

**SPRING 2018**  
**GEO 3421: CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY**  
Th 9:30 - 10:45 AM  
PC # 431  
Course Homepage: <http://online.fiu.edu>

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

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:**

What is “culture”? Why is it so important to how we understand and live in the world around us? Is culture a thing, an idea, a set of practices, or a myth? Is culture connected to people and places, or is it mobile? Does culture unite or divide us? Does it bring peace or conflict? How do cultures mix? How does culture change? What does geography have to do with how culture works, and does thinking about culture geographically give us a different understanding of it?

GEO 3421 addresses these and other questions about something called culture. It will introduce students to the field of cultural geography and to the ways that a geographic approach helps us make sense of cultural politics in the world around us. In this course, we will examine how questions of culture are always already questions of politics, economics, history, and place and how a geographic approach to such questions helps us understand the world in more critical ways. This course focuses on the changing and multifaceted relationships between people and the environments in which they reside. This course provides knowledge of and about the creation of places and regions, an understanding of both the interdependence of places and regions in a globalizing world, and the major changes that have taken place in global, regional, and local landscapes.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Help students understand the complexities of culture as both place based and mobile, historically enduring yet constantly changing, simultaneously local, global, and transnational.
- Provide a framework to help students understand the differences and similarities, connections and gaps, among people around the world – differences often read through a framework of culture.
- Help students understand what a geographic approach to culture gets us in understanding its complexities.

- Introduce students to key debates, developments, and themes in cultural geography through conceptually oriented lectures and contemporary and historical case studies.
- Develop and improve students' map-based knowledge of key location in world regions.
- Develop and improve students' ability to write and think critically about the world.

### ***Hybrid Format/Blackboard:***

This course is being conducted in a “hybrid format”; that is, a combination of in-class activities 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 Wednesday 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.** E-mails, 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:**

Domosh, Mona, Neumann, Roderick, Price, Patricia and Terry Jordan-Bychkov. 2013. *The Human Mosaic: A Cultural Approach to Human Geography*. 12<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE**

As mentioned above, this is a hybrid course, meaning that the course work will be conducted both in-class and 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. Most importantly, 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 utmost importance. 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.

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Students are expected to:

- Take the Syllabus Quiz. Students will not be allowed to access the course materials until they take this quiz and pass it with a perfect score.
- Interact 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.
- **Reading comprehension quizzes.** Each week, before coming to class, you will have to take a quiz that will include the most important definitions/concepts highlighted in the weekly assigned readings, which will be covered in class. Students will be allowed to take the quizzes as many times as they wish between Friday's at 8:00 AM and Wednesday's at 11:59 PM only.
- **Attend class meetings and participate actively.** You are expected to attend class and participate individually and with your 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.**
- **Reflection Essays.** Read and composed the assigned chapters/articles/videos reflection essay no later than the following Wednesday after each class meeting. **There are no make-ups for the reflection essays; no exceptions.** A detail timetable for each summary can be found in the Course Schedule section. **Students must compose a 1-2 page summary essay of at-least 600 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 section. Students must upload their work to the plagiarism detection website Turnitn.com before the deadline (**Wednesday's at 11:59 PM**). **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 next day after the deadline. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER TWO WEEKS OF THE DUE DATE.** Note that there will be 6 reflection essays and 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, a map, an analysis of the information provided, and a Bibliography 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. 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 next day after the deadline. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER TWO WEEKS OF THE DUE DATE.**
- **Research Paper.** You will be writing a 6-8 page double-spaced typed pages, font 12 paper this semester. You will be assigned a research article published in a peer-review geography journal. You will then summarize the elements of that paper, including the subject, argument, methodology, literatures, and conclusions based on the summary format provided in the Research Paper Instructions (file). The **due date is Wednesday, April 4.** 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 next day after the deadline. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER TWO WEEKS OF THE DUE DATE. No late work will be received after Wednesday, April 18. Note that students are required to submit a draft paper on Wednesday, March 7.**

**Selecting an Article (due on Wednesday, January 31):** The first step in completing this assignment is finding a suitable geography article. This article must comply with the overall assignment – it must be a geography article, the research must be related to one of the topics covered in the course textbook, it must be a full-length, research article (not book reviews, commentaries, country reports, editorials, or special issue entries), and it must be from one of the peer-reviewed geography journals listed in the Research Paper Instructions. They must also be published in the year 2000 or later. Only one person will be allowed to review an article, so it is a good idea to pick out a few that interests you. **To submit your article preferences** you will have to send the Instructor of the course an e-mail with a list of three articles you have picked out in order of preference – your list should consist of full citations for the articles selected (author/s last name/s, first name/s, year of publication, title of article, journal where it was published, volume, number, page numbers). You should also attach the PDFs for the articles to your message. **If you fail to submit an appropriate article by the due date, not only will you lose points towards the final grade of this assignment (10%), but I will assign an article to you – I can't promise it will be interesting or easy to read. I will send individual messages to each student with their assign articles no later than Wednesday, February 7.**

Once you complete your paper, you must submit your work to the plagiarism detection website Turnitin.com by the due date. **Any research paper that has been plagiarized will result in a failing grade in the class.**

- **Exams.** We will have three exams (non-cumulative).

**GRADING:**

- Reading Comprehension Quizzes (8 @ 1.25% each) 10%
- Reflection Essays (5 @ 4% each) 20%
- Team Activities 10%
- Exercises (2 @ 10% each) 20%
- Research paper 20%
- Exam # 1, Exam # 2, and Exam # 3 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

**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.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE ON WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, TURNITIN.COM, AND PLAGIARISM**

All written assignment 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 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.**

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 can be 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 reflection essays or the reading comprehension quizzes. No late exercises or term-paper 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 19). **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. **Communication in this course will take place via Blackboard message feature ONLY. I will respond within 48-72 hours (except on weekends or holidays).** This is the best method to communicate with your instructor privately. The message feature is a private, internal Blackboard only communication system. Users must log on to the Blackboard system to send/receive/read messages. There are no notifications in Blackboard 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.

You are welcome to visit my office by previously setting an appointment by calling the GSS Department at (305) 348-2247.

***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 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: Thursday, February 8

EXAM # 2: Thursday, March 29

EXAM # 3: Thursday, April 19

EXERCISE # 1: Wednesday, February 14

EXERCISE # 2: Wednesday, April 11 (\*No late work will be accepted after Wednesday, April 18)

TERM-PAPER: Article selection: Wednesday, January 31

Draft Term-Paper: Wednesday, March 7

Term-Paper (final project): Wednesday, April 4 (\*No late work will be accepted after Wednesday, April 18)

REFLECTION ESSAY # 1: Wednesday, January 24

REFLECTION ESSAY # 2: Wednesday, February 7

REFLECTION ESSAY # 3: Wednesday, February 21

REFLECTION ESSAY # 4: Wednesday, February 28

REFLECTION ESSAY # 5: Wednesday, March 21

REFLECTION ESSAY # 6: Wednesday, March 28

LAST DAY TO DROP THE CLASS WITH A DR/WI GRADE: Monday, March 19.

# Weekly Schedule

(subject to change)

## Week # 1: Introduction

Off-class/Online (Jan. 8-19): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 1: Syllabus Quiz

In-class (Jan. 11): Course Overview

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 2 material

## Week # 2: Chapter # 1 Human Geography: A Cultural Approach

Off-class/Online (Jan. 17): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 2

In-class (Jan. 18): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 3 materials

## Week # 3: Chapter # 2 Many Worlds: Geographies of Cultural Difference

Off-class/Online (Jan. 24): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 3 & Reflection Essay # 1 - Video Summary: "Guns, Germs, and Steal: Part I: Out of Eden"

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36BQW1SuHQ8>) (upload your work to Turnitin.com before 11:59 PM)

In-class (Jan. 25): Team Activities

Off-class/Online: Read Week # 4 material and Exercise # 1 Instructions

## Week # 4: Chapter # 3 Population Geography: Shaping the Human Mosaic

Off-class/online (Jan. 31): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 4 & Term-Paper Article Selection (send your work -3 articles, including full reference and PDF files- using Blackboard messages)

In-class (Feb. 1): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Get ready for Exam # 1

## Week # 5: Exam # 1

Off-class/online (Feb. 7): Reflection Essay # 2

In-class (Feb. 8): Exam # 1

Off-class/online: Read Week # 6 material

## Week # 6: Chapter # 4 The Geography of Language: Building the Spoken Word

Off-class/online (Feb. 14): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 5 & Exercise # 1: Population Geography (upload your work to Turnitin.com)

In-class (Feb. 15): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Read Week # 7 material

## Week # 7: Chapter # 5 Geographies of Race and Ethnicity: Melting Pot or Mosaic

Off-class/online (Feb 21): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 6 & Reflection Essay # 3

In-class (Feb. 22): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Read Week # 8 material

### **Week # 8: Chapter # 6 Political Geography: A Divided World**

Off-class/online (Feb. 28): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 7 & Reflection Essay # 4

In-class (Mar. 1): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Read Week # 9 material

### **Week # 9: "Guns, Germs, and Steel"**

Off-class/online (Mar. 7): **Draft Term-Paper # 1 (upload your work to Turnitin.com)**

Virtual classroom (Mar. 8): Online Video (watch): "Guns, Germs, and Steel: Part III: Into the Tropics" ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xPvd\\_HFZZE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xPvd_HFZZE))

Off-class/online: Read Week # 11 material

### **Week # 10: **SPRING BREAK (NO CLASSES: Mar. 12-16)****

### **Week # 11: Chapter # 8 Agricultural Geography: The Global Food System**

Off-class/online (Mar. 21): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 8 & Reflection Essay # 5

In-class (Mar. 22): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Get Ready for Exam # 2

### **Week # 12: Exam # 2**

Off-class/online (Mar. 28): Reflection Essay # 6

**In-class (Mar. 29): Exam # 2**

Off-class/online: Read Week # 13 material and Exercise # 2 Instructions

### **Week # 13: Chapter # 9 Geography of Economies: Industries, Services, and Development**

Off-class/online (Apr. 4): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 9 & **Term-Paper due (upload your work to Turnitin.com). No late work will be accepted after Tuesday, April 11.**

In-class (Apr. 5): Team Activities

Off-class/online: Read Week # 14 material

### **Week # 14: The Geography of Religion: Spaces and Places of Sacredness**

Off-class/online (Apr. 11): Reading Comprehension Quiz # 10 & **Exercise # 2: Geography of Garments (upload your work to Turnitin.com)**

In-class (Apr. 12): Team Activities

Off-class/online (Apr. 15): Get Ready for Exam # 3

### **Week # 15: Exam # 3**

Off-class/online (Apr. 18): Get Ready for Exam # 3

**In-class (Apr. 19): Exam # 3**