

GEA2000: World Regional Geography

FIU Fall 2024 Semester

Dr. Melissa Bernardo
Email: mebernar@fiu.edu
Office: SIPA 316B (or Zoom)
Office hours: Wednesdays 5-7pm
and by appointment (virtual or in-person)

Course Description

This is an introductory course in geography, in which students will learn and apply geographic lenses to investigate world regions. This class will provide students with key concepts and theories in geography to interrogate various contemporary and historical issues of the globe. There will be a focus on two intersecting themes throughout the semester – development and climate change – that have become defining forces of the world today.

The course fulfills the Global Learning Foundations requirement that counts toward the 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, please visit: <http://goglobal.fiu.edu>.

Global Learning Course Goals and Learning Objectives

Using critical geographic lenses, students will explore the physical, cultural, economic, and political characteristics of the different world regions. By the end of the semester, each student will be able to contextualize major world issues and use their knowledge to better understand the complexity of places in a global context.

More specifically, the overall course goals for this class are as follows:

1. Students will gain a foundational knowledge of global processes of change that involve both the physical earth and the human world.
2. Students will be able to engage, construct, and apply multiple perspectives in order to critically examine complex world issues and events.
3. Students will be able to draw connections between local and global processes and identify the impact these global systems have to their own communities.

Based on these course goals, students will be able to accomplish the following in each of the class modules:

- Identify key geographic concepts and themes

- Distinguish between physical and human geography and how these sub-disciplines approach research
- Apply critical thinking to socioecological problems and identify alternative global perspectives
- Analyze geographic data on regional maps
- Develop critical thinking on how world regions are constructed

Course Materials

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)

Canvas: Any additional readings will be announced in advance and posted online.

Other useful resources for class activities:

- NPR - <http://www.npr.org/sections/news/>
- BBC News - <http://news.bbc.co.uk>
- New York Times - <http://www.nytimes.com> (Go to nytimes.com/FIU for free one-year access)
- Our World in Data (Oxford) <https://ourworldindata.org>

Course structure

This course is a **hybrid** class. At FIU, hybrid is defined as “a course that has 50% of instruction conducted online and the other 50% conducted in class” (FIU Hybrid Provost Program). Students will be expected to complete readings and activities online, while also attending lectures and discussions once a week in class. This hybrid format will provide students with more flexibility, allowing them to access course materials and complete assignments at their leisure. However, internet access is obviously a requirement and students will need to implement good time management skills. More specifically, students will be responsible for the following:

Canvas: This class uses Canvas as a course webpage. All the readings, class activities, assignment instructions, and the weekly announcements will be posted here. Student must access Canvas on a weekly basis. Students can go to <https://fiu.instructure.com/courses> and log in using your FIU credentials.

Textbook and additional readings: Students must read the assigned textbook chapter of the week. In addition, other mandatory readings for the course may include news articles, reports, book chapters, webpages, etc. Links to all of these materials will be announced in class and in the online weekly announcement. Additional readings will complement (not repeat) the lectures, and students are accountable for all assigned readings on the quizzes.

Class Meetings: There will be one 75-minute classes each week (Fridays). Students are required to attend ALL of these meetings and will be responsible for the material presented for the

module quizzes. There will be group activities include discussion, debate, and problem-solving exercises.

Course evaluation

<i>Graded Item</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Quizzes	25%	Online quizzes on Canvas
2. Activities	35%	Activities on Canvas
3. Attendance/participation	15%	Weekly contribution/attendance
4. Final project	25%	Paper and infographic

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.

Course activities: Online 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. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas and reminders about due dates will be included in the weekly announcements.

Attendance/Participation: Students must attend class each week. Three or more unexcused absences can result in a loss of all attendance and participation points. For each module, students will be asked to participate either online (post a reflection or a thoughtful response to a classmate's reflection on Canvas) or during class (contributing something significant to class discussion). The purpose is to make sure students are engaging with the course materials on a consistent basis.

- There will also be mini in-class assignments. This will typically consist of group work that will count towards students' attendance and participation grades. Make-ups will not be offered online.

Final project (Written Paper & Infographic Poster): This is an individual project that will be submitted at the end of the semester. Students will be creating an infographic poster on a social, political, economic, environmental, etc. issue in a region of their choosing. In short paper students will then explain why they chose this issue, what the infographic specifically conveys about this topic, how this issue impacts the region that they have selected, and then draw global connections to understand the larger implications of the issue they have chosen. Additional instructions with a grading rubric will be uploaded to Canvas and discussed during the lectures.

Class policies

Attendance and assignment

It is each student's responsibility to attend all class sessions, read or watch the assigned readings and/or videos, and complete the weekly assignments on time. Attendance is **mandatory**. If a student has 3 or more unexcused absences, he/she/they can lose all participation points for the semester (worth 15% of your total grade). Without an excused absence, late work will only be accepted for three days after the deadline and will have 10% of the total point deduction. Unexpected absences made for serious reasons (i.e., emergency, death of a family member, acute illness) will be excused with documentation.

Communication

Weekly announcements will be posted on Canvas. Important messages will also be sent to each student's email address. If students have any urgent questions or concerns, they are encouraged to send me an email instead of using Canvas messages. Students are asked to please be polite and responsible when communicating with the professor and/or 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.

A.I. Technology can be helpful when brainstorming. However, A.I. generated writing will not be allowed in this class. You are expected to complete all writing assignments and quizzes yourself. Everything you hand in will be run through plagiarism and A.I. detection software. Assignments that are flagged will receive a 0 (if it is the first offense, students will be given the opportunity to re-do the assignment with points deducted).

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct, please contact me or consult FIU academic misconduct webpage at <https://dasa.fiu.edu/all-departments/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/>.

University resources

Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels he/she/they 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.