

GEOGRAPHY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

GEOG 105
Fall 2008



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Towson, Maryland

GEOGRAPHY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS GEOG 105

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Meeting Times:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
The class will meet in Linthicum Hall 003 in the basement level

Instructor:

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Prerequisites & Catalog Description:

An introductory survey of the changing political map of the world with special emphasis on a geographical comprehension of majors regions of international cooperation and conflict. No prerequisites.

General Education Requirement

This course fits into Group IID: Global Awareness. It is designed to help you understand that there are modes of human expression and experience that are not generally found in the Western world.

Course Format:

This course is designed primarily as a lecture course with discussion of issues encouraged. The basic concepts contained in the course outline for the basis for the lectures.

One per week a map quiz based on the lessons from ***Geographic Place Names of World Regions*** will be given. Occasional discussions will be based on the geographical aspects of chapters in the textbook, ***Geography & Global Affairs***. Other class activities will include relevant video tapes, readings, and exercises.

Course Rationale/Background Statement

Most Americans learn what little geography they know in grade school, supplemented by maps at home. Professional geographers in the United States are today keenly aware of the geographical illiteracy of many Americans. The general public is developing a greater awareness of geography through the efforts of the media and organizations such as the National Geographic Society and the Association of American Geographers. Many students nationwide participate annually in the National Geography Bee sponsored by National Geographic.

There has been much interest in recent years in “global education.” As America’s role in the world changed dramatically at the beginning of the 21st century, a void was created by an educational provincialism that fails to help students to look beyond their country’s horizon. This hurts the United States in its diplomatic and business interests and limits career opportunities of many young people. America’s economic strength is very dependent on a global economic system that is becoming increasingly integrated and competitive. The advent of the global economy is a very controversial issue, but the reality is that it has happened. Major political changes continue to occur as countries from the former Soviet Union restructure their economies, turn towards democratic market-oriented political/economic systems, and the European Union works towards greater unity and expanded membership.

It is urgent that we learn about our competitors and fellow players in the global system. Geography has a logical place in diplomacy. Substantive numbers of geographers work in the Federal Government as intelligence officers and in international relations and trade. Indeed, the Washington, D.C. has one of the largest concentrations of geographers in the world.

James Michener, the novelist, was quoted as saying “the more I work in the social studies field, the more convinced I become that geography is the foundation of all. When I begin work on a new area, I invariably start with the best geography I can find. Geography of these areas—really a minute field work carried on over periods of many years—has provided a solid tactile base for what I had to say. My characters were not drifting in space; they were rooted in the ground.”

In Europe (especially Germany, the former USSR, and the United Kingdom) geography is a science held in high esteem. Most other university social sciences are grouped around geography which forms the core of the curriculum.

In the United States, Geography has suffered from an image problem due to the lack of attention in some primary and many secondary schools. This course is designed to introduce you to the science of Geography (which is both a social and a physical science!) and to help you to catch up on the many concepts that will enhance careers in business, government, and teaching.

One cannot see one's own country and culture in perspective until they have studied other lands and people. Geography can help to provide that perspective and play an important role in improving America's performance in international matters. The world has become greatly interdependent, e.g. the United States is critically short of many strategic minerals. Who has deposits of these minerals? Where are they? What kind of country is it? What about its culture, transportation system, pattern of international trade, level of economic development, political stability??? These kinds of issues can be addressed in geography.

Although our needs for geographic sophistication and understanding have increased, the level of geographic literacy in the United States remains appallingly low. This course will outline and demonstrate how the skills and tools of geography are essential for portraying and explaining the world in which we must all live. The global perspective of Geography is an invaluable context for international education, comprehension, and decision making.

Look at some of the comments about the [International Survey by National Geographic in 2002](#) on geographic literacy:

finds that of Americans surveyed between 18 and 24, half couldn't find New York on a map of the US, only one in seven can find Iraq on a map of the world, and *one in nine couldn't find the United States on that same map*. Sweden averaged 40 correct answers out of 56. The US averaged 23. What is the US doing wrong that countries like Sweden are doing right in education and world awareness?

posted by [AaRdVark](#) at 2:59 PM PST (127 comments total)

oh, it's worse than that, why, 9 out of 10 of my fellow Americans can't tell their ass from a hole in the ground.

posted by [quonsar](#) at [3:06 PM](#) PST on November 20

There is no real problem here. Most Americans could not identify Korea. Most Americans could not identify Viet Nam...but go to war and have your sons sent there, or your cousins etc and soon you learn where they going...countries only become worth knowing about when we go to war with them. It is nice that our leaders always seem able to find places on the map to attack that most of us have not heard of till the attack begins.

Part of the answer to this is the same as the answer as to why so many of us Americans are monolingual. It's not because Europeans are smarter, hipper and more liberal.

It's because we don't NEED to know another language. We don't NEED to find another country on a map to survive and prosper. (Most of us.)

I deplore ignorance as much as the next guy. When I taught at an inner-city school, I had a personal obsession in letting kids know that Japan and China and Vietnam were NOT THE SAME COUNTRY! (You'd be surprised.)

This "can't find shit on a map" has been in the news for decades. It's no longer news. What's more upsetting (and, I know, related) is that U.S. citizens don't even CARE about other countries even though the decisions of our elected officials end up being a matter of life and death to millions.

posted by [kozad](#) at [3:35 PM](#) PST on November 20

Course Objectives and Goals

1. To introduce some basic geographical concepts, tools, and techniques
2. To become familiar with the changing political map of the world with emphasis on regions of cooperation and conflict.
3. To develop a "mental map" of the location of major physical and cultural features for various regions of the world.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course student will have

- More effective mental mapping and geographical location skills
- Improved interpretative skills and approaches
- Opportunities to reflect on increased knowledge and their own learning
- Greater understanding of the world's geographical base and the role it plays in international affairs.
- Understand and appreciate the diversity of perspectives and practices in other parts of the globe, especially the contributions of cultures other than your own.
- develop a lasting curiosity about other places, and cultural experiences
- Develop strategies for maintaining and increasing your knowledge of other people, places, and cultures.

Required Course Materials:

1. DiLisio, James E. *Geographic Place Names of World Regions*. (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Pub., 2007).
2. *The World Atlas* (Chicago: Nystrom, newest edition).
3. Smith, James M. *Geography of International Affairs* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt Pub., 2008). ISBN: 978-0-7575-5651-7

COURSE POLICIES

General Guidelines:

1. Students are expected to master the material and to attend all classes
2. Students are expected to participate in in-class discussions
3. Assignments must be completed by established deadlines
4. The classroom is not a cafeteria: please arrive at the beginning and do not leave until the end. There is no coming and going during the class itself, except during scheduled breaks and for emergencies.

Cell Phones & Pagers:

Other than to be turned off, Cell Phones should never appear in the classroom, and more than one occurrence of cell phone usage (of any sort, even opening one up) will result in the student being dismissed from that class. Opening a cell phone during a test will result in failure of that test. If you need to be available by pager, you must notify the instructor and explain the necessity.

Students with Disabilities:

This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support. Students, who suspect that they have a disability, but do not have documentation, are encouraged to contact the DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.

Attendance:

All students are required to attend and participate in all classes. This requires a close reading of the assignments beforehand. There is no point in going to university if you do not go to class. Hence, unexcused absences are not tolerated and will count seriously against you. Anyone **missing more than 5 classes** may be dismissed from the course with a

grade of F assigned. The only acceptable reasons for missing exams or quizzes are documented medical problems or scheduled T.U. events, e.g. participation in sports, field trips (you must present a document from your professor beforehand). Make-up exams will not be given for any other reasons.

For more than 5 absences, you will lose points from you final grade as follows:

6 th absence	lose two point	2 lost total
7 th absence	lose four more pts	6 lost total
8 th absence	lose four more pts	10 lost total
9 th absence	lose five more pts	15 lost total
Beyond 9 absences, 5 pts per absence		

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is not accepted in this course. Cheating on a quiz or examination will result in an automatic **deduction of 10 points from your final course grade and a grade of zero** for that quiz or examination.

Repeating the Course:

University policy states that a student may not repeat a course more than once without specific prior permission from the Academic Standards Committee. If you have taken this course twice before and have not received written permission from Academic Standards to take the course a third time, you should not be registered in the course—consult the Registrar’s Office about the procedure for petitioning Academic Standards.

REQUIREMENTS

Examinations:

There will be **three one hour exams** (each exam counts $\frac{1}{4}$ of the course grade). The final examination is the last one-hour exam; it covers just the last segment of the course and will be given on the regularly scheduled exam date for this course.

Map Quizzes:

There will be **one map quiz per week**, given on Thursdays near end of the class period. These quizzes altogether count $\frac{1}{4}$ of the course grade. Approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the quizzes will be collected and graded; this is done on a random basis.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Weekly map quizzes	25% of the final grade
Three examinations	75% of the final grade

There is no extra credit in this course!

This course uses plus-and-minus grading based on a 100 point scale. In the event that the total points possible is not 100, a percentage will be used to determine your grade out of 100%

*Excellence—in either performance or effort—is expected.
Mediocrity is not rewarded.*

A = 92-100	C+ = 76-78
A- = 89-91	C = 70-75
B+ = 86-88	D+ = 66-69
B = 82-85	D = 59-65
B- = 79-81	F = 0-58

SCHEDULE OF MAP QUIZZES

Map Quiz Schedule based on Geographic Place Names of World Regions:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Sept 4	Basic World Locations
11	United States
18	Canada
25	Europe
Oct 2	Russia & Central Eurasia
9	East Asia
16	Southeast Asia

	23	Oceania: Australia, New Zealand, & the Pacific
	30	South Asia
Nov	6	Middle East: Southwest Asia & North Africa
	13	Subsaharan Africa
	20	South America
	27	No class, Thanksgiving break
Dec	4	Middle America
	11	No Quiz, Last day of class
	19	Antarctica: Final exam day: This is a make-up quiz for those who missed one of the regular quizzes that was graded and counted. <u>This quiz will be given on the day on the final exam for those who need it. If you have taken all of the map quizzes, you may take this one for extra credit.</u>

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

Readings from Smith

Part I:	Introducing Geography: Basic Concepts	Chpt. 1
	Historical sketch of Geography	
	Where are things located?	
	Environmental Determinism	
	Cultural landscape	
	Possibilism	
	Probabilism	
	Point, Line, Area: Geographic Basics	
	Location	
	Nominal (toponymy)	
	Site	
	Situation (relative location)	
	Mathematical (absolute)	
	latitude, longitude	
	time zones	
	Maps	
	Regions	

uniform/formal
functional/nodal

Emphasis on Places or things?
regional & systematic geography
physical & human geography

What, then, is geography?

Careers in Geography
Academic
Government & Public Service
Business

EXAMINATION I

Part II:

International Organizations

Chapter 8

IGOs
NGOs
League of Nations
United Nations
World Bank
European Union
EFTA
NATO
OAU
ASEAN
OAS
NAFTA
OPEC

Transnational Corporations
TNC types
TN Banks
Size and geographic distribution
FDI
Political Factor
Case Study: Automobile Industry

EXAMINATION II

Part III:

The State and Nation

Early States
Nation-states
Political power
units of the state
capitals
boundaries & frontiers
iconography
territorial morphology, size & shape
unitary & federal states
centrifugal, centripetal forces
devolution

Chapter 1
Chapter 3, 4

Power, Geopolitics, Military Geography

Power
Global strategic views
German geopolitics
colonialism
military geography

Chapter 5
Chapter 6, 7

World Population Patterns

Basic facts and concepts
ecumene and empty areas
major population concentrations
secondary concentrations
population growth

Chapter 2



Fall 2008 Exam Schedule

Examinations will begin Tuesday, December 16, 2008 and end Monday, December 22, 2008.

Saturday exams will be held on December 20, 2008 at the regularly scheduled meeting time.

Exam Hours	Day 1 December 16 (Tuesday)	Day 2 December 17 (Wednesday)	Day 3 December 18 (Thursday)	Day 4 December 19 (Friday)	Day 5 December 22 (Monday)
8-10 a.m.	TR 8-9:15 a.m..	MWF, MW, WF 8-8:50 a.m	MWF, MW, WF 9-9:50 a.m.	MWF, MW, WF 10-10:50 a.m.	All Sections ACCT 201-202
10:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	FREE	MWF, MW, WF 11-11:50 a.m.	TR 11a.m-12:15 p.m.	TR 9:30-10:45 a.m.	FREE
12:30- 2:30 p.m.	MW, WF 12:30-1:45 p.m.	TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.	MW, WF 2-3:15 p.m.	TR 2-3:15 p.m.	F 12:30-3:15 p.m.
3-5 p.m.	TR 3:30-4:45 p.m.	FREE	FREE	MW, WF 3:30-4:45 p.m.	F 3:30-6:15 p.m.
5:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.	Classes starting from 4 - 5:30 p.m. meet on their regularly scheduled evening.				
7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.	Classes starting from 6 p.m. or later meet on their regularly scheduled evening.				

**Your final exam in Geog 105 will be on
Friday December 19, 2008 at
10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in
Linthicum Room 003.**