

Course Outline

World Regional Geography

12345 (GEO 111)

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11:00 – 12:15

Three Rivers Community College

Norwich, CT 06360

Instructor: Peter Patsouris

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.; 6:00-6:30 p.m.

Or by appointment

Spring 2014

Course Description:

This course will introduce basic principles of geography, using the context of world regions, in order to gain an insight into relevant global issues. To study world regional geography is to study the dynamic and complex relationships between people and the world they inhabit. Students will gain knowledge of basic geographical tools and concepts needed to understand the complexity of regions and to appreciate the interconnections between their own lives and those of people in different parts of the world. Emphasis will be placed on the following topics: *Globalization and the links between the global and the local; the unevenness of political and economic development; and linking society and nature.*

Learning Goal

By the end of the course, students will gain knowledge of basic geographical tools and concepts to understand regions and the interconnections between themselves and others around the world.

Learning Objectives

Actively engage in the learning process through demonstrated success on the final project

- Employ correct research skills
- Synthesize information to demonstrate knowledge of subject matter
- Select, design and present data which demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter

Actively engage in the learning process through demonstrated success on current events assignments

- Identify topics
- Read, assess, summarize and synthesize material
- Articulate central themes

Required Texts:

De Blij, H.J.; Muller, Peter O; Nijman, Jan; WinklerPrins, Antoinette M.G.A.: The World Today: Concepts and Regions in Geography 6th ed. John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 2013

Tentative Schedule:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Class Content</u>	<u>Text book Reading and Assignments</u>
Week of January 21 st	Intro to Course	None
Week of January 28 th	Introduction to World Regional Geography; Europe	Introduction; Chapter 1
Week of February 4 th Note – No class on February 6 th : all College professional day	Europe (cont.)	Chapter 1
Week of February 11 th	Russia	Chapter 2; Current Events article for Europe due.
Week of February 18 th	North America	Chapter 3; Current Events article for Russia due.
Week of February 25 th	First Test Middle America	Chapter 4; Current Events article for North America due.
Week of March 4 th	Middle America (cont.) South America	Chapter 5; Current Events article for Middle America due

Week of March 11 th	South America (cont.) Sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 5 and chapter 6; Current Events article for South America due.
Week of March 18 th Note: No class – Spring break	None	None
Week of March 25 th	Sub-Saharan Africa (cont.)	Chapter 6; Current Events article for Sub-Saharan Africa due.
Week of April 1 st Note – Final project proposals due on April 3 rd	Second Test North Africa/Southwest Asia	Chapter 7
Week of April 8 th	North Africa/Southwest Asia South Asia	Chapter 7 and chapter 8; Current Events article for North Africa/Southwest Asia due.
Week of November 15 th	South Asia (cont.) East Asia	Chapter 8 and chapter 9; Current Events article for South Asia due.
Week of April 22 nd	East Asia (cont.)	Chapter 9 and chapter 10; Current Events article for East Asia due.
Week of April 29 th	Southeast Asia	Chapter 10
Week of May 6 th - Note: Final Projects due on May 8th.	In class presentations	Current Events for Southeast Asia due.

Week of May 13 th	Third test	None
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Method of Evaluation:

This course will focus heavily on reading, writing, and research, and the assignments will be reflective of that.

Tests

You will be given a test after every three units of learned material, which will consist of multiple-choice questions and a longer essay. The test material will come from lectures, readings, video presentations, and class discussions. The tests will make up 50% of your total grade

Current Events Journal

Each week, you will be required to choose an article from a newspaper, magazine, or journal that is directly relevant to a region or a topic that we will be discussing in class, and write a detailed summary that will serve as a basis for class discussion. Please read a description of what I am looking for later on in the syllabus. The journals will be worth 25% of your grade.

Final Research Project

On December 5th (or the day you give your oral presentation, if that is your choice) you will be required to complete a research project that covers an important topic during the course. I will allow students to have a certain amount of freedom to choose how to complete the assignment and what topic they choose (even if I do not cover it in class), but here is a list of *possible* ways to fulfill the assignment:

1. A five-page paper.
2. A 5-10 minute formal in-class presentation.
3. An art project.

If you have ideas about doing something different and/or unique (such as the art project), I encourage you to speak to me directly so that we can work something out that satisfies both of us.

The more creative and challenging the assignment is, the higher it will be graded. I ask that you hand in a topic proposal on April 3rd so that I am sure you are on the right track. Please see the attached sheets for information on the written paper and oral presentation. This component will be worth 25% of your grade.

Digication Statement

As a student you will maintain an online learning portfolio using a college-designed template in Digication. Through this electronic tool you will have the opportunity to monitor your own growth in college-wide learning. It may even help you determine a major that is best suited to you. You will be able to keep and maintain your learning portfolio after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. If your work is selected and reviewed for assessment purposes, it will remain anonymous and private. Digication provides a “place” where you will connect your learning from the classroom, college, and life in general. Sometimes when you review all of the work you have done and think about it, you end up learning something different and perhaps unexpected. Please review your course outlines to determine what assignments to upload into the TRCC Digication template and please post your own choices, as well. Have fun in learning!

Grading System:

A = 94-100	C = 74-77
A- = 90-93	C- = 70-73
B+ = 88-89	D+ = 68-70
B = 84-87	D = 64-67
B- = 80-83	D- = 60-62
C+ = 78-79	F = Below 60

Paper Information

All written materials that are handed in must be typed, double-spaced and follow the writing rubric that is at the end of this syllabus. If you have any trouble with writing, I strongly advise you visit the writing and tutoring center. Furthermore, the following web site will help answer many, if not all of your questions on writing:

http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/Ed_Resources/writing_center/

Late Assignments/Make-Up Exams

(Please note that none of following applies if we have made arrangements beforehand)

My policy on late assignments and make-up exams is as follows: I will accept the first late writing assignment during the same week that it is due, and give you partial credit. The second and subsequent late assignments will be given minimal credit during the same week. No credit will be given if handed in later.

A first missed exam must be made up in the same week that it has been given for a one-letter grade penalty. The second and third missed exam will be penalized at least two letter grades.

I will not accept any final project after the due date unless we have an agreement beforehand. Final projects will be penalized one letter grade for being late, plus one letter grade for each additional late day.

Attendance:

Please look at the student handbook regarding the college's attendance policies. It goes without saying that habitual absences or lateness will negatively affect your individual contribution grade.

Having said this, I would like to give you my philosophy on attendance: You are all adults and have paid to take this class. What you choose to do with that is up to you. I will never penalize any grade directly because of attendance. Furthermore, you do not need to supply me an excuse for any classes missed. If you have a problem, personal or academic, which will require you to miss class for any length of time, please come talk to me so that we can come to an agreeable solution.

Disabilities Statement:

If you have a hidden or visible disability, which may require classroom or assignment modifications, you are obligated to come see me as soon as possible.

Academic Dishonesty:

Any form of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the college immediately, and may result in the failure of an assignment or the course itself.

Finally, I would like to add that the best part of my job is getting to know all of you better and helping you in whatever your goals may be. I believe in and am truly committed to the mission of the community college, but I know that there is a chance that real life intrudes. If at any point during the semester you are struggling in the course or have a problem for any reason (personal, academic, etc), I encourage you to talk to me so that we can come up with a solution that works for both of us. I want to see you thrive and succeed, and any way that I can help you in doing that is worth the investment.

Current Events Assignments

Beginning with the material in chapter one of your textbook, I would like you to choose an article in a reputable newspaper, magazine, or journal (web sites are fine) that ties in directly with the issues that are covered in the course. The topic may be an issue that is universal but focused in that particular region, or is something that is very specific to that particular region.

I would like you to do the following: summarize the main points of the article; show how the article directly links to the issues discussed in class; finally, give me your opinions about the central themes raised, especially things that interested you or that you learned for the first time.

I expect that the assignment will be approximately 2 typewritten pages in length, and you should be ready to discuss it during class. Also, please include a copy of the article or the link to the website, so that I can compare it to what you have written.

By reputable sources, I am referring to publications that are not directed for mass consumption, but rather have reputations for high journalistic standards and/or ethics. I have included a list of unacceptable and acceptable sources that are easy to find in the Mohegan Campus library or are available in online editions. Please note that this is not an exclusive list, as there are numerous other sources that you can use. If you are unsure about a source, please write or see me and we can discuss it.

Unacceptable Sources

Any wire service reports (Associated Press, Reuters, etc) in local and regional papers

USA Today

Time

Newsweek

U.S. News and World Report

Acceptable Sources

Wall Street Journal

New York Times

The Economist

National Geographic

Atlantic Monthly

Current History

National Review

New Republic

Harper's Monthly

Sources from educational databases found through the TRCC library

In the past, students have approached this assignment in many ways. Most will just find an article for that week regardless of what the topic might be. Others will focus on a particular issue or theme (environment, women's rights, politics, etc) and use it as the common theme for every current events assignment. A bonus for the latter is that the articles can be used as research documents for the final project.

Research Essay Rubric

	10	9	8	7	6-0
THESIS	Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.	Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking insight or originality.	Unclear (contains vague terms), appears unoriginal, or offers relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.	Difficult to identify and may blend restatement of obvious point.	Has no identifiable thesis or an utterly incompetent thesis. Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment.
STRUCTURE	Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.	Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.	Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, and there are many paragraphs without topic sentences.	Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.	No evidence structure or organization.
USE OF EVIDENCE	Primary and secondary source information	Examples used to support most points. Some	Examples support some points.	Very few or weak examples and	No attempt has been made to incorporate

	incorporated to buttress every point. Examples support thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences. Factual information is incorporated.	evidence does not support point or may appear where inappropriate. Quotations are integrated well into sentences. Some factual information is incorporated.	Quotations may be poorly integrated into sentences. There may not be a clear point. Moderate amount of factual information is incorporated.	factual information. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no particular point.	factual information or interpret primary and secondary sources.
LOGIC AND ARGUMENTATION	All ideas flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections which illuminate thesis	Argument is clear and usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to evidence are made.	Logic may often fail, or the argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any connections with the thesis. May also contain logical contradictions.	Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic, and there is no effort to grasp possible alternative views. Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument.	Too incoherent to determine.
MECHANICS	Language is clearly organized. Correct word usage, punctuation, sentence structure, and grammar; correct citation of sources; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.	Sentence structure and grammar strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some spelling errors and at least one run-on sentence, sentence fragment, or comma splice.	Minor problems in sentence structure and grammar. Multiple errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several (two to five) run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and comma splices.	Huge problems in sentence structure and grammar. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many (more than five) run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and comma splices.	Very difficult to understand owing to major problems in mechanics.

* This rubric is taken from users.ju.edu/jhingso/historygradingrubric.htm