This outline is intended to guide us through the course. However, circumstances can change and so I reserve the right to change the syllabus as needed to ensure that we fulfill the objectives of the course. You will receive full and fair notification regarding any such changes.

PEOPLE, PLACES AND ENVIRONMENT

Welcome. This fully on-line course is an introduction to cultural geography. It is an exciting time to study geography. The ways in which human societies create and transform their social and physical environments is a pressing concern. There is globalization, global terrorism, and heightened geopolitical competition between countries, along with rapid internal political, economic and social restructuring within countries. Within cities, wealth and poverty reside cheek-by-jowl. Racial and ethnic minorities along with women, children and the elderly are increasingly exploited or disempowered. Many of our neighborhoods are no longer safe and the household is an increasingly marginalized economic unit. What we know as “nature” is rapidly disappearing with urban and ex-urban encroachment. Places we like to visit are becoming commodified into Disney-like simulations. Cultural geographers are concerned with all these and many other related issues.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course provides you a framework for understanding some key local and global issues from a geographic perspective. You will be able to use critical spatial thinking to help decipher aspects of current world problems such as hunger, migration, terrorism and economic injustice. By paying careful attention to the scale at which spatial patterns and processes operate, you will gain greater understanding of how local actions influence global processes and vice versa.
Here are examples of questions you will be able to answer by the end of the course: Why do certain regions have greater population problems than others? Why are some people starving? Why are some countries richer than others? How does human movement between countries and regions impact economies and politics? How does geography help us to understand conflict in the world? Why are some regions more developed than others? What factors contribute to urban decay and renewal?

ON-LINE TECHNOLOGY

Distance or Online learning Prerequisites:
The prerequisite for this course is total online or distance learning preparedness. (1) Take SDSU’s ‘readiness survey’ (https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/survey.hybrid_learning.main) and (2) prepare your computer for the course as follows:

- Make sure that your computer has active speakers or you can plug in earbuds
- Download (for free) all necessary software, including the latest versions of: Adobe’s Acrobat Reader and Flash Player, QuickTime Player, and Java.
- Formulate a backup plan for fulfilling course obligations when/if your computer malfunctions. For example, to find out about computers at the library; go to http://scc.sdsu.edu/home.php.
- If you need to learn how to use Blackboard, go to: http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/student/

The course is structured through SDSU’s Blackboard (Bb).

There are many video clips throughout the course which require that you have a strong connection to the Internet. You may also need Flash or Quicktime if you don’t already have them.

When emailing me (i.e. the professor of the course), do so through Bb. Your email will be directed to a special in-box that I have created for the course. SDSU does not share your phone number or address with me. The only way that I can communicate with you is via email. It is your responsibility to ensure that you can receive email from Blackboard. Make sure that your email address within the system is correct. Some email systems block Blackboard mailings as if they are spam. Either fix this, or get an SDSU email account (go to: http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/newstudacct.shtml).

An SDSU Bb APP is available for mobile devices. With this you get a limited version of the course. It is particularly useful for streaming the course’s video-content. Writing tests and submitting papers on the app are not recommended.

All papers and assignments are processed through Turnitin © assessment software
All quizzes are conducted through the Respondus © lock-down browser software

For technical questions, Student Computing Center: http://library.sdsu.edu/computing/help#help_desks
Student Disability Services: http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/index.html
COURSE STRUCTURE

The course is divided into eight modules. Each module is set up on Bb and comprises video-lectures, exercises, papers and tests. The modules are set up as progressive learning units and should be taken in sequence beginning with 1 and ending with 8. Each module is followed by an online test. Simply go to Blackboard, enter the relevant module (starting with 1), and work through it by completing assigned reading (including videos, etc.) in the order presented. With each module, you will complete some ‘learning and self assessment activities’ such as exercises and quizzes. Two of the modules have papers attached to them, which are due in subsequent module. After completing a module, simply move on to the next part of the course. Please note that although you may work at your own pace, making this course ideal for anyone with a complicated schedule, you must complete all work by 23:59 hours on the closing dates provided. This arrangement keeps students on track and ensures that the workload entailed in this course—for you, for me, and for our TA (if we have one)—is evenly distributed for the entire duration of our time together.

Module 01, Geography Matters

With this module, students learn that geography is complex, dynamic, and essential for understanding interdependent global relationships. The module introduces important concepts that build the framework of the discipline. Students learn about the increasing geographic interdependence of the world. Learning about human geographies illustrates to students how understanding complex interrelationships are crucial to solving problems on scales from local to global. Finally, students learn that human geography is important both from an intellectual view and a practical point of view. Geographers study the uniqueness of specific places while recognizing the broader processes that contribute to economic, social, and cultural phenomena.

Module 02, Geographic Gears and Grinds

After completing this module, students know the distinction between qualitative (sense of place) and quantitative methodologies (spatial analysis) used in geography. They learn about geographic concepts and tools used to better understand spaces and places such as relative and absolute location, map projections, scale, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), spatial interaction, lifeworlds, landscapes and regional analysis.

Module 03, Globalization

After completing this module, students understand the spatial contexts of world systems and how these result in uneven development across the globe. They comprehend the relations between core and peripheral regions. They can summarize the evolution of the modern world system from its origins with early hearth areas through pre-modern geographies to contemporary neoliberalism. They are able to analyze how and why the industrial revolution helped to bring about the modern global economic system. They know how to probe the changing patterns of interdependence between different world regions.
Module 04, Placing Nature

After completing this module, students understand nature not only a physical entity but also as a social construction. They comprehend the ways that politics influences constructions of nature. They can summarize how belief systems (some quite ancient) influence the ways we apprehend nature. They understand the complex relationship between technology and nature. The relationship between politics and nature is highlighted for students with a focus on the evolution of identity and meaning in the United States. Finally, students learn how to apply these contexts to contemporary case studies.

Module 05, Placing Culture

With this module, students comprehend the ways that politics influence constructions of culture. They can summarize the components and structure of culture, and understand the ways they come together in cultural complexes. They understand the ways geographers study cultural landscapes and how elements such as language, religion and ethnicity/race play out in those landscapes. Finally, students are exposed to some emergent themes in cultural geography that help us understand emotions, affect, care and protest.

Module 06, Population Geographies

After completing this module, students understand world population growth is not only a problem of magnitude and pace, but also a problem of the uneven distribution of energy, food and resources. They comprehend a variety of demographic indicators and are able to analyze their distribution on a world map. They understand the power and limitations the demographic transition model and how population pyramids are used. They know the relationship between a region’s carrying capacity, its sustainability and the effects of outside influences.

Module 07, Movement and Migration

With this module, students get an introduction to some of the most dynamic aspects of cultural geography. They comprehend movement and mobility from a daily perspective and through the life-course. Through the lens of time geography theorems, they understand how time intersects space and how different constraints contextualize human mobility. They get to know the dynamics of migration streams and how those affect the cultural and economic vitality of different regions. They understand the dynamics of migration as a local and a global process, and know how it has changed the North American cultural landscape. They understand the distinction between economic and political refugees, and see how the processes of documented and undocumented migration play out on the US/Mexican border.

Module 08, Urban Geographies

Upon completion of this module, students comprehend the origin and development of settlement patterns, from the agricultural revolution to present day. They become familiar with changes through medieval times and, in particular, the industrial revolution. They are introduced to some of the
responses to the industrial city and get a sense of how planning came to be as a profession. Students get to know the spatial dynamics of urban processes in the modern era through a series of conceptual models. Throughout these presentations, students get an understanding of the dynamics social and spatial segregation. Finally, they gain an appreciation of urbanism as a global process.

ASSESSMENT

Your grade is dependent upon nine quizzes (one at the end of each module), two exercises (~ 500 words plus graphics), a walking tour and two short papers (~ 1000 words plus graphics).

Some of the quizzes contain mapping questions so it is important that you know where the things discussed in the lectures and readings are located (use your atlas or Google Earth).

Unless otherwise stated, the readings are from Paul Knox and Sallie Marston (2015). Human Geography: Places and Regions in Global Context, 7th Edition. Pearson Education. You may purchase a subscription to the book via the Pearson Website (see Blackboard). Alternately, you may buy the book at SDSU’s bookstore or online elsewhere. All other readings are made available through Bb.

Lecture discussion follows the textbook only in terms of topic, not substance. I strongly recommended that you get a good atlas as mapping questions about places talked about in lectures and readings will show up in the tests.

QUIZZES

Outline 10 points
Module 01 10 points
Module 02 20 points
Module 03 20 points
Module 04 20 points
Module 05 20 points
Module 06 20 points
Module 07 30 points
Module 08 30 points

COGNITIVE MAPPING EXERCISE (Module 01) 20 points
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES EXERCISE (Module 05) 20 points
GEOGRAPHIC WALKING TOUR (Module 08) 20 points

FIRST PAPER (Youth Cultures) 30 points
- assigned Module 02, due Module 04
SECOND PAPER (Family Migration Geographies) 30 points
- assigned Module 06, due Module 08

Total 300 points
RELATION BETWEEN TOTAL POINTS EARNED AND LETTER GRADES:

280-300=A
270-279=A-
260-269=B+
250-259=B
240-249=B-
230-239=C+
220-229=C
210-219=C-
200-209=D+
190-199=D
180-189=D-
<179 =F

Points commensurate with the following grades on assigned papers (rubrics are provided) reflect the following criteria:

A=exceeds expectations in both quantity and quality  D=fails to meet minimum expectations
B=exceeds expectations in some areas  F=drastically fails to meet minimum
C=meets minimum expectations

EXPECTATIONS

I expect students to:
1. Please read the assigned readings as you go through the course—don’t put it off.
2. Study for exams.
3. Write at a college level in APA or Chicago style and follow directions on assignments.
4. Participate in all activities as indicated in the directions for each week.
5. Honor due dates (no extensions are given on the papers and if you miss a test or an exam you will forfeit the grade).

You can expect me to:
1. Treat you with respect.
2. Be organized with all lectures, exercises and test available in a timely fashion
3. Give feedback.
4. Answer emails.
5. Grade exams and papers in a timely fashion.

Academic Honor

Cheating
Instances of cheating may result in failure of the course and referral for disciplinary procedures that may result in dismissal from the university.
Plagiarism
Plagiarism is simply the use of others’ words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source. As students, you are learning about other people’s ideas in your course texts, your instructors’ lectures, in-class discussions, and when doing your own work. When you incorporate those words and ideas into your own work, it is of the utmost importance that you give credit where it is due. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and all instances will be reported to SDSU’s Office of Judicial Procedures (see “Cheating and Plagiarism” section of the SDSU senate policy file http://senate.sdsu.edu/policy/policy_file.pdf). To avoid plagiarism, you must give the original author credit whenever you use another person’s ideas, opinions, drawings, or theories as well as any facts or any other pieces of information that are not common knowledge. Additionally quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words; or a close paraphrasing of another person’s spoken or written words must also be referenced. Accurately citing all sources and putting direct quotations – of even a few key words – in quotation marks are required. For further information on plagiarism and the policies regarding academic dishonesty go to the Course Catalog section on Standards for Student Conduct (41310).

Assignments
Your assignments must be written by you alone and not with another student from the class.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

LATE AND MISSING ASSIGNMENTS
- Assignments are due on the date and time specified.
- Missing assignments will be counted as zero

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS
Students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately, within the first two weeks of the semester, to discuss specific accommodations for which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at 619-594-6473 (Calpulli Center, Suite 3101), please do so before making an appointment to see me.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS
Students who need to be absent from class due to the observance of a religious holiday or participate in required religious functions must notify the faculty member in writing as far in advance of the holiday/obligation as possible. Students will need to identify the specific holiday or obligatory function to the faculty member. Students will not be penalized for missing class due to religious obligations/holiday observance. The student should contact the class instructor to make arrangements for making up tests/assignments within a reasonable time.
MILITARY PERSONNEL STATEMENT
A student who is a member of the National Guard, Reserve, or other U.S. Armed Forces branch and is unable to complete classes because of military activation may request complete or partial administrative unrestricted withdrawals or incompletes depending on the timing of the activation.

HARASSMENT PROHIBITED
SDSU policy prohibits harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, Vietnam era veteran status and other protected veteran status. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employees or expulsion of students. Contact the Office of Employee Relations and Compliance (http://oerc.sdsu.edu/discrimharasstoc.htm) if you feel another student or an SDSU employee is harassing you based on any of the factors above.

GRADE APPEALS
The professional responsibility for assigning grades is vested in the instructor of the course, and requires the careful application of professional judgment. A student wishing to appeal a grade must first meet with the instructor who assigned the grade to try to resolve the dispute. If the dispute cannot be resolved directly with the course instructor, contact the Office of the Ombudsman at SDSU Student Affairs at: http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/ombuds/index.html.