**GEOG202 Introduction to Human Geography**

**Professor:** Laixiang SUN (email: LSun123@umd.edu; phone 301 405 8131; office hours: after class, Mondays 4.00 – 5.00pm or by appointment).

**Teaching Assistant**: Yuhao Wang (email: yhwang20@terpmail.umd.edu)

**Time and Place**: Lectures on Monday & Wednesday 3:00pm-3:50pm (LEF 2205)

Discussion Sessions on Thursday and Friday:

Section 0101 at 01:00pm - 01:50pm on Friday (LEF 1201)

Section 0102 at 11:00am - 11:50am on Thursday (LEF 1201)

Section 0103 at 12:00pm - 12:50pm on Friday (LEF 1220)

Section 0104 at 02:00pm - 02:50pm on Friday (LEF 1220)

**Course Description**

This course provides a general introduction to Human Geography, the study of the spatial and material characteristics of people and human-altered environments. The course looks at the foundational theories and concepts of human geography and its subfields, including economic geography, urban geography, and political ecology. We focus on the analysis of the relationship between society, place and space, while also exploring some tools and techniques used by geographers, including cartography, data visualization, and other forms of spatial data analysis. The central concern of the analysis is on social, economic, political, cultural and human-environment processes and patterns and how they change over space and time.

**Learning objectives**

After successfully completing this course you will be able to:

1. Recognize the significance of geographic concepts for understanding human-environment interactions and socio-ecological processes;
2. Analyze how societies organize themselves in space, the ways people interact with and alter their physical environments, and how places of meaning are constructed by human experiences in particular locations;
3. Relate course content to current geographical trends in human-environment processes and identify likely outcomes for societies and the physical landscapes they inhabit; and
4. Strengthen skills in constructing clear, logical, and persuasive written arguments on central course themes, well-supported by evidence.

**Textbooks**

1) Required:Dorrell, D.; Henderson, J.; Lindley, T.; Connor, G. (2019), ***Introduction to Human Geography*** (2nd Edition). Open Textbooks. University of North Georgia Press. Free download at: <https://opentext.wsu.edu/introtohumangeography/>.

2) Recommended: Graves, Steven M. (2021), **Introduction to Human Geography: A Disciplinary Approach. 3rd Edition**. Free download at: <https://sites.google.com/site/gravesgeography/>.

3) Recommended: Rubenstein, James M. (2020) ***Contemporary Human Geography*** (4th Edition). Pearson.

**Course Format**

***Lectures***: We will discuss basic concepts and themes, and describe historical case studies and explore current events. The syllabus table at the end of this document outlines the dates and topics of the in-class lectures. The majority of the course materials (lectures), quizzes, paper assignments will center on the two open textbooks. The handouts of lecture PPT are available at the course website at elms.umd.edu.

***Discussion Sessions***: Students are required to post a brief comment (2-3 paragraphs) and 2 type-written discussion questions derived from the lecture content of the week. These comments should not be summaries of the contents, but instead should reflect your thoughts, criticisms, praise of the ideas discussed in the two lectures. These should be posted on the discussion board of the course website at elms.umd.edu. In addition, ***each student will be assigned to lead discussions on a specific week***. The discussion leaders must provide a typed overview of the main points discussed during the week, summarize the main arguments, and stimulate discussion. In this way, we expect our students to develop the essential art of scholarship in terms of “respectful critique,” i.e., to appreciate the strengths and identify the weakness of existing literature.

***Office hours***: Please visit your TA and me if you need help to solve problems in the learning process. Many students come right before an assignment is due or the day before the exam, which is a poor strategy for success. Please note that this class will build upon earlier concepts and information, if you fall behind, it will be difficult to “catch up.”

**Assessment and Grades**

There will be a mid-term exam during the semester and a final exam. These will test all material covered in class. There will be no extra credit assignments.

* ***Exams:***There will be a mid-term exam worth 20% and a final exam worth 30% of your final grade. The exam questions will be based on course readings and other lecture material, so class attendance is important in order to do well on the exam. In the event of an illness or emergency (which must be documented) an oral or written make-up exam will be held. If you are late to class on the day of the midterm or final exam, you will receive a zero grade. The dates for both exams will be provided well in advance.
* ***Pop quizzes:***There will be a number of pop quizzes accounting for 10% of your final grade. In the event of an illness or emergency (which must be documented) a make-up quiz will be held.
* ***Attendance & Performance in Discussion Sessions:***(a)Full attendance and active discussions in the discussion sessions account for 8% of your final grade; and (b) the performance as a discussion leader accounts for 8% of your final grade.
* ***Written essay:***You will have to submit one written essay (maximum 1500 words) worth 24% of your final grade.
* ***Attendance and Class Participation:*** Attendance and participation in class discussions are a requirement and an integral part of the work for the course. A significant portion of exam questions will come from materials presented in lectures and discussion sessions. Therefore, attending class will be important in helping you do well in the course. For more on the University of Maryland’s attendance policy and policy on medically necessitated absences from class, please see <https://faculty.umd.edu/main/activity/teaching-policies-guidelines#students>.

**Grading Scale**

All assignments will be given a numerical grade on a 100-point scale. At the end of the semester, your overall numerical grade will be calculated, based on your grades for and the relative weights of the assignments and then converted to a letter grade using the following scale.

The University’s marking system defining the standards for letter grades is as follows:

A+, A, A- denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship

B+, B, B- denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship

C+, C, C- denotes acceptable mastery of the subject

D+, D, D- denotes borderline understanding of the subject, marginal performance, and it does not represent satisfactory progress toward a degree

F denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance

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| --- | --- |
| Numerical grade (*n*) |  Letter Grade |
| 96 |  ≤ *n* ≤ | 100 | A+ |
| 93  |  ≤ *n* < | 96 | A |
| 90 |  ≤ *n* < | 93  | A- |
| 86  |  ≤ *n* < | 90 | B+ |
| 83  |  ≤ *n* < | 86  | B |
| 80 |  ≤ *n* < | 83  | B- |
| 76  |  ≤ *n* < | 80 | C+ |
| 73  |  ≤ *n* < | 76  | C |
| 70 |  ≤ *n* < | 73  | C- |
| 66  |  ≤ *n* < | 70 | D+ |
| 63  |  ≤ *n* < | 66  | D |
| 60 |  ≤ *n* < | 63  | D- |
| 0 |  ≤ *n* < | 60 | F |

All grades will be determined by the above method.

**Medically Necessitated Absences from Class**

For a medically necessitated absence from a single lecture, students may submit a self-signed note to their instructor. Such documentation shall be honored as an excused absence unless the absence coincides with a Major Scheduled Grading Event. Any student who wishes to be excused for an absence from a single lecture due to a medically necessitated absence shall: (1) Make a reasonable attempt to inform the instructor of his/her illness prior to the class; and, (2) Upon returning to class, present their instructor with a self-signed note attesting to the date of their illness. This note must be submitted to the instructor as soon as the student returns to class following an absence. Each note must also contain an acknowledgment by the student that the information provided is true and correct. Providing false information to University officials is prohibited under Part 9 (h) of the Code of Student Conduct (V-1.00(B) UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT) and may result in disciplinary action.

Students who experience more than two non-consecutive medically necessitated absences, a prolonged absence(s) of consecutive lectures, or an **illness during a Major Scheduled Grading Event** as identified in writing by the class instructor shall be **required to provide written documentation of the illness** from the Health Center or from an outside health care provider. In cases where written verification is provided, the Health Center or outside health care provider shall verify dates of treatment and indicate the time frame that the student was unable to meet academic responsibilities. No diagnostic information shall be given. For more information on the University’s policy on medically necessitated absences from class can be found at <https://faculty.umd.edu/main/activity/teaching-policies-guidelines#students>.

**Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism is the use of another person’s work as if it was your own. For more technical definitions of plagiarism see <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-integrity-student-conduct-codes/>. If I believe that there has been plagiarism on an assignment, I will inform you of my determination and you will receive a zero for the assignment. Cases will be referred to the Student Conduct Office. Remember that on each assignment you must write and sign the honor pledge. “I have neither given nor received any unauthorized help on this assignment.”

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you have disabilities, learning or otherwise, you should visit the Disability Support Office to fill out appropriate forms that will tell me what accommodations to make. These may include testing formats, class participation difficulties, and paper writing. I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form which has been updated for the Fall 2011. This form must be presented to me no later than October 1, 2012. I am not able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide me with documentation which has been reviewed by DSS after October 1, 2012.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Cell phones (including text messaging) cannot be used while you are in the classroom. All music playing devices must be turned off and earphones must be removed during class. Computers are not to be used for non class-related purposes during class time. If it becomes obvious that you are using your phone or your computer for non class-related purposes, you will be asked to shut it off and put it away. Failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the class.

**Honor Code**

The University has a nationally recognized Honor Code administered by the Student Honor Council (<https://studentconduct.umd.edu/you/students/honor-pledge>). **Unless you are specifically advised to the contrary, the Pledge statement should be handwritten and signed on the front cover of all papers, projects, or other academic assignments submitted for evaluation in this course.** Students who fail to write and sign the Pledge will be asked to confer with the instructor.

**Student Feedback on Course Experiences**

Your participation in the evaluation of courses through <https://courseexp.umd.edu/> is a responsibility you hold as a student member of our academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University as well as to the tenure and promotion process. I will announce when the site will be open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses, then please go directly to the website (<https://courseexp.umd.edu/>) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

**Course Outline & Schedule**

| **Week of** | **Topics** | **Key Reading** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 08/28 | Introductions to geographyPopulation and health | Chap 1 of textbook (1) & (2)Chap 2 of (1); Chap 4 of (2) |
| 09/04 | Population and health | Chap 2 of (1); Chap 4 of (2) |
| 09/11 | Migration | Chap 3 of (1) |
| 09/18 | Folk culture and popular culture | Chap 4 of (1); Chap 2 of (2) |
| 09/25 | The geography of language | Chap 5 of (1); Chap 5 of (2) |
| 10/02 | Religion | Chap 6 of (1); Chap 6 of (2) |
| 10/09 | Ethnicity and race***Mid-term Exam*** | Chap 7 of (1); Chap 9 of (2) |
| 10/16 | Political geography***Handout essay assignment*** | Chap 8 of (1); Chap 7 of (2) |
| 10/23 | Development and wealth | Chap 9 of (1) |
| 10/30 | Agriculture and food | Chap 10 of (1); Chap 3 of (2) |
| 11/06 | Industry | Chap 11 of (1); Chap 12 of (2) |
| 11/13 | Human settlements***Submit assignment paper on ELMS*** | Chap 12 of (1); Chap 11 of (2) |
| 11/20 | (Thanksgiving holiday, no lecture) |  |
| 11/27 | Environment and resources | Chap 13 of (1) |
| 12/04 | Final review |  |
| **12/15** | **Final Exam at 1:30-3:30pm** |  |