

SPRING 2017
GEO 2000: INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY
F 1:00 - 2:50 PM, GC # 279A

Course Homepage: <http://online.fiu.edu>

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Course Description:

Do we have to decide between the environment and the economy?
What role do I/we play in the health (sustainability) of these systems?
How do my actions affect/impact these systems?

Many scientific models predict that the ocean will rise 6 feet by the end of this century, a fact that is constantly repeated by the media –almost on a daily basis. That would mean most of Miami (and South Florida) would be partially underwater in a few decades. What will the path to that time look like? In what year will flooding become excessively difficult to drain? In what year will the sea water infiltrate the drinking water, the foundation of life? These are critical questions that need to be understood for a metropolitan area of 6 million people (and constantly-growing): we cannot make long-term financial investments without a clear vision of the area’s future.

In this course we will explore the major concepts of Geography that we have introduced in this example of Miami. Each topic that we will cover is one of many areas in this field and we will be synthesizing them to build an understanding of our world. You will be introduced to some tools for geographical exploration that range from searching for information to critically processing it using real-world examples. You will be challenged to critically reflect upon the way human society shapes and is shaped by the physical world using ‘real world’ case studies.

Learning Goals:

- Develop a foundational understanding of the discipline of Geography including key concepts and areas of research, and how to apply them in our daily life for the benefit of the human and ecological systems: Geography is the interactions of humans and the environment.
- Geography is an interdisciplinary (holistic) field and plays a major role in our life (and future career). If it’s happening on Earth, its geography!
- Human and ecological systems are intertwined and every action in one system will have an impact on the others. “For every action, there’s a reaction...”
- To be aware of the effects/impacts of our actions on the Earth systems attuned with principles of sustainability.

- To be more interested and be ready for the many challenges that we face in the 21st century, and be active participants in the solution of these issues.
- Apply our own experience to the field of Geography as a foundation for absorbing and internalizing its content. Understand that we are all born geographers! Moreover, as educated individuals, we need to be keen critics of the information that we receive.

Hybrid Format/Blackboard:

This course is being conducted in a “hybrid format”; that is, a combination of in-class lectures and outside-of-class, online assignments. **We will meet once a week in class. The other part of the class will be fulfilled through online assignments, which are due on Thursday nights.** In addition to the obvious difference, **the hybrid format puts a lot more on the shoulders of the student.** This has both advantages and disadvantages. The main advantage is greater flexibility in setting your schedule. The main disadvantage is that it requires more advance planning and covers more material than the traditional format. The hybrid course often requires more work by the students because so much of the material is presented outside the classroom, and the student must take the initiative to find and learn it. Make sure to **follow the syllabus, plan ahead, and complete the online coursework by the deadlines.**

Because of the heavy online component in this class, you must have access to a computer and internet connection to complete this class without major difficulties. Class notes or other materials will be posted on the course website: Blackboard (<https://online.fiu.edu/>). There are many computer terminals at the FIU libraries and other locations on all our campuses if you do not have a reliable computer at home. A computer malfunction, unless it is a problem with Blackboard itself, is not a legitimate excuse for missing an assignment or reading. **Everything you need to know about the course and all the online materials and readings, except for the textbook listed below, will be accessible from Blackboard.** Messaging (course emails), discussions, submission of exercises, and grade tracking will all be done through this password-protected website. **Please do not hesitate to contact the professor if you have questions or problems accessing course materials.**

Textbook

Getis, A, Getis, J. and J. Fellmann. 2009. *Introduction to geography*. 12th edition. New York: McGraw Hill.

Expectations of this Course

This course will be conducted both in-class and online. Expectations for performance this course are the same as for a traditional class. In fact, this course requires a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students. When you sign up for this course, you are expected to be sufficiently computer savvy to keep your computer in a condition that can well support the software used in this course. You are responsible for having access to a well-functioning computer. This is of utmost importance, especially with regards to the online assignments.

If you are not sufficiently computer savvy to meet these conditions, or do not have access to a good computer, you may wish to reconsider taking this course. **You must take the Syllabus Quiz in order to**

have access to the course materials available in the course webpage (Blackboard), and to make sure you know how the process works and to make sure that your computer is compatible with FIU's Blackboard system.

Students are expected to:

- Take the Syllabus Quiz. Students will not be allowed to access the course until they take this quiz and pass it with a perfect score.
- Interact online with the instructor and peers, and keep up with all assignments.
- Review and follow the course calendar.
- Log in to the course at least three times per week.
- Respond to discussion questions and posting within two days.
- Respond to emails/messages within two days.
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- Log in to the course twice per week.
- Respond to discussion questions and postings within one week (except on weekends or holidays).
- Respond to emails/messages within three days (except on weekends or holidays).
- Grade assignments within two weeks of the assignment deadline unless otherwise noted.

Requirements:

- **Read the assigned chapters and/or articles before coming to class.** Assignments from the textbook and videos are listed below for each class session. The lectures will often presume knowledge that the textbook provides.
- **Attend class meetings and participate actively with your assigned team.** You are expected to attend class and participate individually and with your assigned team. There will be no role call; it is your responsibility to submit all in-class assignments before leaving the classroom. Please, **don't be late for class.**
- **Reading comprehension quizzes.** Each week we will start the class by giving a reading comprehension quiz. The quizzes will be based on the weekly assigned readings. These will be given at the beginning of each class. Students that arrive 5 minutes late to class will not be allowed to take the quiz. **There are no make-ups for the reading comprehension quizzes; no exceptions.**
- **Reflection Essays.** Read and composed the assigned chapters/articles/videos summary no later than the following Thursday after each class meeting. **There are no make-ups for the reflection essays.** A detail timetable for each essay can be found in the Course Schedule section. **Students must compose a 1-2 page reflection essay of at least 500 words, highlighting the most important aspects of topic covered in class. The word count does not include the student's name, PID, date, title of the essay, or the required Bibliography/References/Works Cited section. Students must upload their work to the plagiarism detection website Turnitin.com before the deadline (Thursday's at 11:00 PM). No late work will be accepted.** There will be a total of six reflection essays; the lowest grade will be dropped.
- **Exercises.** There will be 2 exercises related to the topics discussed during a specific week, which require you to apply concepts learned in class. Each exercise will consist of three sections, including a table, map, an analysis of the information provided, and a

Bibliography/References/Works Cited section. Your exercises must be uploaded to the plagiarism detection website Turnitin.com by the due date (see Important Dates and Course Schedule for specific due dates). **Any exercise that has been plagiarized will result in a failing grade in the class. Works that are submitted late will be accepted but will receive a 10-point discount for each day they are late. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER ONE WEEK OF THE DUE DATES.**

- We will have three **exams** (non-cumulative). The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions, map knowledge questions (locations of countries), and, one or two essay questions.

Grading

- Summary Essays (5 @ 2% each) 10%
- Reading comprehension quizzes (10 @ 1% each) 10%
- In-Class Activities 20%
- Exercises (2 @ 20% each) 40%
- Exams (3 @ 6.67% each) 20%
- TOTAL 100%**

LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE	LETTER GRADE	RANGE
A	95 or above	B-	80-82	F	59 or less
A-	90 - 94	C+	77 - 79		
B+	87 - 89	C	70 - 76		
B	83 - 86	D	60 - 69		

Class participation:

It is expected that interactive learning and teaching will enrich the learning experience of all students, and that each student will work in partnership with your assigned group and the professor to create a positive learning experience for all. Student engagement is a necessary condition for an effective learning experience, and includes contributions to debate and discussion, positive interactive learning with others, and an enthusiastic attitude towards inquiry. Everyone is expected to be a positive contributor to the class learning community, and students are expected to share the responsibility of teaching each other.

Every student must respect the right of everyone to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students must adhere to a standard of academic conduct, demonstrating respect for themselves, their fellow classmates, and the educational mission of the University.

Class conduct:

Students and instructor in this class are bound by Florida International University policies on conduct and academic rights and freedoms. Please make sure that you are familiar with the rules and regulations of our campus community.

In order to ensure a positive learning environment, the following behaviors are unacceptable:

- talking out of turn
- carrying out side conversations in class
- chronic tardiness/early departures
- sleeping, reading non-class material
- internet cruising/email/text messaging

Important note on Written Assignments, Turnitin.com, and Plagiarism

All written assignments must conform to the following formatting - Technical Aspects: 12-point font (Arial, Times New Roman, Garamond, or Book Antiqua), one-inch margins all around, double-spaced, and number the pages. **Any written assignment that does not include ALL the required technical aspects will receive a 10-point deduction in their grade.**

All written assignments must be uploaded to the plagiarism detection system Turnitin.com. Please note that we have set up the Turnitin.com system so students will be allowed to submit their draft work as many times as they wish until the deadline. This is done so you can review the Originality report generated by Turnitin.com and make any adjustments or improvements so no portion of your work is considered plagiarized. A link to all assignment will be available in the Assignment Dropbox section of the course website.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any assignments that have been plagiarized will earn an automatic failure grade in the course. Your work must be your own, original thoughts. If you plagiarize your thoughts from a website, journal, or any other source, not only you will be sad because you cannot write the small number of words of your own, but, as mentioned above, you will earn a failing grade in our class.

Plagiarism is cheating. Don't do it. The disciplinary action that will be taken in the case of plagiarism is explained in the section on "Academic Misconduct" in the *Student Handbook*. **If you are uncertain about what plagiarism is, check out the FIU website:** <http://library.fiu.edu/assistance/plagiarism>.

Make-ups:

There are no make-ups for the summary essays or the reading comprehension quizzes. No late exercises will be accepted after one week of the deadlines. All make-up exams (Exam # 1 and Exam # 2) will be given on the day we have Exam # 3 (April 21). **No make-ups will be given for the last exam (Exam # 3); NO EXCEPTIONS.**

No make-ups exams will be given without a verified excuse. Should an exam be missed you must contact me within 24 hours of the missed exam. You will not be able to make-up the exam without verified documentation. Absolutely NO make-up exams without either, 1) a note from a doctor that a student was incapable of attending for medical reasons or 2) documentation of a death in the immediate family. Flat tires, conflicts with work or travel, etc. are not valid reasons for missing an exam and do not qualify for make ups.

Class communication:

This is a large lecture class and it is important to establish a protocol for student-instructor interaction in order for you to receive timely advice. For questions you can contact the instructor or teaching assistants. You are welcome to communicate through email or to visit us by previously setting an appointment. To make sure that your email does not get buried in the pile of other emails I usually receive, **on your subject line, please write: "GEO 2000:" to precede your email purpose.** I will respond to inquiries within 24-48 hours.

Cell phones must be off during class. No talking on the phone or texting. Laptop use is permitted for note-taking ONLY; violating the laptop policy means that you will not be allowed to use your laptop in class.

Please let the instructor know if you have any special needs. If you have a disability and need assistance, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Upon contact, the DRC will review your request and contact your professors or other personnel to make arrangements for appropriate modification and/or assistance.

Important Dates

EXAM # 1: Friday, February 17.

EXAM # 2: Friday, March 31.

EXAM # 3: Friday, April 21.

EXERCISE # 1: Thursday, March 23.

EXERCISE # 2: Thursday, April 13.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 1: Thursday, January 26.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 2: Thursday, February 2.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 3: Thursday, February 9.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 4: Thursday, February 23.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 5: Thursday, March 2.

REFLECTION ESSAY # 6: Thursday, April 6.

LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH A DR/WI GRADE: Monday, March 20.

Weekly outline (subject to change)

Week # 1 (Jan. 9-13): Introduction

Off-class/Online (Jan. 9 –20): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 1: Syllabus Quiz

In-class (Jan. 13): Course Overview

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 2 material: Chapter # 1: Introduction

Week # 2 (Jan. 16-20): Introduction

Off-class/Online (Jan. 9 –20): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 1: Syllabus Quiz

In-class (Jan. 20): Presentation: What is geography? Assessment of Students Map knowledge

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 3 material: Chapter # 2

Week # 3 (Jan. 23-27): Maps

Off-class/Online (Jan. 26): Reflection Essay # 1

In-class (Jan. 27): Presentation: What is geography? Assessment of Students Map knowledge

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 4 material: Chapter # 3

Week # 4 (Jan. 30-Feb. 3): Physical Geography: Landforms

Off-class/Online (Feb. 2): Reflection Essay # 2

In-class (Feb. 3): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 4 material: Chapter # 4

Week # 5 (Feb. 6-10): Physical Geography: Weather and Climate

Off-class/Online (Feb. 9): Reflection Essay # 3

In-class (Feb. 10): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Get Ready for Exam # 1

Week # 6 (Feb. 13-17): **EXAM # 1: Friday, February 17**

Off-class/Online (Feb. 16): Get Ready for Exam # 1

In-class (Feb. 17): Exam # 1

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 7 material: Chapter # 5

Week # 7 (Feb. 20-24): The Geography of Natural Resources

Off-class/Online (Feb. 23): Reflection Essay # 4

In-class (Feb. 24): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 8 material: Chapter # 6 and Read Instructions for the completion of Exercise # 1.

Week # 8 (Feb. 27-Mar. 3): Population Geography

Off-class/Online (Mar. 2): Reflection Essay # 5

In-class (Mar. 3): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Read and Watch Week # 9 material

Week # 9 (Mar. 6-10): Online Classroom: “Guns, Germs, and Steel”

Off-class/Online (Mar. 9): Online Reading: “Guns, Germs, and Steel” (PPT) and Video (watch): “Guns, Germs, and Steel: Part I: Out of Eden” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36BQW1SuHQ8>
In-class (Mar. 10): Team Activities
Off-class/Online: Read Week # 11 material: Chapter # 7

Week # 10 (Mar. 17): Spring Break

Week # 11 (Mar. 24): Cultural Geography

Off-class/Online (Mar. 23): Exercise # 1 – deadline: Thursday, March 23
In-class (Mar. 24): Team Activities
Off-class/Online: Get Ready for Exam # 2

Week # 12 (Mar. 31): EXAM # 2: Friday, March 31

Off-class/Online (Mar. 30): Get Ready for Exam # 2
In-class (Mar. 31): Exam # 2
Off-class/Online: Read Week # 13 material: Chapter # 10 and Read Instructions for the completion of Exercise # 2.

Week # 13 (Apr. 7) Economic Geography

Off-class/Online (Apr. 6): Reflection Essay # 6
In-class (Apr. 7): Team Activities
Off-class/Online: Read Week # 14 material: Chapter # 8 & 9

Week # 14 (Apr. 14): Spatial Interaction & Political Geography

Off-class/Online (Apr. 13): Exercise # 2 – deadline: Thursday, April 13
In-class (Apr. 14): Team Activities
Off-class/Online: Get Ready for Exam # 3

Week # 15 (Apr. 21): *EXAM # 3: Friday, Apr. 21

Off-class/Online (Apr. 20): Get Ready for Exam # 3
In-class (Apr. 21): Exam # 3