Course Homepage: http://canvas.fiu.edu

Professor:	**Dr. Ricardo M. González (rmgonzal@fiu.edu)**
Office Hours:	**by appointment; call (305) 348-2247**
Department Location:	**Department of Global & Sociocultural Studies**
	SIPA # 304

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.

*University Core Curriculum***:**

This course satisfies the following University Core Curriculum requirement for Social Science Group Two (university-required):

- Students will demonstrate the ability to examine behavioral, social, and cultural issues from a variety of points of view.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavioral, social, and cultural issues, past and present, local and global.

It is supported by the following learning outcomes for the course:

- 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.
- 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 participates 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.

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 participates 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.

Textbook

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

[You may use a newer edition of the textbook. Please see note included in the syllabus section, *Important Note on Written Assignments, Turnitin.com, and Plagiarism* for important information on the citation of our textbook in all written assignments.]

Academic Integrity Statement, including the Use of Artificial Intelligence

You are expected to be honest in all academic work, consistent with the academic integrity policy as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. All work is to be appropriately cited when it is borrowed, directly or indirectly, from another source. Unauthorized and/or unacknowledged collaboration on any work, or the presentation of someone else's work, is plagiarism. Content generated by an

Artificial Intelligence third-party service or site (AI-generated content) without proper attribution or authorization is another form of plagiarism. If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or another form of academic dishonesty, please reach out to me to discuss it as soon as possible.

Hybrid Format/CANVAS:

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 Saturday 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 course without major difficulties. Class notes or other materials will be posted on the course website: CANVAS (https://canvas.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 CANVAS 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 CANVAS.** 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.**

Expectations of this Course

This is a hybrid course, meaning that half of the course work will be conducted during our class meetings (Friday's) and the other half online. Expectations for performance in a hybrid course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, hybrid courses require 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 hybrid 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 the outmost importance, especially with regards to the online quizzes.

If you are not sufficiently computer savvy to meet these conditions, or do not have access to a good computer, you should reconsider taking this course. You **must** take the Syllabus Quiz and the Practice Quiz (the questions have nothing to do with the material taught in this course, and count nothing) to make sure you know how the process works and that your computer is compatible with FIU's CANVAS system. It is also important to note that **students must take and pass with perfect score the Syllabus Quiz in order to get access to the course materials.**

If you have computer problems while trying to submit a written assignment or taking a quiz, you MUST contact FIU Online Support Services IMMEDIATELY by calling FIU Online at (305) 348-3630 or by clicking on the "Technical Support" link in the Course Menu, NOT THE PROFESSOR OR YOUR CLASSMATES. If such issues occur while taking a quiz, you must gather as much evidence of the issue you are confronting (i.e., take pictures) and include it in the message sent to Technical Support, otherwise, unfortunately, we will be unable to provide you with the opportunity to re-take the missing or incomplete assessment.

Students are expected to:
- **Take the Syllabus Quiz before the first class meeting: Friday, January 12.** Students will not be allowed to access the course until they take this quiz and pass it with perfect score.
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week of the term by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum.
- Take the Practice Quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with CANVAS.
- Interact online with the instructor and peers and keep up will 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 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 journal postings within one week (except on weekends or holidays).
- **Respond to messages within 48-72 hours (except on weekends or holidays).**
- **Grade assignments within two weeks of the assignment deadline unless otherwise noted.**

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the **CANVAS message feature ONLY.** **I will respond within 48-72 hours (except on weekends or holidays).**

The message feature is a private, internal, CANVAS-only communication system. Users must log on to CANVAS to send/receive/read messages. There are no notifications in CANVAS to inform users when a new message has been received; therefore, it is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

In addition, **your professor will post *course announcements*, alerting students of upcoming deadlines, feedback on assignments, and other important information. Please make sure to read them carefully and get back to your professor immediately if you have any questions or concerns. Please make sure to include detail questions or explain your concerns so your professor is better prepared to answer them on a timely manner.**

Course' Requirements:

-Class Attendance, Participation and Conduct

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 team 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.

- Students are expected to attend all class meetings, arriving on time, and participate actively with their assigned teams.
- 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.**
- **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.
- **We will start the class with a quiz**; and there are no make-ups.
- **IF YOUR SCHEDULE PROHIBITS YOU FROM BEING AVAILABLE DURING THESE TIMES, then unfortunately you probably should not take this class.**

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.

Note on the Use of Electronics during Class Meetings

Cell phones must be off during class. No talking on the phone or texting, otherwise the student in questions will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. Laptop use is permitted for notetaking ONLY; violating the laptop policy means that you will not be allowed to use your laptop in class.

Note on Students with Special Needs

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 plan for appropriate modification and/or assistance.

-Reading Comprehension Quizzes

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum **hardware requirements**.

- All quizzes will be online.
- There will be three, non-cumulative reading comprehension quizzes in this course based on the readings, outlines, videos and other materials reviewed, including map questions. All quizzes will be online, and each one is worth 5% of the final grade in our course. The total value of the exams is 15% of the course final grade.
- In addition to these (3) quizzes, students will have the opportunity to take an Optional Quiz at the end of the term. This quiz will replace the lowest grade earned in the first three quizzes, unless you earn a lower grade (dropped), and will include all the material covered in the course (cumulative).
- Students will be allowed to take the quizzes two times during the testing period, and only the best grade earned will be used to calculate your final grade in our course. **IF YOUR SCHEDULE PROHIBITS YOU FROM BEING AVAILABLE DURING THESE TIMES, then unfortunately you probably should not take this class.**
- The quizzes will be available from Sunday's at 2:00 PM and until Friday's at 2:00 PM. **IF YOUR SCHEDULE PROHIBITS YOU FORM BEING AVAILABEL AT EITHER OF THESE OPTIONAL TIMES, then, unfortunately, you probably should not take this class.**
- Students are not allowed to take the quizzes in teams or share any information with classmates or any other individual. If you are in doubt, please read the FIU Academic Honesty Policy here.
- **No make-up quiz will be given. Students that miss to take a quiz will take the Optional Quiz as a make-up test.**
- Each quiz will consist of 20 multiple-choice questions, including map questions (location of countries only), and each question will be worth 5 points. The quizzes will be limited to 30 minutes (past experience with a number of in-person and online courses has shown that this is sufficient time for the student who knows the material).
- Students are provided with Study Guides for each chapter/topic covered in this course. The study guides contain all questions that will be include in the quizzes, except for the map questions. For this reason, we would strongly suggest you use them while reviewing the course material to be better prepared for the quizzes, and to improve your learning experience and your performance in our course.

- Results will be available after the testing period has ended. You will be able to see the total score only.

Dates for the quizzes are as follow:
- **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 1:** Chapters 1 to 4. From Sunday, February 11 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, February 16 at 2:00 PM.
- **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 2:** Chapters 5 to 8. From Sunday, March 24 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, March 29 at 2:00 PM.
- **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 3:** Chapters 9 to 12. From Sunday, April 14 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, April 19 at 2:00 PM.
- **Optional Quiz:** Chapters 1 to 12. From Sunday, April 21 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, April 26 at 2:00 PM.

Note: While taking a quiz, you should save your answers after each question, in case you run out of time.

-Reflection Essays

- There will be six (6) reflection essays, which require you to apply concepts learned in our course. The lowest grade earned will be dropped. Each discussion topic is worth 10% of the final grade in our course.
- Students must compose a 1-2 page summary essay of at-least 500 words, highlighting the most important aspects of each assigned reading/video. The word count does not include the student's name, PID, date, title of the essay, or the required Bibliography/References/Works Cited. Students must upload their work using the corresponding plagiarism detection website Turnitn.com links included in our course website before the deadline.
- Students must post well thought-out comments based on the assigned topics – the corresponding textbook chapter/s of the week, which must be cited in your essay and in a bibliography page –, showing knowledge of the subject by using key definitions used in the textbook, and **upload them to the plagiarism detection website Turnitin.com**. Both the quantity and the quality of your posts will contribute to your grade.
- Students will have to comply with all requirements of this activity, including the minimum required number of words, show knowledge of the topic, originality, and to format their work following the Technical Aspects (see section: **IMPORTANT NOTE ON WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, TURNITIN, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND PLAGIARISM**) and upload their posts to Turnitin.com.
- **The reflection topics will be available for the entire week (from Sunday to Saturday) ONLY. Late work will be accepted but will incur in a 10-point discount for each week they are late. The weekly point deduction will be applied starting on the 7th day after the deadlines mentioned below. In other words, you may submit your work six (6) days after any deadline without incurring in any point deduction. No late work will be accepted after Saturday, April 20.**

Dates for the Reflection Essays are as follow:
- **Reflection Essay # 1;** due: Saturday, February 3.
- **Reflection Essay # 2;** due: Saturday, February 10.
- **Reflection Essay # 3;** due: Saturday, February 24.
- **Reflection Essay # 4**; due: Saturday, March 9.
- **Reflection Essay # 5;** due: Saturday, March 16.
- **Reflection Essay # 6;** due: Saturday, March 30.

-Portfolio

- **The dictionary defines a portfolio as a set of works [drawings or photographs] either bound in a book form or loose in a folder. In this course we will define a *portfolio* as a collection of reflection essays completed during the term, and which requires you to apply concepts learned in this course.**
- Since we have defined the portfolio as a collection of reflection essays, this [portfolio] must first introduce the topics covered in each essay and their scope in **a** Introduction.
- After the topic is introduced, the next step would be to include your six reflection essays. Note that your portfolio **does not** need to include the reflection essays. You are only required to submit the first (Introduction) and last portion (Conclusions) of the portfolio.
- After the reflection essays, we must **include a Conclusion section where you will summarize the most important findings highlighted in your essays**.
- To complete your portfolio, this must include a bibliography page with all the references you have used in all reflection essays, including our course' textbook.
- **Structure of the Portfolio (minimum 500 words): Introduction (~200-250 words), Conclusions (~250-300 words) and Bibliography page. You must separate each section clearly using titles: Introduction, Conclusions, Bibliography.**
- Include a title in your first page that reflects the nature of this assignment. The title "Reflection Essay Portfolio" is accurate, but… boring!
- **The portfolio is worth 20% of the final grade in our course.**
- Your work must be uploaded to the plagiarism detection website Turnitin.com by the due date (see Important Dates and Course Schedule for specific due dates). **Works that are submitted late will be accepted but will receive a 10-point discount for each week they are late. No late work will be accepted after Saturday, April 20.**
- **Any works that has been plagiarized will result in a failing grade in the class.**

Dates for the completion of the Portfolio are as follow:
- **Portfolio Rough Draft;** due: Saturday, April 6. No late work will be accepted after Monday, April 8.
- **Portfolio Final Project;** due: Saturday, April 20. No late work will be accepted after this day (Saturday, April 20).

Important Note on Written Assignments, Turnitin.com, Artificial Intelligence and Plagiarism

Students must submit all written assignments in a word document.

Works that are submitted late will be accepted but will receive a 10-point discount for each week they are late. In the case of the reflection essays, the weekly point deduction will be applied starting on the 7th day after the deadlines mentioned above. In other words, you may submit your essays six (6) days after any deadline without incurring in any point deduction. In the case of the Portfolio Rough Draft, no late work will be accepted after Monday, April 8.

No late assignments will be accepted after Saturday, April 20.

Each written assignment must include references from the course textbook, including but not limited to key definitions and other important aspects related to the topics covered in each project. Students must include in text citations of the course textbook in their essays, as well as complete reference of this source in a Bibliography page. You can find a complete reference of our course textbook below. Use the following format for the in-text citation: (Getis *et al*. 2009). You may also introduce this source at the beginning of a sentence following this example: According to Getis *et al.* (2009), … In case you are including a quote from this source, you must include the page number/s where we can find this information following this example: "The spatial distribution of …" (Getis *et al.* 2009: 35).

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

Students are not allowed to use WIKIPEDIA in this course and will result in a significant point deduction if this source is use in any written assignment.

All written assignment must conform to the following formatting - Technical Aspects:

- Submitted in a word document.
- 12-point font (Arial, Times New Roman, Garamond, or Book Garamond, or Book Antiqua).
- One-inch margins all around and with no indentations.
- Double-spaced.

- Number the pages.
- **Any written assignment that does not include any one of the required technical aspects mentioned above will receive a 10-point deduction in their grade.**

==All written assignments must be uploaded to the plagiarism detection system Turnitin.com. The Turnitin.com links to submit your work are embedded in our course website – you do not have to create a Turnitin.com account.== 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.

All work submitted in this course must be your own. In fact, it is expected that most of the written assignments submitted are written using the student's own words. Because writing, analytical and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments must be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. **Contributions from anyone or anything else, including artificial intelligence (AI) sources, must be properly quoted and cited every time they are used. Failure to do so constitutes an academic integrity violation, and I will follow our institution's policy in those instances.**

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: [FIU Libraries](#)

GRADING

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	WEIGHT
Reading Comprehension Quizzes (3 @ 5% each)	15%
Reflection Essays (5 @ 10% each)	50%
Portfolio	20%

Attendance and Participation	15%
TOTAL	**100%**

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

Weekly Schedule

DATE	TASKS
Week 1: January 8 - 13	Chapter 1: *Introduction* **Take the Syllabus Quiz before the first class meeting: Friday, January 12.** **Review the Start Here folder** located in the course content. **Review the Policies Page** as is important to the quality of your education. **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum under the "Discussion Board" tab. **Take the Practice Quiz** under the Start Here folder to ensure that your computer is compatible with CANVAS.
Week 2: January 14 – 20	Chapter 2: *Maps*
Week 3: January 21 - 27	Chapter 3: *Physical Geography: Landforms*

Week 4: January 28 – February 3	Chapter 4: *Physical Geography: Weather and Climate* • **Reflection Essay # 1**; due: Saturday, February 3.
Week 5: February 4 – 10	Chapter 5: The Geography of Natural Resources • **Reflection Essay # 2**; due: Saturday, February 10.
Week 6: February 11 – 17	• **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 1:** chapters 1 to 4; From Sunday, February 11 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, February 17 at 2:00 PM.
Week 7: February 18 – 24	Chapter 6: Population Geography • **Reflection Essay # 3**; due: Saturday, February 24.
Week 8: February 25 – March 2	**Spring Break: No classes**
Week 9: March 3 - 9	Chapter 7: Cultural Geography • **Reflection Essay # 4;** due: Saturday, March 9.
Week 10: March 10– 16	Chapter 8: Spatial Interaction • **Reflection Essay # 5;** due: Saturday, March 16.
Week 11: March 17 – 23	Chapter 10: Economic Geography
Week 12: March 24 – 30	• **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 2:** chapters 5 to 8; From Sunday, March 24 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, March 29 at 2:00 PM. • **Reflection Essay # 6;** due: Saturday, March 30.
Week 13: March 31 – April 6	Chapter 9: Political Geography • **Portfolio rough draft;** due: Saturday, April 6 [no late work accepted after Monday, April 8].
Week 14: April 7 – 13	Chapter 11: An Urban World and Chapter 12: Human Impact on the Environment
Week 15: April 14 –20	• **Reading Comprehension Quiz # 3:** chapters 9 to 12; From Sunday, April 14 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, April 19 at 2:00 PM. • **Portfolio Final Project;** due: Saturday, April 20. • **No late assignments accepted after Saturday, April 20.**
Week 16: April 21 - 27	• **Optional Quiz:** chapters 1 to 11; From Sunday, April 21 at 2:00 PM and until Friday, April 26 at 2:00 PM.