

Department of Geography and Geology
Geography 360: Geography of North America

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Course Description:

Gen-Ed: Geography 360 - Geography of North America is a 3-hour course and is an elective for the Geography Major and Minor. This course fulfills the old Category C general education requirement, (not Colonnade). It will help you attain these general education goals and objectives:

- An understanding of society and human behavior

General course goals: This course is designed to help students gain a greater understanding of society and human behavior within the United States and Canada as well as how the U.S. and Canada help to influence society and human behavior throughout the world. Throughout the semester we will study the cultural social, economic, physical, and ecological systems of North America by examining important topics and geographic regions. *All course reading assignments and lectures are intended to help students develop an understanding of society and human behavior.*

Required Material:

- **Text: (Required) Text:** Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada, Seventh Edition.
- **Internet, Blackboard, and Topper mail account:** This course will mainly be online. Course material will be accessible through Blackboard. All assignments will be turned in via blackboard versus emailed to the instructor. All students must be familiar with blackboard and uploading assignments before the first assignment is due. Using Mozilla Firefox as your internet browser is recommended but each students should check compatibility
- **Mediasite & video camera/microphone:** Each student will create videos and watch videos via the Mediasite software found in blackboard. Each student will need access to a video camera and microphone on a computer.

Grade/Evaluation:

- All grades will be posted on blackboard with digital feedback.
- Regular grading scale of 90-100% A, 80-89% B and so on.
- Weighted final grade:
 - Exam 1 25%
 - Exam 2 25%
 - Mapping Census 15%
 - Research Activity 10%
 - Location Quiz, Fieldwork, Activities and Discussion Boards 25%
- There is no extra credit, you will have enough work to keep you busy.
- If you find that you are right on the line between grades you must push harder to get the higher grade. Final grades will not be altered.

Assignments (see blackboard for all details on completing assignments):

- **Exams (2):** 50%. Readings, power points, lecture videos, films, assignments and activities will be include content on the exams. Any exams taken via blackboard are timed and closed book. Failure to complete all questions, within the time limit, will result in a zero for unanswered questions. Students should pace themselves. The final exam must be taken at a local testing center. All details in Blackboard.

Mapping the Census: 15%. Students will explore census data and select a topic to construct a graduated color map of the USA by state. Student will create a Mediasite presentation of their findings.

- **Research Topic:** 10%. Each student will research, write a paper, and present their findings. Topics will be provided but students are encouraged to offer ideas. Students must submit, for approval in a timely fashion, the topic, research question, outline of paper. Presentations will be created via Mediasite.
- **Location Quiz, Fieldwork, Activities and Discussion Boards:**
 - o **Location Quiz:** Map quiz of North America. The list of places maybe found on Blackboard along with blank map templates. Each student must prepare their own study guide.
 - o **Five Themes Observation & Field work:** Field work days will involve a field trip to one or more locations where students will observe the five themes of geography. Each student will prepare a power point and upload to blackboard—No Mediasite presentation—just a power point.
 - o **Variety of small assignments,** see blackboard.

Classroom Decorum for an Online course:

- Please practice proper etiquette and professionalism in all communications, with the instructor and classmates, via email, etc.
It is understood that all students have read the WKU student “Code of **Conduct**” and will abide by these **rules**: (Plagiarism and cheating are serious violations and students should familiarize themselves with these issues).
http://www.wku.edu/handbook/2009/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59:academicoffenses&catid=36:academic-offenses&Itemid=60

Other important details:

- || **Students with disabilities:** In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270 745 5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.
- || **Academic Honesty:** Each student should be aware of the student code of conduct found in WKU's student handbook. Examples of academic dishonesty include cheating on an exam, allowing another student to copy your work, either inside or outside of class; using work from previous semesters; and plagiarism. Caught cheating in this course will result in failing the course and possible removal from the University.
- || **Schedule Change Policy:** The Department of Geography and Geology strictly adheres to University policies, procedures and deadlines regarding student schedule changes. It is the sole responsibility of the students to meet all deadlines in regard to adding, dropping, or changing the status of a course. Only in exceptional cases will a deadline be waived. The student schedule exception appeal form shall be used to initiate all waivers. This form requires a written attachment of appropriate documentation. Poor academic performance, general malaise, or undocumented general stress factors are not considered as legitimate circumstances.

Topics for the Midterm (25% of final grade):

Module 1: What is geography? The five themes of geography

- Assignments:*
1. Introduce yourself to the Instructor via email
 2. Submit your field trip waiver to Blackboard
 3. Defining Regions Assignment
 4. Time Zones Assignment
 5. Prep for the Location Quiz

Module 2: Physical Geography of North America

- Assignments:*
1. Field work #1 Natural Landscape
 2. Prep for the Location Quiz

Module 3: Demographics of North America

- Assignments:*
1. Reflections: (3), Melting Pot, Earth, & Footprint Calculator
 2. Mapping the Census 15 % of final grade, topic approval, completed map, data, paper and Video uploaded
 3. Prep for the Location Quiz

Topics for the Final Exam (25% of final grade):

Module 4: Urbanization and Settlement Politics

- Assignments:*
1. Field work #2 Downtown Landscape
 2. Choose Research Topic
 3. Complete Location Quiz

Module 5: Economics, Agriculture, Mining, Services

- Assignments:*
1. Submit a Research Outline
 2. Field work #3 Economic Landscape

Module 6: Miscellaneous Topics, Recreation, Environmental Science

- Assignments:*
1. Gerrymandering
 2. Research Paper 10% of final grade, power point and video upload

Suggested Course Schedules

Below you will find two suggested course schedules to help you organize your studies. These schedules are meant as a guideline to help those who need to complete their course in a certain timeframe.

| Need to finish your course within a semester? Here is a suggested course schedule: | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Week | Assignments | Exams |
| 1 | Familiarize yourself with the course | |
| 2 | Module 1 | |
| 3 | Module 1 (continued) | |
| 4 | Module 2 | |
| 5 | Module 3 | |
| 6 | Module 3 (continued) | |
| 7 | Prepare for midterm | Midterm Examination |
| 8 | Module 4 | |
| 9 | Module 4 (continued) | |
| 10 | Module 5 | |
| 11 | Module 5 (continued) | |
| 12 | Module 6 | |
| 13 | Module 6 (continued) | |
| 14 | Prepare for final exam | |

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| Need to finish your course within a semester? Here is a suggested course schedule: | |
| 15 | Final Examination |

| Need to finish your course within seven weeks? Here is a suggested course schedule: | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Week | Assignments | Exams |
| 1 | Module 1 | |
| 2 | Module 2 | |
| 3 | Module 3, Prepare for midterm | Midterm Examination |
| 4 | Module 4 | |
| 5 | Module 5 | |
| 6 | Module 6 | |
| 7 | Prepare for final exam | Final Examination |