

# FIU, DEPARTMENT OF GLOBAL & SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

## GEA 2000 – U03: WORLD REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

**Spring 2019**

### SYLLABUS

*[Please note, this syllabus is a draft schedule.*

*Dates and content are always subject to change by University officials.]*

**Instructor:** Dr. Ulrich Oslender  
**Room:** Charles E. Perry (PC) 438  
**Class meets:** Tuesday/Thursday, 2:00PM - 3:15PM  
**Office hours:** Tuesday/Thursday, 4:00PM - 5:00PM (or by appointment); SIPA 324  
**E-mail:** [uoslende@fiu.edu](mailto:uoslende@fiu.edu) (please always put 'GEA 2000' in "Subject" line)  
**Course website:** On Canvas at: <https://canvas.fiu.edu/>  
**Teaching Assistant:** TBC

### About the Course

The world today is one of ever increasing interconnectedness. People, countries, regions and places are linked in multiple ways and on many scales, from the local to the global. Geographers are interested in understanding these connections and the spatial expressions of human relationships. This course introduces students to the major regions of the world by examining their characteristic physical, cultural, economic, and historical geographies. We will build an understanding of the historical development and interrelationships of regions on a foundation of basic geographical knowledge. For each region, lectures will highlight an important contemporary issue such as migration, economic development, ethnicity, environmental change, or political conflict. Students will be challenged to critically reflect upon the ways in which we conceptualize and generalize about people, cultures, and regions.

The course fulfills both the Global Learning Foundations requirement and the University Core Curriculum requirement for Foundations of Social Inquiry. Like all courses in this area of the Core Curriculum, 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.” Furthermore, GEA 2000 is a particular type of social inquiry, namely one that helps you as a student to be able to compare and contrast societies and cultures. For nearly every area of the globe, this course will discuss how environment, politics, population, culture, and economy have shaped the diverse lives of people on this increasingly interconnected planet. Furthermore, as a geography course, special attention will be paid to how place and location influence and are influenced by human activity.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

After successfully completing this course, you should have acquired the following:

1. *Global awareness.* Students will have acquired a basic awareness of world geography and will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems with respect to world regional geography. This includes political entities, economic activities, environmental patterns, and sociocultural traits. This is foundational knowledge for understanding and explaining the spatial expression of dynamic global processes. This means a certain amount of memorization of the location of the world's basic natural, cultural, political, and economic geography. We need to know *where* things are in order to make wider claims about the world we live in.
2. *Global perspective.* Students will develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, and intercultural problems with respect to world regional geography, so that they will be able to understand major processes that shape human society on a world scale. Very little of what happens on Earth happens in isolation. Large processes – such as global trade, climate, and international migration – are dynamic in time and space. They operate across countries, regions, and hemispheres, but have different effects in different locations. Thus students will learn to think relationally about world geography as comprised of a set of interconnected and interdependent regions.
3. *Global engagement.* Students will be able to conceptualize and think critically about possible ways to address problem-oriented enquiry into some of the main issues facing the world today. Importantly, they will be able to critically evaluate claims about the world's societies and cultures. Knowledge about world geography will provide the foundation for critical thinking. There are many stories told about the world from many perspectives. This course will help students identify and evaluate generalizations, stereotypes, and assumptions about people, their places, and their lives. It will contribute to students developing a critical perspective on the stories about the world that they are confronted with on an everyday basis.

## **Textbook**

*World Regional Geography: Global Patterns, Local Lives: Without Subregions.* By Lydia Pulsipher. New York: W.H. Freeman, 2017, 7<sup>th</sup> edition: ISBN: 978-1-319-05976-7

[Alternatively, you may use the 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 2014 (ISBN: 978-1-4641-1069-6). Make sure it is the "Without Subregions" version.]

This textbook will be the main source of information, data, and analysis that this course draws on. Each week, readings from this book will be assigned and you will be expected to have read and studied those before you come to class. Quizzes and Exams will draw directly on the material covered in the textbook. I cannot stress enough therefore, how important it is for you to thoroughly read assigned chapters. Additional readings will be distributed in class.

## Using Canvas

Our course will be on Canvas at: <https://canvas.fiu.edu/>. Make sure you know how to log in to the site. Additional readings will be posted here together with announcements. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to the site and know how to use it. If you experience problems with Canvas, phone 305.348-3630, or visit the Resource Center at MANGO 5th Floor for walk-in support.

## Grading and Exams

There will be a total of 500 points available in this class, broken down as follows:

1. Attendance and Participation	10%	50 points
2. Exam #1	30%	150 points
3. Exam #2	30%	150 points
4. Exam #3	30%	150 points
TOTAL	100%	500 points

I use a standard grading scale. Final grade ranges are as follows (fractional grades are rounded to the nearest whole number):

A = 93%-100% / A- = 90%-92% / B+ = 87%-89% / B = 83%-86% / B- = 80%-82%  
C+ = 77%-79% / C = 73%-76% / D = 60%-72% / F = below 60%

## Attendance and Participation

Attendance in class is necessary to achieve a passing grade. Students are responsible for all information, materials, and instructions disseminated during the class period. The lectures and readings will be complimentary but often quite different in content, and the exams will reflect this.

For attendance and participation, we will award points in a number of ways: 1) through announced tasks – for example, I might ask you to prepare a short summary and relevant questions about the reading for discussion; 2) through unannounced tasks – such as a map quiz or a question in class about the readings; 3) sometimes we will just take attendance. All of these will be quite easy to obtain points, if you attend class on a regular basis and prepare the relevant readings. Please note: No make-ups are granted for participation points if you miss a particular class, no matter what the reason. ***Attendance and Participation accounts for 10% of the Final Grade.***

Extra credit: Additional points may be acquired through attending and writing a short report on geography-relevant lectures (guest speakers on campus, for example). I don't know when or how many of those opportunities will arise during this particular semester, but shall announce them in good time if they do. Up to a maximum of 10 points may be gained in this way for each extra credit. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities when they arrive.

## Exams

There will be three (3) examinations during the semester. They will be of similar length, format, and difficulty. Exams are not comprehensive; that is, Exam #1 covers the first part of the course material, Exam # 2 covers the second part, etc. Exams will be a mixture of short essay and multiple choice questions drawing from lectures and readings. I will explain details in class. ***Each exam accounts for 30% of the Final Grade.***

**IMPORTANT:** *Essay writing* forms an important part in this class and will be tested in the exams. I expect you to be able to write in an articulate manner and present a coherent argument. You also need good command of the English language. If you feel you have problems with your writing skills, please address these concerns asap with your TA or with me. You may also want to use the resources in the Center for Excellence in Writing (located in the Green Library), where you can get help from writing tutors or participate in workshops to help sharpen your skills as a writer: <http://writingcenter.fu.edu>.

## Make-Up Policy

Flat tires, conflicts with work or travel, or the neighbor's dog barking all night are not valid reasons for missing an exam. Make-up exams are allowed for incapacitating illness, a death in the immediate family, official university travel, or jury duty. NO make up exams without: 1) a note from a doctor that a student was incapable of attending for medical reasons; 2) documentation of a death in the immediate family; 3) documentation from a university official; or 4) documentation from the court regarding jury duty. No make-ups given for in-class participation exercises you may miss.

## Electronic Device Policy

Think of the class as take-off time with an airline. All electronic devices ***must be turned off*** and stowed for the duration. That includes laptops, cell phones, iPads, etc.

The reasons for this policy are quite simple: First, while electronic devices can be useful tools, they are almost always also being used by students to check Facebook, Twitter, or similar social media sites during class. This is a huge distraction, not just for the student concerned but also for everyone else around, including me. Second, I always recommend taking notes in handwritten form, a much more efficient way of learning and memorizing lecture notes. Many scientists agree that handwriting is beneficial to the overall learning process. Read this [NYT article](#), e.g.

As you will agree, I have adopted this strict electronic device policy for your and the class's benefit.

Please note: If you are found to ignore this electronic device policy, you will get reprimanded and are subject to being removed from class. The TA or myself may take away your electronic device for the remainder of the class, and we will deduct attendance points. Repeat offenders are subject to University disciplinary actions. By taking this class you express your consent to these rules.

## **Academic Misconduct, Cheating and Plagiarism**

Academic misconduct is defined as the following intentional acts or omissions:

**Cheating:** The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or unauthorized use of on-line exams, library materials or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers (or on-line examination) or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. Any student helping another cheat may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

**Plagiarism:** The use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

**Penalties:** Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated and dealt with according to the proceedings outlined in the Student Handbook. Please familiarize yourselves with this policy. The minimum penalty for such offense in this class is zero points for that particular assignment plus a full grade deduction in your final grade (i.e., if you were otherwise to receive a B in class, you will get a C instead, etc.). In addition I report all students guilty of plagiarism to Academic Affairs for further disciplinary actions, which, in case of repeat offenders, may include expulsion from the university.

## **A Reminder of FIU's Student Code of Conduct**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

### **Important Dates**

- Exam #1 Feb 19
- Spring Break: NO CLASS Mar 11-17
- Exam #2 Mar 26
- Exam #3 Apr 18

## Lecture Topics and Readings

Please note: This is a draft schedule, which is subject to change. Assigned readings should be completed prior to the lectures for that week.

### **Week 1: Jan 8, 10**

- Introduction to concepts in geography
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 1

### **Week 2: Jan 15, 17**

- Introduction to concepts in geography (continued)
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 1

### **Week 3: Jan 22, 24**

- Region: North America
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 2

### **Week 4: Jan 29, 31**

- Region: North America (continued)
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 2

### **Week 5: Feb 5, 7**

- Region: Middle and South America
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 3

### **Week 6: Feb 12, 14**

- Region: Middle and South America (continued)
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 3

### **Week 7: Feb 19, 21**

- **EXAM #1: Tuesday, Feb 19**
  - Thursday, Feb 21: Region: Europe
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 4

### **Week 8: Feb 26, 28**

- Region: Europe (continued)
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 4

### **Week 9: Mar 5, 7**

- Region: North Africa and Southwest Asia
- Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 6

**Week 10: Mar 12, 14**

- NO CLASS: Spring Break!

**Week 11: Mar 19, 21**

- Region: North Africa and Southwest Asia (continued)

Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 6

**Week 12: Mar 26, 28**

- **EXAM #2: Tuesday, Mar 26**
- Thursday, Mar 28: Region: Sub-Saharan Africa

Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 7

**Week 13: Apr 2, 4**

- Region: Sub-Saharan Africa (continued)

Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 7

**Week 14: Apr 9, 11**

- Region: South Asia

Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 8

**Week 15: Apr 16, 18**

- Region: South Asia (continued)

Reading: Pulsipher, Chapter 8

- **EXAM #3: Thursday, Apr 18**

**Week 16: Apr 23, 25**

**FINALS WEEK**

- Wrap-up of class