

INTRO TO GEOGRAPHY – GEO 101
Professor Heather Verdi
hverdi@mxcc.comnet.edu

Semester – Fall 2014

CRN - 3202

Online – 3 Credits

Textbook - The Cultural Landscape – James M. Rubenstein, 11th Ed.

Catalog Description

An introductory study of geography concerned with the basic patterns of physical environment and their relationship to man. Focus is upon not only where people and activities are located on the Earth's surface and the reasons for the location but also upon geography as a social science, emphasizing the relevance of geographic concepts to human problems and conditions. As such the course's use of physical geographic concepts will help students to better understand human behavior. A topical approach is used. Included are analyses of why languages, religions, and ethnicities are arranged as they are in the World and an examination of the significance of the locations of important economic activities, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services.

Course Applications

According to James Rubenstein, the author of our text, The Cultural Landscape, our world is undergoing “a tension between two important themes – globalization and cultural diversity.” We live in a world that is both more unified and more polarized than ever in terms of economies, politics, culture, and the environment. While humans may unify under numerous circumstances for any given period of time, “people are taking deliberate steps to retain distinctive cultural identities.” This course will aid in the understanding of today's world both culturally and geographically.

Course Prerequisites

None – additionally, this course has been deemed as transferable to other colleges and fulfills a general education requirement for many majors. This course also satisfies the graduation requirement for a ‘D’ selection that is required in your studies.

Assignment Due Date/Class Cancellation Policy

All discussions and weekly assignments are due by **Sunday at 6:00 p.m.** Late submissions will be penalized with a full grade deduction. Due to the nature of online learning, class will not be cancelled.

On Line Learning Expectations

Students are expected to log on frequently throughout each week. Participation in weekly discussions is expected to be conducted on a mature and non-threatening level. While disagreement is expected (and encouraged!) one should not attack another's views in an insulting manner. Appropriate academic language is expected at all times.

Course Requirements

- ❖ You will need to have knowledge of PowerPoint and Word to complete assignments. These applications will not be taught in this course. If you do not have Microsoft Office installed you can download a free version at www.openoffice.org.
- ❖ All work must be submitted using the file format .doc or .docx
- ❖ Download a physical copy of the syllabus. It is the guideline for the course.
- ❖ Assigned readings must be completed thoroughly as they will provide the basis for weekly discussions and written assignments
- ❖ Each week you will be responsible for participating in a discussion forum and answering two essay questions at the end of each chapter (*Thinking Geographically*) pertaining to the assigned chapter
- ❖ The mid-term and final evaluation will each consist of a PowerPoint presentation.

Evaluation Methods

❖ Weekly discussions	150 points
❖ Weekly Essay Questions	280 points
❖ Mid-Term PowerPoint	100 points
❖ Final PowerPoint	<u>100 points</u>
Total Points	630 points

Weekly discussions

- ❖ Topics are available from Monday 12:01 am to Sunday 6:00 pm each week
- ❖ Late submissions will **not** be accepted due to the nature of the discussion forum
- ❖ Students are expected to respond to weekly issue (6 points) and then respond to at least two classmates with comments that extend the ideas (4 points) – 10 pts total
- ❖ Engage in active discussion - Avoid making submissions at the last minute – you will not receive full credit for discussions that are too brief
- ❖ Proper academic language and behavior is expected at all times

Thinking Geographically Weekly Essays

- ❖ Answer two of the *Thinking Geographically* questions at the end of each chapter (your choice). 20 points total each week.
- ❖ Submissions must be in proper essay format, grammatically correct, and no spelling errors (use spell-check!). All parts of each question must be answered using information from the chapter.
- ❖ Submit your file in .doc, .docx or .rtf format only in the assignment drop box or cut and paste into field (this is the preferred method).
- ❖ Late submissions will be accepted but there will be full grade deduction

Mid-term and Final PowerPoint Presentations

- ❖ Specific assignments are located within the **Course Dates** portion of syllabus
- ❖ Presentations must include no spelling nor grammatical errors
- ❖ All information must be factual (document researched information at bottom of each slide)

- ❖ Slides must be consistent in format and style
- ❖ Each slide should include text and graphics/pictures to support idea(s)
- ❖ Be professional!

Course Dates and Weekly Assignments

Week 1, Aug 27 – Aug 31 **Introduction to Class – no textbook assignment**

- ❖ Download Syllabus – read completely to insure you understand course expectations!
- ❖ Make sure you have the textbook – if you are waiting, this is the time to find a resource you can use to make sure you do not fall behind. Late work will not be accepted due to lack of textbook!
- ❖ **Graded Assignment:** Introduce yourself to your professor and classmates in the discussion forum! What do you expect to learn in this class?
- ❖ Any roadblocks this semester? This is the time to ask me any questions or pinpoint any concerns you may have!

Week 2, Sept 1 – Sept 7 **Chapter 1 – Basic Concepts**

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates
Give a local example of not-so-sensitive environmental modification, as demonstrated in the book's discussion of Florida. Are there multiple ways to achieve the desired result of an environmental modification? Discuss.

- ❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter in one or two double-spaced pages. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 3, Sept 8 – Sept 14 **Chapter 2 – Population and Health**

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates
Describe the change brought about by the industrial and medical revolutions in terms of population growth. What effect did both revolutions have?

- ❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter in one or two double-spaced pages. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 4, Sept 15 – Sept 21 **Chapter 3 – Migration**

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates
Many politicians and citizens have proposed building a high-security fence along a major portion of the U.S.-Mexico border to prevent undocumented migration. What do you think?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter in one or two double-spaced pages. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 5, Sept 22 – Sept 28

Chapter 4 – Folk and Popular Culture

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Describe a custom that you follow that is not generically “popular culture”, and a culture that you follow. Explain the custom and tell from where it originated in your life.

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 6, Sept 29 – Oct 5

Chapter 7 - Ethnicities

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Give some examples from your personal experience that demonstrate the difference between race and ethnicity.

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 7, Oct 6 – Oct 12

Chapter 8 - Political Geography

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

What are the implications of gerrymandering? Is there any way that voting districts could be divided up that would not result in one group complaining of inappropriate representation?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 8, Oct 13 – Oct 19

Mid-Term PowerPoint

❖ PowerPoint Presentation – using the text as a guide, choose a topic from the textbook (either one we have previously studied or one we have not) and connect it to a contemporary problem either within your town or the entire state of Connecticut.

Formulate a plan to correct the problem – this cannot be a plan already in existence!

Use PowerPoint to present your plan

- ❖ Plan must include the following essential components – include detailed specifics:
 - √ businesses which will support you
 - √ cost
 - √ materials
 - √ political concerns/implications
 - √ impact on environment
 - √ specific geography that will be affected
 - √ human capital (specific people) needed for implementation

Week 9, Oct 20 - Oct 26

Chapter 9 - Development

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Discuss whether our economy requires other countries to remain underdeveloped. That is, could we maintain our standard of living if the rest of the world had the same level of development, and thus presumably the same wages and costs of living? What does this mean for the future?

- ❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 10, Oct 27 – Nov 2

Chapter 12 - Services and Settlements

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Describe the type of job you are hoping to start after college. Is it a service? Do you think most jobs that will be available will be service? Why or why not?

- ❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 11, Nov 3 – Nov 9

Chapter 13 – Urban Patterns

- ❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Why do people live in cities and others in suburbs? Explain your ideal situation.

- ❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 12, Nov 10 – Nov 16

Chapter 10 - Food and Agriculture

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

When you shop for food (or eat it!), do you think about where it came from? Does this bother you know that you think about it? Why or why not?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Week 13, Nov 17 – Nov 23

Chapter 11 – Industry and Manufacturing

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Given current trends in the movement and growth of industry, is industry likely to remain important as a source of employment in our country? Why or why not?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14, Dec 1 – Dec 7

Chapter 6 - Religions

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Explain why religious conflicts occur. Is it only that religious ideologies disagree, or is it geographically involved?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Answer two of the Thinking Geographically essay questions at the end of the chapter. For each essay, it is required that you write the question (2 points), present textbook evidence to answer the question (6 points), and provide a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

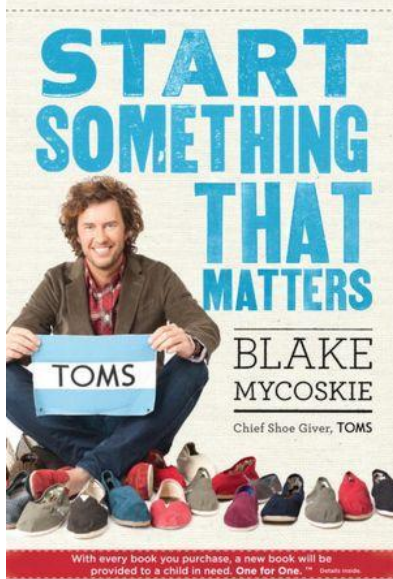
Week 15, Dec 8 – Dec 15

Final PowerPoint Presentation

*Final PowerPoint presentation due by 6 pm on Sunday

Inspiration!! Throughout the course, we have examined many ways in which we can improve our world – one person at a time! TOMS is a real life example of one man making a difference world-wide!

Examine the TOMS Story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIArTDAHwBc>



- ❖ In the spirit of TOMS, your task is to **create** an Action Plan in which you **identify** a current social problem which exists on the **international** level and, then, create (do not use an existing plan) an initiative to address this issue – start something that matters!
- ❖ Plan **must** include the following essential components:
 - √ businesses which will support you (use existing businesses)
 - √ cost (provide line item details)
 - √ materials
 - √ political concerns/implications (identify a specific region – what roadblocks might you face politically?)
 - √ impact on environment (identify regional concerns specific to your focus area)
 - √ specific geography that will be affected
 - √ human capital (specific people) needed for implementation

IMPORTANT COLLEGE POLICIES!! PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather and emergency closings, and more, please go to the following website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/ or scan the QR code with your smart phone. Also, please become familiar with the policies regarding nondiscrimination, sexual misconduct, and general student conduct at the following website: www.mxcc.edu/nondiscrimination/.



NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123|
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Mary Lou Phillips
Director of Human Resources, Middlesex Community College
mphilips@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5751; Founders Hall Room 115
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Queen Fordham
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011