

Course Outline

World Regional Geography

31246 (GEO 111)

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 11:00-11:50

Three Rivers Community College

Norwich, CT 06360

Instructor: Peter Patsouris

Email Address: ppatsouris@trcc.commnet.edu

Office Phone: (860) 892 - 5703

Office Hours – Room C108:

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.; 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (By Appointment Only)

Or by appointment

Fall 2010

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. and Muller, Peter O: The World Today: Concepts and Regions in Geography
4th ed. John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 2008

Tentative Schedule:

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Class Content</u>	<u>Text book Reading and Assignments</u>
August 27 th	Intro to Course;	None
August 30 th , September 1 st , September 3 rd	Introduction to World Regional Geography; Europe Part A	Introduction; Chapter 1
September 8 th and 10 th – Note: Note: no class on the 6 th (Labor Day)	Europe – Part B and C	Chapter 1
September 13 th , 15 th and 17 th	Russia - Part A and B	Chapter 2; Current Events article for Europe due on the 17 th
September 20 th , 22 nd and 24 th	North America - Part A and B	Chapter 3; Current Events article for Russia due on the 24 th
September 27 th , 29 th and October 1 st	First Test; Middle America Part A	Chapter 4; Current Events article for North America due on the 1 st
October 4 th , 6 th and 8 th	Middle America – Part B; South America Part A	Chapter 4 and 5

October 11 th , 13 th and 15 th	South America – Part B; Sub-Saharan Africa – Part A	Chapter 5 and 6; Current Events article for Middle America due on the 15 th
October 18 th , 20 th and 22 nd	Sub-Saharan Africa – Part B; North Africa/Southwest Asia – Part A	Chapter 6 and 7; Current Events article for South America due on the 22 nd
October 25 th , 27 th and 29 th	North Africa/Southwest Asia – Part A (cont.) and B	Chapter 7; Current Events article for Sub-Saharan Africa due on the 30 th
November 1 st , 3 rd and 5 th Note – Final project proposals due on the 5 th	Third Test; South Asia – Part A	Chapter 8
November 8 th , 10 th , and 12 th	South Asia – Part A (cont.) South Asia – Part B	Chapter 8; Current Events article for North Africa/Southwest Asia due on the 12 th
November 15 th , 17 th and 19 th	East Asia Part A and B	Chapter 9; Current Events for South Asia due on the 19 th
November 22 nd – Note: no class on the 24 th or 26 th (Thanksgiving Break)	East Asia – Part C	Chapter 9
November 29 th , December 1 st and 3 rd - Note: Final Projects due on December 3 rd	Southeast Asia – Part A and B	Chapter 10; Current Events for East Asia due on the 4 th
December 8 th , 10 th and 12 th	In-class Presentations	None; Current Events for Southeast Asia due on the 11 th

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. Each test will be worth 10% of your final grade, making an overall total of 40%.

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 30% of your grade.

Final Research Project – On December 4th (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 5-10 page paper.
2. A 10-15 minute formal in-class presentation.
3. A paper that compares/contrasts books, films, etc.
4. 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 October 30th 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 30% of your grade.

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 center at Mohegan and TASC in the library at both campuses. They are resources that you should use. 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. A second missed exam will be penalized severely.

I will not accept any final project after the due date unless we have an agreement beforehand.

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. However, lack of attendance will surely affect the class participation portion of your grade which affects your overall grade.

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.

College Withdrawal Policy:

Students may withdraw, in writing at the Registrar's Office, for any reason until the end of the 10th week of classes. From the 11th until the end of the 13th week, a student may withdraw with the signature of the instructor or advisor.

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.

Civility in the Classroom:

The classroom is a place of learning. In this setting all ideas and opinions are to be heard and respected, even if you disagree with what is said. Anyone who upsets this environment, or who disrespects anyone in the class, will not be tolerated.

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 2-3 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

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.

Grading Rubric

THE SUPERIOR PAPER (A/A-)

Thesis: Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

Structure: Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences.

Analysis: Author clearly relates evidence to mini-thesis; analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.

Logic and argumentation: All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes) which illuminate thesis.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

THE GOOD PAPER (B+/B/B-)

Thesis: Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.

Structure: Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Evidence often related to mini-thesis, though links perhaps not very clear.

Logic and argumentation: Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence, sentence fragment, or comma splice.

THE "NEEDS HELP" PAPER (C+/C/C-)

Thesis: May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.

Structure: Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.

Analysis: Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote.

Logic and argumentation: Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections. May contain logical contradictions.

Mechanics: Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). Errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

THE "TRULY NEEDY" PAPER (D+/D/D-)

Thesis: Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

Structure: Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.

Use of evidence: Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner.

Analysis: Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to.

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views. Many logical contradictions, or simply too incoherent to determine.

Mechanics: Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

THE FAILING PAPER

Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis.