

**GEO 140 CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY, Fall 2009**  
**Shippensburg University: Geography & Earth-Science Department**

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## **WELCOME TO GEOGRAPHY 140**

This course will introduce you to a range of concepts, processes, tools, and perspectives that will allow you to investigate, analyze, question, and describe the diverse natures of human activity and processes across the United States and the World. Our approach will be to focus on general cultural and human processes on the one hand, and, the ways in which such processes work in specific places on the other. We will look at many contemporary and historical issues from a spatial perspective, including: politics, population processes, landscape, language, religion, human/environment dynamics, agriculture, diffusion, ethnicity, gender, urban dynamics, economic development ..... and many others.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

**CLASS TIME** will consist primarily of elaborations of important concepts, themes, and processes through applied examples, discussion and case studies. I *will not* be re-reading the textbook to you from the front of the classroom. Therefore, if you miss class you will often miss material that is not covered in the text and you will have little chance to score well on the exams. Frequently, we will discuss current events in class.

The **READINGS** for this course come from the text, Contemporary Human Geography (1e), by James Rubenstein which is available at the SU Bookstore (as well as on-line booksellers). Additional readings / materials will be assigned from the World Wide Web or handed out in class. *You will need to have access to an Internet-connected computer to take this course.*

I strongly suggest that **you take notes on what you read**: this will aid you in your preparation exams and help you with your in-class and out-of-class projects. As you are reading your textbook and other materials throughout the semester, I encourage you to come visit me as questions come up or if there are particular topics that you want to discuss in more detail. The first thing I will ask you, however, is to see your notes on what you have read. Taking notes on what you read does at least two things: (a) it organizes the important points from the text for you, making studying easier; and, b) it provides a starting point for our discussions if you come to office hours. I have found that students that take notes both in lecture and on the readings score much better on the exams.

**IN CLASS PROJECTS (15% of your grade).** From time to time we will be working on short in-class projects (often you will need to bring them home to finish them up). You must be in class on the day the project is handed out/completed to receive credit. I will drop one exercise during the semester – after that you will be losing points. I strongly suggest you save your miss for when you are sick or have an emergency.

**THREE (3) SHORT ANALYSIS PROJECTS (25% of your grade)** will be assigned during the semester to provide you with an opportunity apply concepts that we have discussed in class and/or read about. Individual projects are graded on a 0 (unacceptable) to 10 (exceptional) basis. In total, your performance on the projects will comprise 25% of your final course grade. I expect your work on the projects to be creative, thoughtful, complete, and timely, but I also expect you have fun with them. Unless otherwise noted, all projects must be completed individually. Please take these exercises seriously— I do. **PROJECTS ARE DUE, AND WILL BE COLLECTED, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE ASSIGNED DUE DATE. ALL PROJECTS NOT TURNED IN AT THAT TIME ARE CONSIDERED LATE AND WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO.** If you will be absent on a “due date”, make sure that you either turn in your project

early or give it to a friend to turn in for you.

**THREE (3) EXAMS** will be given during the semester and your average performance on these exams will comprise 60% of your final course grade. Exams will be administered during class time, except for the third, which will be given at the appropriate time during the University's final exam period. The exams (including the third) are not specifically cumulative; that is, while I will not directly include material covered on an earlier exam on a later exam, I will expect that you are familiar with the concepts and ideas previously covered. Exams will cover material from the lectures and readings (our text and supplementary readings), as well as relevant material from the projects. Exams will contain multiple choice questions as well as true/false, maps, matching, and other types of questions as well. I often include "slide questions" on my exams, where I show you an image that relates to something that we have discussed and ask you questions about it. There are no make-ups for exams. If an exam is missed due to a University closure (for weather or other reasons), the exam will be administered during the *first class period after the closure – so come prepared.*

**ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE.** Attendance is required. My analyses of student grades in the past have shown that there is a strong positive correlation between attendance levels and course grades – in short, if you do not come to class, you will be very likely to fail this course. From time to time, I will be collecting information on attendance. Students who miss classes and/or have poor attendance records will (a) lose points on in-class assignments; (b) not receive the benefit of the doubt on individual exams, projects; and, (c) may receive reductions on their final course grades (up to and including "F") at my discretion. If things come up that are affecting or will affect your attendance, **SEE ME RIGHT AWAY – DO NOT WAIT.**

Disruptive behavior of any form will not be tolerated and will result in severe course grade reductions and/or expulsion from the course. I **DO** expect you to participate in this class and to have fun; I simply ask that you do so in a thoughtful, respectful, and inclusive way at appropriate times.

## GRADING SUMMARY

### ***Final grades will be calculated as follows:***

Average on exams	60%
Analysis projects	25%
In-class projects	15%
Base Grade	100%
Adjustment (+ or -)*	(+) or (-)

#### ***Total Score***

\*at my discretion based upon attendance / classroom performance

### ***Final Course Grade Assignment:***

A	93+	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	70-76
B+	87-89	D	60-69
B	83-86	F	< 60
B-	80-82	F	Failure to complete all requirements

## IMPORTANT NOTES AND REMINDERS

**1.** For your privacy, I *do not* discuss grades over the telephone or via E-mail, so please do not ask. I do not respond to calls or e-mail on this subject. Your grades for various components of the course will be posted on Blackboard as they are available.

**2.** If any due date (e.g., exam, project, etc.) is missed due to a University closure (for weather or other reasons), the *activity will be due / made-up during the first class period after the closure – so come prepared.* Please note that I do not decide whether the University is open for classes or not. **ONLY** the President's office makes such decisions, and class will or will not be held on the basis of the President's decision. Information regarding closures or schedule changes is available at 477-1200.

**3.** I expect your work in all facets of this course to adhere to University and Geography Earth-Science Department standards of academic honesty. If you are unfamiliar with University policies regarding such matters, please review your University catalog. If you have any questions, please ask me. Each assignment and all other work that you submit must be signed and dated on the top of the first page by you to certify that: (a) the work that you have submitted is your own; (b) that you understand both

course and Shippensburg University's policies regarding academic honesty; and, (c) that your work is not in violation of these rules. **Your work will not be accepted without these signatures.**

4. When turning in your projects in this course, please note the following general directions. Work that does not conform to these guidelines *will not be accepted* and will receive a zero:

- a) Projects **will be collected at the beginning of class**;
- b) All written work **must be typed**, unless otherwise directed;
- c) All work that includes multiple pages **must be stapled** before you get to class. *Do not waste money on report covers* – A simple staple is perfect;
- d) Projects **will not be accepted after the due** date unless you have my *prior* approval.

5. There will be no make-up exams, projects, etc. unless you have my prior approval. If I approve a make-up for you, it will be administered prior to the main exam time. The format of make-up exams is at my discretion, and may differ significantly from the exam the rest of the class takes. In all cases, prior approval means that you have spoken with me in person, and that I have approved your request. It does not mean a message left on my answering machine or an e-mail. You may be required to obtain additional documentation from the Dean of Arts and Sciences at my discretion.

6. The use of cell phones, iPods, etc. during class is disruptive to everyone. These items must be switched off prior to class, **PUT AWAY OFF YOUR DESK**, and may not be used for any purpose during our class period. You will receive a ½ letter grade reduction in your final course grade without warning for each instance you I see your phone/iPod/other device.

7. Certain accommodations can be made for intercollegiate athletes and those students with documented disabilities (who need accommodations to be made). **PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES** so that we can discuss your situation and make arrangements that fit your personal needs:

- a. Schedule an appointment with me ..... and, in preparation for our meeting, please:
- b. *Write* down some suggestions that will allow us to structure a way for you to: maximize your class participation; complete the readings, assignments, and examinations to the best of your ability and in a comfortable way; and/or attend to any other issues that are relevant in your particular case.
- c. Keep me posted during the semester at regular intervals.

8. If you expect to be absent during the semester for the observance of *specific religious holidays*, please provide me, in writing (not by e-mail or phone), with the dates on which you will be absent **BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES.**

9. We all know special circumstances arise in all of our lives. If issues come up that you believe will impact your performance in the course PLEASE, PLEASE, come to see me as soon as possible. IF we talk early, there are often things we can do to work through those issues. If you wait until the end of the semester, there will be little I can do to help.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is a list of important dates for exams and projects. Please remember that if one of these dates is missed because of University closure, the exam or project will be held/due the next time the class meets. If any changes to these dates are needed, they will be announced in class. In class projects will be handed out as we reach appropriate points in the material.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
Project #1	Tuesday September 15
Exam #1	Thursday October 1
Project #2	Tuesday October 20
Exam #2	Tuesday November 10
Project #3	Tuesday November 17
Exam #3	<i>Finals Week – See University Schedule</i>

<b><u>READING LIST</u></b>			
The readings below refer to the Rubenstein text. Because I prefer to move “at our own pace” I will announce the timing of readings in class. This list is subject to change, and any changes will be announced in class.			
<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>		<b><u>BEGIN</u></b>	<b><u>END</u></b>
<b><i>Introduction</i></b>	(1)	p.2	End of Chapter 1
<b><i>Population</i></b>	(2)	p.26	End of Chapter 2
<b><i>Migration</i></b>	(3)	P.50	End of Chapter 3
<b>EXAM #1</b>			
<b><i>Agriculture</i></b>	(1)	p. 218	End of Chapter 10
<b><i>Folk &amp; Popular Culture</i></b>	(2)	p. 74	End of Chapter 4
<b><i>Language</i></b>	(3)	p.98	End of Chapter 5
<b><i>Religion</i></b>	(4)	p.122	End of chapter 6
<b>EXAM #2</b>			
<b><i>Ethnicity</i></b>	(1)	p.146	End of Chapter 7
<b><i>Political Geography</i></b>	(2)	p. 170	End of Chapter 8
<b><i>Urban Patterns</i></b>	(3)	p.290	End of Chapter 13
<b><i>Resource Issues</i></b>	(4)	p. 314	End of Chapter 14
<b>EXAM #3</b>			

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this syllabus and understand the course requirements including, among others:

- a) Requirement for attendance;
- b) Requirement for academic honesty;
- c) Requirement for acceptable projects (stapled, typed, handed in at beginning of class, etc);
- d) Requirement to take all exams at the required date and time;
- e) Requirement to switch off and put away cell phones, iPods, etc. every class;
- f) Plan for making up work due to University closure;

I understand the grading scheme of the course and how my failure to follow course guideline may affect my grades for individual items and my final course grade. I also realize that should I have any questions about the course syllabus I may ask my Professor for clarification.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_