

GEO 101: Introduction to Cultural Geography

Course Syllabus Spring 2019

Contact Information

Instructor

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Course Description

GEO 101: Introduction to Cultural Geography (3 credits)

A survey of world patterns of culture, such as population, language, religion, urban and rural settlement, and their causal relationships, emphasizing the global diversity of world cultures, contrasting worldviews and the issues thus raised. This course fulfills the UWC requirement for Social Sciences (SS).

Course Outcomes

Culture is hard to define; however, some of the components of it are easily recognized and include things like population, migration, language, religion, material items, ethnicity, politics, and development. We will examine all of these and several other issues during the semester. We will stress the variation in the cultural landscape and critically analyze several current problems facing modern society, such as overpopulation and differences between societies.

As a result of taking this course, you will be able to

1. analyze, synthesize, evaluate and interpret geographic information and ideas;
2. interpret graphs, tables, diagrams, and maps;
3. read and evaluate material with comprehension and critical perception; and
4. gather information from printed sources, electronic sources, and observation.

By working through each lesson and participating in the discussions, we will exchange ideas that will help us to better understand the diversity of the cultural landscape and the similarities and differences between different social groups.

Expectations of Students

Your course, Introduction to Cultural Geography (GEO 101), is highly structured and adheres to a very strict timetable of course events. The course is divided into units. Each unit covers a specific area of cultural geography. The units are broken into a series of lessons. Each lesson emphasizes a specific topic. We work on a regular schedule. As we move through the semester, you must complete all of the readings, assignments, and quizzes as scheduled.

You will have several readings throughout the semester. Some of these readings will be required readings, and others will be suggested readings. You must complete all of the required readings during the period for which they are assigned because they will be the building blocks for future discussions. You must also complete all assignments on time. Late assignments will not be accepted unless there is a compelling reason for me to do so.

Since we are working with an online course, we need to communicate with each other on a regular basis in order to ask any questions or to clarify any issues that arise during the semester. This also includes dialogue among members of the class in regard to group assignments. For the best way to communicate with your instructor, please refer to the Faculty Information page.

My expectations of you during the semester include the following:

- complete all reading assignments in a timely manner,
- complete all written assignments as scheduled,
- present all quizzes as scheduled, and
- communicate with each other in a timely manner.

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating on any quiz or plagiarizing any assignment will be handled on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the guidelines established by the UW-Colleges.

FAQs

Is the course self-paced?

Answer: Up to a point. The pace is flexible within an individual unit, but each unit must be completed before the date of its scheduled exam. Each unit is divided into lessons. You have the flexibility of doing some of the activities on weekends or working ahead. If an activity includes responding to a discussion question, then you should respond in a timely fashion so that a meaningful dialogue can take place.

Do the exams have to be proctored?

Answer: No, your quizzes do not have to be proctored.

How do I find out if there are any new class announcements that I need to know about?

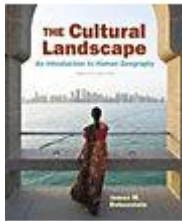
Answer: You should always check the News widget on the Course Home page you see when you first log in to the course.

TEXTBOOK, REQUIRED SOFTWARE, AND COURSE TOPICS

The textbook for this course should be purchased online through Follett. For detailed information and resources regarding textbook purchases, please visit the [Academic Resources Textbooks Page](#). Unfortunately, our textbook support staff cannot provide assistance with textbook orders placed through other vendors. If you ordered your textbook through a different provider you will need to contact that provider directly.

Please Note: UW Colleges campus bookstores do not stock UW Colleges Online textbooks.

Textbook



For your class, you will be reading both the textbook material and assigned online articles. The required textbook for the course is

James M. Rubenstein, *The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography*, 12th edition revised. (Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, N.J., 2011). ISBN-13: 9780134206233

Online articles will be assigned throughout the class to coincide with specific discussion topics. You should do your reading early in each lesson so that you can participate in the class discussions.

Required Software

As a student enrolled in the course, programs that you are required to use include

- Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox web browser,
- Microsoft Word, and

- Adobe Acrobat Reader.

If you do not have these programs on your home-based computer, they are generally available on the machines at all UW Colleges computer labs. Discounted software is available for purchase through the University.

Antivirus Software

You should have a virus protection program such as McAfee or Norton running on your PC. You should also update your virus signature files often.

If a virus gets out among the users in an online course, it can take some time for everyone to get their computers cleaned up. If you are not running current antivirus software, please do so.

Course Topics

Cultural geography is the branch of geography which emphasizes the study of patterns and processes that shape human interaction with various environments. It encompasses human, political, social, and economic aspects. While the major focus of cultural geography is not the physical landscape, it is not possible to discuss cultural geography without referring to the physical landscape on which human activities are being played out. Environmental geography is emerging as a link between the two.

Several topics are examined during the semester. Each topic is covered in a lesson which includes homework assignments, discussions, and quizzes. Below is a list of the lesson titles for the semester.

Lesson Titles:

- Lesson 1: This is Geography
- Lesson 2: Population and Health
- Lesson 3: Migration
- Lesson 4: Folk and Popular Culture
- Lesson 5: Language
- Lesson 6: Religion
- Lesson 7: Ethnicity
- Lesson 8: Political Geography
- Lesson 9: Development
- Lesson 10: Agriculture
- Lesson 11: Industry and Energy
- Lesson 12: Services and Settlements
- Lesson 13: Urban Patterns
- Lesson 14: Capstone Experience

COURSE STRUCTURE

Open Discussion Forums

On our Discussion board, we have three open discussion threads where we can exchange general information. The first thread is Raise Your Hand. This is the place where you can ask me questions about the different topics that we are studying in the course. The second thread is the Cyber Cafe. This is an area where you can exchange information of the main topics of the course. You can consider this to be the chat area for the course. Please feel free to exchange ideas in the Cyber Cafe. The third thread is the Current Events forum where you can post any announcements relative to upcoming events that are pertinent to our course material.

Posting to Online Discussions

Following is a set of guidelines that you are to use for all of your postings to the Discussion board.

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Use appropriate language for a classroom setting.
- Do not make derogatory comments to a classmate either directly or implied.
- Do not post trivial comments.
- Do not use the Forums as a "soap box" for personal opinions.
- Do not post long and rambling commentaries to a discussion. If you need to write 300 words or more use an attachment and briefly describe the contents of the attachment in the comment box.
- Do not "cut and paste" material from other websites into your postings. All postings are to be your own work. If you feel that that a website offers valuable information, then provide the URL for the website and brief explanation regarding its contents in your contribution.
- Use the other mechanisms available to you at the course site to communicate with your fellow classmates for exchanges that are off the topic. This would include the *Cyber Café* discussion topic or direct email between individuals.

Submitting Assignments to the Dropbox

All of your homework assignments and discussion summaries are to be uploaded to the Dropbox. The assignments must be submitted in the appropriate folder. Your file should be named using this format: "Smith_AssignmentTypeX.doc". You should also include your name in the actual document. In naming your file, you should **not** use any spaces or any special characters (# \$ % & =); an underscore character is okay. All your assignments need to be submitted as a Microsoft Word file or in a Rich Text format (rtf).

Learning Assessment

Your class may participate in college, departmental, or institutional level learning assessments in any given semester. If the class is assessed, students will be informed of the process and given the option of not participating in the assessment. The UW Colleges assessment program enhances the quality and effectiveness of curriculum, programs, and services to our students

because they are of primary importance for student learning. Learning assessments are conducted each semester in all disciplines for select courses offered by the UW-Colleges. The assessment results do not count towards your grade, but rather they are used to gather statistical information about student learning. The information derived from the analysis of the assessment data is used as guidance to your professors so that we can improve the effectiveness in our delivery of educational material in the classroom.

If your class has been selected to participate in the UW-Colleges assessment program this semester, I will inform you of this fact. Your participation in the assessment program is voluntary and you can choose not to have your results reported as part of the report. However, you must complete any assignments associated with an assessment activity as part of your course work.

GRADING POLICY

There are specific due dates for the homework, quizzes, discussions, and discussion summaries associated with each lesson. I must receive your assignments by their due dates in order for you to receive credit for your work. Assignments returned past the due date will not be accepted for grading unless there is sufficient cause, such as illness or death in the family, for me to do so.

Point Distribution

Online Quizzes	195 points	(15 points each)
Homework	195 points	(15 points each)
Discussions	195 points	(15 points each)
Discussion Summaries	195 points	(15 points each)
Capstone Project	60 points	
Total:	840 points	

All work must be turned in on time or a grade of zero will be given for the task. Exceptions to this policy will be considered only for medical reasons or family emergencies and will be done so on a case-by-case basis. To obtain an extension of a due date, written and verifiable evidence must be provided.

Cases of cheating and plagiarism on any course work will be handled on an individual basis based on the guidelines set forth by the University of Wisconsin Colleges.

Grading Scale

Your final grades are based on your final average that is calculated as a percent of the points that you have earned during the semester to the points that are available. The grading scale for the course is listed below.

A	93%+
A-	90-92%
B+	88-89%
B	84-87%
B-	80-83%
C+	78-79%
C	74-77%
C-	70-73%
D+	68-69%
D	64-67%
D-	60-63%
F	<60%

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

You will have thirteen Homework Assignments relating to material covered in the textbook. Each homework assignment has a value of 15 points for a total of 195 points. Homework assignments must be submitted in a Microsoft Word Document (*.doc or *.docx) or in a Rich Text Format (*.rtf) and uploaded to the appropriate folder in the Dropbox by the due date.

Homework Assignment Grading Rubric

For your Homework Assignments, you will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

Competency	Points	Percent
Exemplary	13.5 to 15	90 to 100
Above typical	12 to 13.5	80 to 89
Typical	10.5 to 12	70 to 79
Below typical	9.0 to 10.5	60 to 69
Non-responsive	0.0 to 9	0 to 59

See competency definitions below.

Exemplary

- Homework Assignment is complete and correct.
- Provides thorough, balanced relevant support of the topic using appropriate resources.
- Very neatly presented.

Above typical

- Homework Assignment is complete and generally correct.
- Generally provides credible support using appropriate resources.
- Neatly presented.

Typical

- Homework Assignment is mostly complete and attempts to address the topic and purpose of the homework assignment.
- Support for topic using appropriate resources is limited.
- Presentation and organization needs improvement.

Below typical

- Homework Assignment is attempted but includes little or no support.
- Weak effort and presentation.

Non-responsive

- Homework Assignment is not submitted by the due date or fails to meet the minimum expectations of "Below Typical" effort.

ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

For each lesson we will have an online discussion. The online discussions pertain to specific topics covered in each lesson. Topics and specific expectations for each online discussion are posted with the material for that lesson. You will submit your comments in the appropriate discussion forum in the **Discussions** area.

It is important that you participate in the online discussions for each lesson because this is where we exchange some of our ideas. Your contributions to each lesson's discussion are worth 15 points for a total of 195 points for the semester. You are not required to respond to the postings of your classmates. However, you must respond to direct questions or comments made about your own postings by your classmates or your instructor. If you fail to respond to such comments, you will receive a lower score in the discussion than if you had responded.

Lesson Discussion Grading Rubric

For your lesson discussion postings, you will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

Competency	Points	Percent
Exemplary	13.5 to 15	90 to 100
Above typical	12.0 to 13.5	80 to 89
Typical	10.5 to 12	70 to 79
Below typical	9.0 to 10.5	60 to 69

Non-responsive 0 to 9 0 to 59

See competency definitions below.

Exemplary

- Information clearly relates to the main topic and adds new concepts and information. It includes several supporting details or examples.
- Consistently provides resources even if not required.
- Enhances the critical thinking process consistently through premise reflection and difference of questioning self or others.
- Encourages and facilitates interaction among the members of the group.
- Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used consistently throughout the discussion.

Above typical

- Information clearly relates to the main topic.
- Occasionally provides resources even if not required.
- Critical thinking and premise reflection is demonstrated in the discussion by the individual only.
- Responds to other members of the group.
- Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used consistently throughout the discussion.

Typical

- Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details or examples are given.
- Provides resources when requested.
- Responds to questions but does not engage in premise reflection.
- Rarely interacts or responds to other members of the group.
- Both professional vocabulary and writing style are used occasionally throughout the discussion.

Below typical

- Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic or simply relates to the main topic.
- Does not provide resources even when requested.
- Does not respond to questions posed by the instructor.
- Responds to the instructor only.
- Professional vocabulary and writing style is not used.

Non-responsive

Posting not submitted to the discussion forum by the due date or fails to meet the minimum expectations of "Below Typical" effort.

DISCUSSION SUMMARIES

After each discussion has concluded, you will be required to submit a written summary of the discussion. You can earn a maximum of 15 points for each Discussion Summary for a total of 195 points. Discussion Summaries are to be uploaded to the Dropbox as either an MS Word Document (*.doc or *.docx) or in a Rich Text Format (*.rtf). All Discussion Summaries must be submitted by the due date listed in the Course Calendar for you to receive credit for the assignment.

To write a Discussion Summary, you will read through all of the postings for the lesson's discussion. Prepare a generic summary of the discussion by listing the key points that were raised. Include any points from your own posting, the contributions of your classmates, and my responses that seem appropriate. Your generic summary does not have to detail every point raised in the discussion, but it should emphasize the major themes and concepts mentioned. You need to provide enough information in your summary to demonstrate that you have a clear understanding of the discussion topic. In order to emphasize specific points, please feel free to cite the postings of your classmates or my responses. **Your Discussion Summary must be a minimum of 300 words in length to receive a passing grade.**

Lesson Discussion Summary Grading Rubric:

For your Discussion Summaries, you will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

Competency	Points	Percent
Exemplary	13.5 to 15	90 to 100
Above typical	12.0 to 13.5	80 to 89
Typical	10.5 to 12.0	70 to 79
Below typical	9.0 to 10.5	60 to 69
Non-responsive	0 to 9	0 to 59

See competency definitions below.

Exemplary

- Work done to a professional level of standards.
- Shows great consideration of the discussion topic under consideration.
- Summary of the main ideas of the discussion is complete.

Above typical

- Work is very competent.
- Shows good consideration of the discussion topic under consideration.
- Summary of the main ideas of the discussion are mainly complete.

Typical

- Work is moderately competent.
- Some consideration of the discussion topic under consideration.
- Summary of the main ideas of the discussion is incomplete.

Below typical

- Work shows little or no application of subject knowledge.
- Summary of the main ideas of the discussion are generally missing.

Non-responsive

- Discussion Summary is not submitted by the due date or fails to meet the minimum expectations of "Below Typical" effort.

QUIZZES

Each lesson corresponds to a chapter in the textbook. You are responsible for reading all of the material assigned from each chapter. After you read a chapter, take the online quiz to evaluate your understanding of the material. There are 15 multiple-choice questions on each quiz. Each quiz has a value of 15 points. There are 13 chapter quizzes for a total of 195 points. You are able to take each quiz only three times. After you complete a quiz, you will be able to see the questions that you answered correctly so that you can improve your scores on subsequent attempts. There is a one hour time limit in which you must complete your quiz. Your online quizzes do not have to be proctored. You may use your textbook to help you answer the questions, but it is very important that you have read the chapter in the textbook before taking a quiz so that you are very familiar with the material. All quizzes must be taken by the assigned due date for you to receive credit for your work.

Quizzes Grading Rubric

For your quizzes, you will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

Competency	Points	Percent
Exemplary	13.5 to 15	90 to 100
Above typical	12.0 to 13.5	80 to 89
Typical	10.5 to 12.0	70 to 79
Below typical	9.0 to 10.5	60 to 69
Non-responsive	0 to 9	0 to 59

CAPSTONE PROJECT

A capstone project is an assignment that serves to pull together the many different concepts that you have learned over the semester. You will be using the knowledge that you have gained to write a 1,500-word essay about your hometown. Specific topics that need to be covered will be provided to help organize your information. You are the local experts on the subject. Completion of the project will give you a better understanding of your community.

Please note that the essay is not a term paper. You will write the paper from your own perspective by synthesizing information about your community.

The capstone experience will count as your final exam.

Capstone Project Grading Rubric

You will be graded according to the rubric provided below.

Competency	Points	Percent
Exemplary	54 to 60	90 to 100
Above typical	48 to 54	80 to 89
Typical	42 to 48	70 to 79
Below typical	36 to 42	60 to 69
Non-responsive	0 to 36	0 to 59

See competency descriptions below.

Exemplary

- The individual work presented was accurate, well researched and answered the big question thoroughly.
- The essay was interesting, creative, and addressed a wide audience.
- The overall quality of the project was excellent and each part of the paper was well put together.

Above typical

- The individual work presented was accurate and answered the big question.
- The essay was interesting, creative, and addressed a wide audience.
- The overall quality of the essay was very good.

Typical

- The individual work presented was accurate but did not answer the big question.

- The essay was interesting.
- The overall quality of the essay was good.

Below typical

- The individual work presented was not accurate or did not answer the big question.
- The essay lacked interest and creativity.
- The overall quality of the essay was poor and many parts of the project were not well put together.

Non-responsive

- The essay is incomplete, contains major errors in content, or the component parts of the essay were not returned for grading by the due dates.

REVIEW MATERIAL

Anonymous Examples

After your homework assignments and discussion summaries have been graded, I will post anonymous examples of these materials. Using the sample homework assignments and discussion summaries, you will be able to compare your work to work that has received full credit so that you can determine where you may have lost points. I will also post keys for each quiz so that you can determine which answers you missed. You will find the links to these items embedded in discussion forums in the **Discussions** area.