

## INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

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To paraphrase the eminent 20<sup>th</sup>-century geographer Carl O. Sauer, geography is the study of humans' impact in changing the surface of the earth. This broad definition of the discipline informs us that the study of geography concerns the immense variety of ways that we organize, manipulate, utilize, design, defend, interpret, and bring meaning to the pieces of planet Earth that we occupy. How we go about doing so is the substance of everyday life, politics, economy, and culture.

In this course, we will explore the discipline of human geography through a selection of important themes, concepts, and approaches. The core goals of this course are (1) to raise your awareness about how geography shapes the human experience and (2) to help you understand and use geographical concepts to explain processes of social change over time and across and within space. In sum, this course aims to help you develop a distinctly spatial way of understanding the world.

The primary format for the class will be lectures, though we will also engage in group discussions, group work, and outdoor fieldwork. For class time to be productive, you must come to class prepared. It is essential to read the assigned material carefully before each class and complete assignments on time. Much of the material will be unfamiliar and some of it quite challenging.

**Readings:** All writings are available on the course Carmen site.

**Grade Distribution:**

- 1) 4 short writing assignments (2 double-spaced pages): 40%
- 2) 1 midterm exam: 25%
- 3) 1 final exam: 25%
- 4) Participation and attendance 10%

For detailed instructions on assignments and an explanation of the grading scale, see the relevant files in the course's CANVAS site.

This class fulfills the **GE** requirements for **Social Science: Individuals and Groups**.

The goal and rationale of the **Social Science GEC** is to help students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures, and institutions.

There are three central **GEC learning objectives** in this course:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the study of individuals and groups.
2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in social and cultural contexts of human existence, and the processes by which groups function.
3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and group values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policymaking.

The course provides multiple ways of understanding social structure and human interaction, which are the overarching themes of the class. Important sub-themes include human differences and similarities, group behavior, and cultural and individual identity. Lectures will introduce general concepts, and these will be supplemented with assignments and activities that allow students to explore these concepts in the real world context. The course meets these goals and objectives by introducing students to a variety of approaches for understanding multiple aspects of human societies, cultures, and institutions. The course applies concepts from Human Geography to issues and problems of contemporary relevance, and hence helps students develop knowledge that will be useful for problem solving.

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)).”

## DISABILITY SERVICES

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); 614-292-3307; [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu); 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## Class Policies and Guidelines

### *General classroom basics:*

Absolutely no cellphone gazing during class. (You may think I can't see you doing it, but I can, and doing so will count against your participation grade.)

Please arrive on time.

If you must leave early, inform me at the beginning of class. Never simply leave class before the end of the period. (Doing so is disrespectful toward your classmates and the instructor and will result in you being marked as absent.)

### *Must I always attend class?*

Consistent attendance is crucial to success in this class. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. You are expected to attend each session and to provide documented evidence (doctor's note, etc.) to receive an excused absence. Please note that absences due to extracurricular activities (i.e., Model UN, club travel, family travel, etc.) do not count as excused. Also note that **after three unexcused absences, your final grade will begin to drop by a percentage point per unexcused absence.**

### *Must I participate in class?*

Yes. Reading and listening are good but are not enough to guarantee effective learning. Verbally articulating your ideas is a very helpful way for you to process, organize, and express your thoughts. Active participation is therefore expected of everyone.

### *What is the policy on late assignments?*

For logistical purposes (and because deadlines are deadlines) late assignments will only be accepted in the case of a documented medical or family emergency, or if an extension has been granted before the due date. Unfortunate occurrences, such as a failed Internet connection, roommate crises, traffic, etc., do not count. **Please do not request an extension unless you have a valid excuse and documentation.** Assignments not turned in on time receive a 0% grade.

### *Can I use a laptop in class?*

No. I do not permit the use of laptop computers or other devices during class unless you have a documented reason to use one. Please verify with me if you have such a need. This rule is in place as a way to help you concentrate and to foster discussion and integration in the class.

### *How should I contact the professor?*

I maintain designated weekly office hours and am happy to accommodate requests to meet outside those hours, if needed. I will reply within 24 hours to all substantive email queries. The TA will do the same.

**COURSE OUTLINE (please note that readings are subject to change)**

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment*	
<b>Week 1</b>	Aug. 23	Syllabus and course overview		
	Aug. 25	<i>Human</i> geography	Syllabus	
<b>Week 2</b>	Aug. 28	Place and region	Tuan; Massey	
	Aug. 30			
	Sept. 1			Writing assignment 1
<b>Week 3</b>	Sept. 4	<b>NO CLASS – LABOR DAY</b>		
	Sept. 6	Cartographic knowledge	De Blij	
	Sept. 8			
<b>Week 4</b>	Sept. 11	Cores, peripheries, frontiers	Turner; Moore	
	Sept. 13			
	Sept. 15			
<b>Week 5</b>	Sept. 18	Globalization, interconnection, and uneven development	Steger; Crang	
	Sept. 20			
	Sept. 22			
<b>Week 6</b>	Sept. 25	Commodity chain	<i>Washington Post</i> on Cobalt	Writing assignment 2
	Sept. 27	Watch <i>Darwin's Nightmare</i>	n/a	
	Sept. 29			
<b>Week 7</b>	Oct. 2	Landscape	Groth & Wilson; Jackson; Cosgrove; Mitchell	
	Oct. 4			
	Oct. 6			
<b>Week 8</b>	Oct. 9	Geography of capitalism	Harvey	
	Oct. 11	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		
	Oct. 13	<b>NO CLASS – AUTUMN BREAK</b>		
<b>Week 9</b>	Oct. 16	Nature-society relations	Robbins; Norgaard	
	Oct. 18			
	Oct. 20			
<b>Week 10</b>	Oct. 23	The Anthropocene	Castree (1, 2, 3)	
	Oct. 25			
	Oct. 27			
<b>Week 11</b>	Oct. 30	Resource geographies	Calvert; Huber	
	Nov. 1			
	Nov. 3			
<b>Week 12</b>	Nov. 6	Watch <i>Behemoth</i>	n/a	Writing assignment 3
	Nov. 8			
	Nov. 10	<b>NO CLASS – VETERANS DAY</b>		
<b>Week 13</b>	Nov. 13	Urban and economic	Walker	

		geography: Suburbanization		
	Nov. 15	Urban and economic geography: Agglomeration	Scott	
	Nov. 17	Urban and economic geography: Exclusion	Davis	
<b>Week 14</b>	Nov. 20	Guest lecture: Anurag Mazumdar		Writing assignment 4
	Nov. 22	<b>NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING</b>		
	Nov. 24			
<b>Week 15</b>	Nov. 27	Place-making, urban	Harvey, He & Wu	
	Nov. 29	governance	n/a	
	Dec. 1	Spectacle	Ong	
<b>Week 16</b>	Dec. 4	Reflections on our global present	Kaplan	
	Dec. 6	Review	n/a	
<b>Final Exam</b>				

## **Detailed Reading List**

Week 1: Syllabus

Week 2:

Yi-fu Tuan

Massey, D. 1994. "A global sense of place," in *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minnesota University Press).