

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

Semester – Spring 2014
CRN - 1197
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 – An Introduction to Human Geography, the central theme of this book (and the course!) is “a tension between two important themes – globalization and cultural diversity.” We live in a world that is more unified than ever in terms of economies, politics, culture, and the environment. While we 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 the term. 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.

Preparing for online learning:

-Be Organized

- ❖ Set aside a specific time in which you will complete the work required for each chapter. Treat this as your time to be 'in school' and avoid distractions. Assume that you will have at least three 'class' sessions per week for learning material and completing the assignments.
- ❖ Chapters are **not** studied in order – be aware of syllabus requirements

-Be Prepared

- ❖ You will need the required textbook.
- ❖ You will need to have knowledge of PowerPoint and Word to complete assignments. These applications will not be taught in this course.
- ❖ Make sure that you have Internet access, PowerPoint and Word capability. If you do not have Microsoft Office installed you can download a free version at www.openoffice.org.
- ❖ Download a physical copy of the syllabus. It is the guideline for the course.

Course Requirements

- ❖ Assigned readings must be done 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 spellcheck!). 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 – **do not use motion**
- ❖ Each slide **must** include text and graphics/pictures to support idea(s)
- ❖ Be professional!

Course Dates and Weekly Assignments

Week 1, Jan. 22- Jan 26th

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!
- ❖ Any roadblocks this semester? This is the time to ask me any questions or pinpoint any concerns you may have!

Week 2, Jan. 27 – Feb. 2

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, Feb. 3 – Feb. 9

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, Feb. 10 – Feb. 16

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, Feb. 17 – Feb. 23

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, Feb. 24 – March 2

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, March 3 – March 9

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, March 10 – March 16

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

Spring Break – March 17-March 23

Week 9, March 24 – March 30

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, March 31 – April 6

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, April 7 – April 13

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, April 14 – April 20

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, April 21 – April 27

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.

Week 14, April 28 – May 4

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, May 5 – May 11

Chapter 7– Ethnicities

❖ Discussion Question - Answer and respond to two classmates

Given American's long history regarding the struggle for freedom and equality, how does one explain why we, in 2014, are still discussing inequality in terms of race?

❖ Thinking Geographically

Students will answer two of the discussion questions at the end of each chapter in one or two double-spaced pages. The student should write the question (2 points), offer succinct evidence to answer the question within two pages (6 points), and providing a summary paragraph (2 points). Ten points possible for each discussion question for a total of twenty points per week.

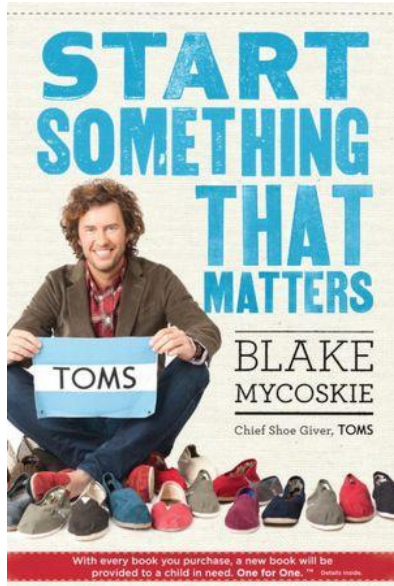
Week 16, May 12 – May 18

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, Our Movement, site at <http://www.toms.com/our-movement/>



- ❖ 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

ADA Accommodations Statement

“Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process.”

Academic ethics and classroom behavior

“At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees’ Proscribed Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees’ Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another’s idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally.” (Board of Trustees’ Policy 5.2.1)

Use of Computing Resources

All resources and facilities of the Data Processing Labs, including the computer classroom sites, are to be used solely for the legitimate and authorized academic and administrative purposes. Any unauthorized or illegitimate use of the computer systems, resources, and/or facilities will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not subject to criminal prosecution in accordance with Section 53a-250, et seq., of the General Statutes.