoples of the World (3 credit hours)

**Course Description:**

Introduction to the physical and human geography of the world with a focus on selected regions

**SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course introduces students to diversity, inequality, and interconnectedness in the contemporary world.  In terms of diversity, this course highlights the ways that the physical environment, social and economic systems, political relationships, and historical circumstances have produced distinctive regional geographies.  In terms of interconnectedness, this course explores the ways in which global processes—world trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism, geopolitical conflict, and climate change—have integrated different world regions into a complex global system.  In terms of inequality, this course gives special attention to the way that regional and global processes intersect to produce and reinforce social and geographical inequalities.

**ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Upon successful completion of Geography 121, students will be able to:**

1. Conduct independent research and to speak in an informed manner on key issues and problems relating to global and regional transformations and inequalities.
2. Analyze diverse regional patterns and relationships between world regions using key concepts, including globalization, colonialism, development, sustainability, and neoliberalism;
3. Analyze the intersections between global and local processes and how these generate diverse patterns of resource use, inequality, and socio-political conflict in different world regions;
4. Evaluate interactions between the natural environment and human systems in different parts of the world and to discuss the potential impacts of global environmental change on particular places;
5. Analyze current events through an understanding of the complex environmental, political, economic, social, and cultural processes that shape them;
6. Conduct independent research on regional-geographical topics using academic and journalistic sources and to communicate geographical analyses of world regions and globalization to others through writing and discussion.

**SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS**

1. Rowntree, L., Lewis, M., Price, M., and Wyckoff, W. (2012). *Diversity Amid Globalization: World Regions, Environment, and Development* (5th Edition)
2. In addition to the textbook, students will be assigned a variety of supplementary articles (both academic and journalistic) that will be available on Blackboard.

**SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS**

1. **5 multiple-choice quizzes:** The five multiple-choice quizzes test students’ comprehension of textbook readings.  These quizzes will be given at the START of each section of the course, rather than at the end.  Mastering the textbook material at the start of each section will allow us to explore in depth current issues relating to specific regions.  Students will be given a set of study questions to guide their reading and to prepare for quizzes.
2. **4 short research-and-writing assignments**: Students will conduct independent, interdisciplinary research on a specific topic relating to four of the six world regions covered in the course (options for topics will be listed on Blackboard).  They will write up their findings in a short (500-600 word) discussion paper.  The paper should address the historical and geographical context of the topic at hand and why this topic is significant to the region and its people. Students should be prepared to discuss their findings in class.  Papers should be submitted on the day of the final lecture for each regional section.
3. **Final exam:** The final exam is cumulative and will include both multiple-choice and written questions based on reading, lecture, and discussion material.

**SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS**

**Week 1:**  Foundational concepts

Capitalism, industrialization, and urbanization

Colonialism, de-colonization, neo-colonialism, and core/periphery relations

Historical and contemporary globalizations

Neoliberalism and global institutions

Emerging economies

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 1

**Week 2:** Foundational concepts

\*\*QUIZ 1\*\*

Development, natural resources, and ‘sustainable development’

Population, demographic transitions, and migrations

Climate change and biodiversity

Understanding regions

Gender, race, and inequalities

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 2

**Week 3:** Europe

 \*\*QUIZ 2\*\*

Basic physical geography of Europe

Capitalism, agricultural transformations, the Industrial Revolution, urbanization, and demographic transition

Liberal democracy, the nation-state system and nationalism

Imperialism

The Cold War, the European Union, and European integration

Contemporary ethno-national conflict

Post-industrial cities

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 3

**Week 4:** Europe

Special Topic 1: Immigration

Special Topic 2: The Euro Zone Crisis

Reading: 2 non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard

**Week 5:**  Latin America

\*\*QUIZ 3\*\*

Basic physical geography of Latin America

The Columbian Exchange and demographic collapse

Colonial production and labor systems

European/American neo-colonialism

Demographic changes and urbanization

Racial hierarchies and social inequalities

Import Substitution Industrialization and export dependency

Structural adjustment and neo-liberalism

Deforestation and related environmental issues

Emigration

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 4

**Week 6:** Latin America

Special Topic 1: The ‘war on drugs’

Special Topic 2:  Agricultural export industries and environmental degradation

Reading: 2 non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard

**Week 7:** Southwest Asia and North Africa

\*\*QUIZ 4\*\*

Basic physical geography of SW Asia and North Africa

Islamic empires and Islamic cities/ European/Islamic encounters

Western colonialism

Oil and geopolitics

Modern industry and urbanization

Terrorism, geopolitics, and the Gulf Wars

The Arab Spring

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 5

**Week 8:**   Southwest Asia and North Africa

Special topic: Israel and Palestine

Special topic: Water resource politics

Reading: Two non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard.

**Week 9:** Sub-Saharan Africa

\*\*QUIZ 5\*\*

Basic physical geography of Sub-Saharan Africa

African trading empires

The slave trade and European colonialism

Urbanization and ‘development’ in post-colonial Africa

Apartheid in South Africa

Export-oriented agricultural production, resource extraction, and Chinese investment

Contemporary environmental problems

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 6

**Week 10:**  Sub-Saharan Africa

Special topic 1: South Sudan

Special Topic 2: AIDS politics in Africa

Reading: Two non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard

**Week 11:** East Asia

East Asia overview:

Basic physical geography of East Asia

Rice and wheat agricultural systems

Western colonialism

Post-War communist regimes and the one-child policy

Post-War industrialization and the rise of the Asian Tigers

China’s transition to state capitalism

Chinese urbanization

Migration

Environmental degradation

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 7

**Week 12:** East Asia

Special Topic One: Environmental change in Mongolia

Special Topic Two: Tibet and the Tibetan diaspora

Reading: Two non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard

**Week 13:**  South Asia

Basic physical geography of South Asia

Sacred landscapes of Hinduism

The East India Company and British colonialism in India, Burma, and ‘Ceylon’

The post-independence partition of India

The Green Revolution

Climate change and the fate of Bangladesh

Demographic transitions?

The geopolitics of Kashmir

Reading: Textbook, Chapter 8

**Week 14:** South Asia

Special Topic: India’s high-tech economy and outsourcing industry

Special Topic: The Indian Diaspora

Reading: Two non-textbook readings posted on Blackboard

**Week 15:** Summary and Review

**Final Exam according to University exam schedule**