

Course Syllabus – INTRODUCTION TO WORLD GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

Course Information

Course number –GEOG - 2303

Course title – INTRODUCTION TO WORLD GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

Term –Spring 2010

Section – 001

Classroom – CB3 1.306

Time – Monday/Wednesday 11:30 am-12:45 pm

Professor Contact Information

Name – Dr. Irina Vakulenko

Phone number – 972-883-6718

Email – ivakulenko@utdallas.edu (best way to contact me)

Office location – GR 3.213

Office hours – Monday/Wednesday 10:00 am -11:00am; by appointment

Other information: I do not read e-learning email or use it until further notice. Please send email directly to the address above.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no formal prerequisites for this course. General academic skills of analytical thinking, comparison, essay writing, working with statistical material, map reading will be helpful.

Course Description

This course considers how the key concepts of place and space can be used to understand the special character and interactions of history, culture, economics, and the environment in major regions of the world including North America, Europe, Russia, Pacific Rim countries, South Asia, Southwest Asia and North Africa, and Latin America.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completing this class students will be able to:

- Understand the basic methods of regional geographic research
- Practice the methods of regional geography by describing the human and physical geography of 8 world regions
- Analyze aspects of relative geographical position, physical geographic characteristics such as landforms, climate and weather, resources of world regions through class presentations, individual research, and discussions.
- Interpret human geographic characteristics such as demographics, political organizations, economic conditions, language and religion through class presentations, individual research and discussions.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Geography: Realms, Regions and Concepts, 13th Edition by H.J. DeBlij and P.O. Muller, 2008. ISBN 978-0-470-25134-8. The latest edition will keep you even more up to date.

Suggested Course Materials

Students are expected to take notes during PowerPoint presentations and complete exercises posted on e-learning.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

#	Date	Topic	Chapter
1	1/11/10	Introduction: the Evolution of Geography, Perspectives of Geography. Systematic Geography: People, Environment and Resources.	Introduction Appendix A, B, class notes
2	1/13/10	Cultural Components of the Human Environment: Culture and Physical Environment, Elements of Culture, Social and Political Organization of Societies, Political Map of the World, Categories of Economic Activities.	Introduction, class notes
3	1/20/10	Characteristics of Development. Classification of World Economies.	Introduction, class notes, Table 1-1
4	1/25/10	Classification of Realms. Plan of Analyses. US and Canada: physical geography, resources for industrial growth, European culture cores, westward expansion, demographic characteristics, population mobility.	Chapter 3 <u>Map 1</u>
5	1/27/10	US and Canada: economic growth and restructuring. Income Disparity and Regional Problems. Global Contacts and Influence. Problems in Developed Realm: minorities' socio-economic situation, Canadian identity and unity.	Chapter 3
6	2/1/10	US and Canada: Regions: Case study. Map. Review.	Chapter 3
7	2/3/10	Test 1	Map 1 is due
8	2/8/10	Europe: relative geographical location, landforms, climate, resources, environmental modifications and crisis. History of Development.	Chapter 1 <u>Map 2</u>
9	2/10/10	Europe: Population: Demographics, Religion, Languages, Level of Living, Distribution, Urbanization. Primary and secondary economic activity.	Chapter 1
10	2/15/10	Europe: Political Geography. Supranationalism and Devolution. EU. Map. Western Europe.	Chapter 1
11	2/17/10	Europe: British Isles, Northern and Mediterranean.	Chapter 1
12	2/22/10	Europe: East European Transformation and Perspectives.	Chapter 1
13	2/24/10	Russia and other Former Soviet Union: Geographical Position, Natural Regions and Resources, Population.	Chapter 2
14	3/1/10	Russia and other Former Soviet Union: The Soviet Economic Reforms, Present Economic Activity and Reforms. Foreign Policy and International Relations. Truths and Myths about Russia.	Chapter 2
15	3/3/10	Test 2	Map 2 is due
16	3/8/10	Pacific Rim: East Asia, Australia. Physical and Human	Chapter 11, 12

		Overview: Monsoon Climate, Population and Favored Environments, Unity and Diversity, Colonial and Modern Economics.	<u>Map 3</u>
17	3/10/10	Japan and Asian Tigers.	Chapter 9,10
18	3/22/10	Southeast Asia	Chapter 10
19	3/24/10	China	Chapter 9
20	3/29/10	South Asia	Chapter 8
21	3/31/10	Test 3	Map 3 is due
22	4/5/10	Southwest Asia and North Africa: physical/ cultural environment. Historical Overview, Role of Islam.	Chapter 6 <u>Map 4</u>
23	4/7/10	Development and Petroleum Economy, Isolation and Globalization. Large States–Integrated Economies and Small States–Unique Economies.	Chapter 6
24	4/12/10	Afghanistan, Iraq and War on Terror	
25	4/14/10	Sub-Saharan Africa: Environmental Diversity, Colonial Legacy. Main Regions.	Chapter 7 <i>Bonus Map – 1 pt.</i>
26	4/19/10	Latin America: Physical Diversity and Cultural Heritage.	Chapter 4, 5 <u>Map 5</u>
27	4/21/10	Mexico, Central America and Caribbean: Lands of Contrasts.	Chapter 5
28	4/26/10	South America: Regions of Uneven Development. Brazil	Chapter 5
29	4/28/10	Test 4 <i>Bring and show your notes and get up to 3 pts!</i>	Maps 4-5 are due
30	5/3/10	Review . Map Questions. Bring and show your optional homework and get up to 3 pts!	Paper is due.
31	5/10/10	Final Exam is on Monday, May 10 at 11:00 am	

Grading Policy

You are required to take four tests during the semester that consist of multiple-choice questions and map questions as well as “challenge assignments” (essays, fill-ins, tables, etc.). Each of them will cover one or several of the world major realms. Each test will count **15%** toward your final grade. Average of Tests 1 and Test 2 will make your **Midterm Grade** to be posted on **March 5, 2010**. You are also expected to submit a short, 3-5 pages, paper on a country of your choice* or make a 10 minutes country presentation during the class on a larger region. This individual assignment will count **10%** toward your grade and is due no later than **May 3, 2010**. The Final Exam on **May 10, 2010** will make other **25%** of your grade. You are also to work at five regional maps that have a value of **1** point each toward your final grade. No partial credit is offered for the maps. The other blank maps and bonus homework in every packet are offered as part of an individual performance for extra credit. All graded material will be assigned a numerical value on a scale of 100. Letter grades are given as follows: 97% and over A+; 93% to 96% A ; 90% to 92% A- ; 87% to 89% B+; 83% to 86% B; 80% to 82% B- ; 77% to 79% C+; 73% to 76% C ; 70% to 72% C- ; 67% to 69% D+ ; 63% to 66% D ; 60% to 62% D; Less than 60% F.

*A paper should be in a printed format with a cover page, at least one illustration, and a list of at least three sources (excluding your textbook). The narrative should follow the plan of a country characteristics discussed in class #4.

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance is crucial for the successful learning and will be taken each class. Many of my lectures and our discussions will include materials not found in the text. As a result a good set of class notes and contour maps will be extremely helpful if you plan excelling in this course. To do the classroom assignments you need to have a pencil, eraser, and colored pencils at every class. No maps colored with anything other than colored pencils will be accepted.

Attendance and class participation will be used as deciding factors for borderline students. No makeup tests. (Individual consideration may be given in case of overwhelming circumstances).

Field Trip Policies Not Applicable

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities Not Applicable

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion

and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to

remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:

The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22

PO Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.