

GEA2000: World Regional Geography

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Office hours: Th 10:45 – 11:30am or by appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory course in geography, with which you will learn and apply geographic lenses to investigate world regions. You will learn key concepts and theories in geography to interrogate various contemporary and historical issues of the world. This course will focus on two intersecting themes – development and climate change – that have become defining forces of the world today. Using critical geographic lenses, you will learn about major regions and countries of the world with regards to their physical, cultural, economic, and political characteristics. You will also explore local, regional, and global levels of connections and examine how these connections are constructed, maintained, and changed. By the end of the semester, you will be able to contextualize major issues in world regions and use this knowledge to better understand the complexity of world regions in a global context.

The course fulfills the Global Learning Foundations requirement that counts toward your GL graduation requirement and the University Core Curriculum requirement for Foundations of Social Inquiry. GEA 2000 is designed to “investigate social, political, and economic configurations; cultural and psychological features of human life; gender, race/ethnicity, and social class; consciousness and identity; social interactions with the natural environment; and local, national, and global aspects of the human world.” - The Global Learning Graduation Initiative, For more information visit: <http://goglobal.fiu.edu>.

Global Learning Course Outcomes & Objectives

1) Students will demonstrate foundational knowledge of the world’s human and physical geographic features, institutions, and processes (such as trade, religion, environmental degradation, and migration) and how they relate to each other:

- Identify key geographic concepts and themes
- Describe the earth system and know its main features applicable to the physical geographies of world regions
- Describe the world economic system and the history of development and underdevelopment

2) Students will identify, differentiate between, and apply multiple perspectives (including physical science, social science, and popular perspectives) to critically examine key geographic issues:

- Analyze the assumptions on development and develop alternative conceptualizations
- Explain the strengths and weaknesses of different models of development
- Develop spatial thinking by recognizing the complex connections and relationships between places, people, and social and environmental processes

3) Students will gain the ability to engage in actions that impact local and global processes, by coming to understand their connections to these processes (especially via their location in Miami):

- Thoughtfully articulate complex ideas and perspectives and apply them to your everyday life
- Develop critical thinking on how world regions are constructed
- Develop solutions to the existing local, regional, and global problems
- Apply public communication skills to present the complexities of the world

Resources

Textbook (required): Marston, S.A., P.L. Knox, D.M. Liverman, V.L. Casino, and P. Robbins. 2016. *World Regions in Global Context: Peoples, Places, and Environments*, 6th edition, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall (textbook only ISBN-13: 9780134183640)

Any additional **readings** will be announced in advance and posted on Canvas.

Other useful resources

U.S. News Media:

NPR <http://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com> (Go to www.nytimes.com/FIU for free one-year access)

World Data:

Our World in Data (Oxford) <https://ourworldindata.org>

Software:

Google Earth: <http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>

Google Maps: <https://maps.google.com/maps/myplaces>

QGIS: <http://www.qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html>

Microsoft PowerPoint & Word (available for free to all FIU students)

Course structure

Canvas: This course uses Canvas as a course webpage (Go to <https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/INSERT> and log in using your FIU credential.) All the readings, lecture slides, class activities, assignment instructions, the latest version of the syllabus, and other announcements will be posted here.

Textbook and additional readings: You must read the textbook chapter of the week and take an online weekly quiz before coming to class. In addition, other mandatory readings for the course are news articles, reports, book chapters, webpages, etc. Links to all of these materials will be announced during class. Additional readings will complement, not repeat, the lectures, and students are accountable for all assigned readings on the exams. Instructions on the reflections on additional readings or virtual fieldwork missions for each week will also be announced during class before the week.

Class Meetings: There will be one 75-minute classes each week (Thursdays). You are required to attend all the meetings and will be responsible for all material presented in the meetings during our weekly quizzes. There will be group activities include discussion, debate, virtual mapping, and problem-solving exercises.

Course evaluation

Graded Item	% of Grade	Comments
1. Quizzes	25%	Online quizzes on Canvas
2. Class activities	25%	Activities on Canvas

3. Participation	10%	Weekly contribution & attendance
4. Case-study presentation	15%	Group work
5. Final project	25%	Connections to Miami

Quizzes: There will be online quizzes throughout the semester. A separate announcement will be made for each quiz in advance, explaining which Module(s) will be covered and when the quiz needs to be completed. Quiz questions come from the module's readings, lectures, and course activities. Quizzes are due by at the end of the assigned week (Sundays by 11:59 PM).

Course activities: Class activities consist of individual assignments of various types (e.g., reflections on class material, virtual fieldwork, or an online activity). Due dates will vary by activity and will be announced in class. Be sure to check on Canvas as well.

Participation: You must attend class each week. Three or more unexcused absences can result in a loss of all participation points. Each week you will also be asked to participate either online (post a quick reflection or a response to a classmate's reflection on Canvas) or during class (contributing something significant to class discussion). The purpose is to make sure you are engaging with the course on a consistent basis.

Case-study presentation: Each week starting with Module 4, one group will make a 15-minute presentation on a current event related to the world region of the module. The group is expected to read the instructions and meet in advance remotely or in person to prepare for the presentation. The group should submit (1) the presentation slides or a hyperlink to the presentation (Prezi, etc.) to Canvas, along with (2) a bibliography and (3) a list of work breakdown. Further instructions will be available on Canvas and discussed in class.

Final project - Infographic Poster: This is an individual project that will be submitted at the end of the semester. You will be creating an infographic poster on a social, political, economic, environmental, etc. issue in a particular region. In a 500-word paper (minimum), you will then explain why you chose this issue, what your infographic specifically conveys about this topic, how this issue impacts the region you've selected, and then draw global connections to understand the larger implications of the issue you have chosen. Additional instructions with a grading rubric will be uploaded to Canvas and discussed during the recorded lectures.

Class policies

Attendance and assignment

It is your responsibility to attend all of our class sessions, read or watch the assigned readings and/or videos, and complete the weekly assignments on time. Attendance is **mandatory**. If you have 3 or more unexcused absences, you can lose all participation points for the semester (worth 10% of your total grade) and potential access to the course activities. Late work will only be accepted for three days after the deadline and will have 10% of the total point deduction. If you must miss class or a quiz, please notify me before the date and get approval for late quiz. Unexpected absences made for serious reasons (i.e., emergency, death of a family member, acute illness) will be excused with documentation.

Communication

Announcements will be posted on Canvas. Important messages will also be sent to your email address. If you have any urgent questions or concerns, please send me an email instead of using Canvas messages. Be polite and responsible when you communicate with your professor and classmates.

Plagiarism and academic misconduct

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with severe consequences that range from probation to expulsion. If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Academic Integrity Committee. Please do not plagiarize.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact me or consult FIU academic misconduct webpage at <http://academic.fiu.edu/academicbudget/misconductweb/1acmisconductproc.htm> .

University resources

Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Disability Resource Center at 305-348-3532 in GC 190 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/student-success/disability-resource-center/>) to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

If you suffer from stress, sleep problems, anxiety, depression, interpersonal concerns or alcohol use that damages your academic performance, you are not alone. Students who have these issues are encouraged to contact the Counseling and Psychological Services at 305-348-2277 in SHC 270 (<http://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/wellness/counseling-and-psychological-services/services/index.php>).

Center for Excellence in Writing

The FIU Center for Excellence in Writing offers various services that will help improve your writing skills. I highly recommend using these resources for you to be successful in this course. Visit their website (<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>) for making an appointment.