

History 106: Introduction to Geography

Monday, 4:00 – 5:45 pm

Prof. Heather Bennett

Office Hours: MW 3:00-4:00 pm

Course Description:

This course will offer students an introduction to geography as a broad field of study. Subjects covered in this class will include population and migration, cultural geography, the geography of languages and religions, the geography of food, cities and urbanization, as well as political and economic geography. Constant attention will be paid to the relationships between people and space, and change over time.

Texts:

Dahlman, Renwick, and Bergman, *Introduction to Geography: People, Places & Environment*, Fifth Edition (New York: Prentice Hall, 2011)

See Blackboard and the syllabus below for additional articles to read and websites to browse.

Please bring the textbook and copies of any necessary readings with you to each class.

Format:

This course is taught in two ways: online and in a classroom. The majority of your written work will be done online. We will meet once a week (Mondays, 4:00-5:45 pm) on campus.

Expectations:

You can expect me to begin each class on time with a brief lecture introducing the topic(s) for the day. I will also provide input throughout the class period. However, please know *this is not a lecture course*. The majority of our learning will be accomplished through discussions of assigned readings, weekly responses, and online participation. This means that you must come to class prepared converse with and listen to your classmates and me. Although I will provide some guidance for discussions, the quality of our conversations largely depends on you.

Student Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, you should each be able to:

- Define multiple types of geography and the terms used by geographers.
- Identify geographic boundaries, physical or political, across the nation and the globe.
- Read, decipher and critically engage maps, charts, and tables.
- Demonstrate knowledge of global relationships among peoples, institutions, and countries.
- Enjoy an improved ability to critically analyze and engage the world.

Attendance/Participation:

Attendance and active participation are required in this course. Your online presence and your attendance in class will make up a large portion of your overall grade. (See grade proportions below.)

If you need to miss a class or will not be able to complete the assignment in the event of an emergency, please contact me as soon as possible to make other arrangements. College policy dictates your presence in class. You are, however, allowed two weeks of excused absences by the college before you will be withdrawn from the course. If you miss more than two weeks worth of classes and are withdrawn from the course, you will need to begin the appeal process immediately. See the student handbook for more detailed information.

Classroom/Online Decorum:

- Respect will be the defining characteristic of our conversations, both online and in the classroom.
- Respect includes using appropriate language to describe people or groups of people. I expect you to use gender neutral language and the correct designation for ethnic, racial, and national groups when appropriate. If you are unsure of what the most respectful terminology is, feel free to ask!
- Perfection will not (usually) be a defining characteristic of our conversations. With that in mind, please share freely!
- Do not make a habit of coming to class late. It is disruptive and, if it happens too often, will negatively affect your grade.
- Discussions should be had with the entire class. Please try not to engage in side conversations (verbal or written) once class has begun.

Technology:

- Please turn cell phones off or to silent and **put them away**. You may leave class to answer a call in an emergency situation only.
- Computers, tablets, iPads, and other electronic devices are not allowed in class.

Examinations:

- There will be two exams in this class. A midterm on March 11 and a final exam sometime between May 6 and 11. (To be determined by the college.)
- No make-ups will be allowed on exams or map quizzes without prior arrangement. If you need to miss an exam or quiz because of a family emergency or illness, please notify me as soon as possible so we can work out an alternative time for you to make up the exam or quiz.
- The exams will consist of short identifications questions (who, what, when, where, and so what?) and essay(s) that require critical thinking and interpretation of the material covered during the period in question.
- Please see the end of each chapter of your textbook for important identification terms. More details concerning the essay questions will be provided as each exam approaches.

Writing Assignments:

- You will have multiple in-class writing exercises and three two-page, out-of-class writing assignments to complete over the course of the semester.
- Out-of-class writing assignments must be completed and emailed to me no later than **Mondays at 12:00 pm (noon)**. Any assignment not turned in by noon will be considered late. There is a five-point penalty per day for late assignments. An assignment worth 100% becomes a 90% if turned in one day late, but becomes an 80% if turned in two days late. And so on.
- Out-of-class writing assignments should be 2 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1" margins, Times New Roman.
- Should you need assistance with your writing, please speak to me during office hours or contact me via email.

Online Assignments:

- The weekly online assignments need to be completed **by Fridays at midnight**. If they are posted late, they will be marked down 10 points per day. This deadline is assigned in large part for your own benefit. Completing your online assignments by Friday night should give you the weekend to complete reading and writing assignments for this class as well as coursework for your other Monday classes.

- Online assignments may include individual responses, responses to classmates, and occasional group work. These are intended to help you work through and express your thoughts about the week's topics.
- Like the weekly writing assignments, plagiarism will not be tolerated and academic honesty is required. Again, if you are unsure whether or not something will count as plagiarism, please ask.

A Word About Writing:

- I expect the proper use of grammar, spelling, and punctuation in all online assignments and in the three out-of-class writing assignments. (The in-class assignments are for reflection purposes and therefore excused.
- If you are unsure of whether or not something is grammatically correct, by all means, use the spelling and grammar check tools in Word or Pages and/or consult books such as the MLA manual or helpful websites like OWL Perdue or GrammarGirl.

Grading:

Map Quizzes	10%
2 Exams (15%, 20%)	35%
Active Participation	15%
In-class Writing Assignments	10%
Out-of-class Writing Assignments	10%
Online Assignments	20%

Academic Honesty:

The work you hand in must be entirely your own, developed for this course through our assignments, and must document ALL use of sources. If you plagiarize once, you will fail the assignment and I will file the required report with the Dean. I will also ask you to meet with me to discuss the assignment. A second instance of plagiarism will result in failure of the entire course.

In addition, all writing assignments must be completed as individuals. Class discussions should influence your responses and you are encouraged to dialogue with your classmates and me beyond the classroom. However, you must ultimately complete your own work.

Academic Accommodations:

Bloomfield College offers a wide array of academic support services, including reading support and tutoring services. Located in the Learning Resource Center, these services offer individual tutoring at every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to revising. For more information and to schedule your appointments call (973)-748-9000 X256 or X239, or visit the website www.bloomfield.edu/tutorial. You may also see me for assistance in accessing services.

Bloomfield College encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to providing equal access. If you need special accommodations for this course, please contact Disability Services and talk with me as soon as possible. The mission of Disability Services is to assist students in realizing their academic potential and to facilitate the elimination of physical, programmatic, and attitudinal barriers.

Weather Emergencies:

If the college closes because of bad weather, the closure will be posted on the school's homepage. If this happens, please check your email for updates concerning assignments and future classes from me. Given the amount of material we must cover this semester, I will most likely assign additional reading or an online discussion to make up for the missed class.

Course Schedule

- January 28: Syllabus, Class Expectations and What is Geography?
- January 30: **Introduction to Geography: Defining Geography, Maps, Tools**
Read 1-5, 19-27
- Online Activity:
Spend some time taking the geography quizzes on [LizardPoint](#) and [Sporecle](#). This is a great way to test your current geography knowledge and start to prepare for the map quizzes.
- February 4: **Population and Migration: Understanding Population**
Read pp. 155-178
- Writing Assignment:*
Read the excerpt from Thomas Malthus (document on Blackboard) as well as a summary of his *Essay on the Principle of Population* on Victorian Web.
- Read "[Mind the Baby Gap](#)" from the New York Times. This is also an article about a population crisis.
- Why is Malthus so concerned about overpopulation? Why is the author of "Mind the Baby Gap" worried about the declining birth rate of some nation? What solutions do they offer for re-balancing the population?
- February 9: *Online Activity:* Visit the website [Becoming Minnesotan](#). Go to the tab "Stories" and choose "Narrators" from the drop down menu. Choose the community you have been assigned (listed at the top). Read and listen to at least two stories within that community. (Specify the community and the names of the narrators in your paper.) Then respond to the following questions that are pertinent to the stories you read:
- Why do you think each person choose to leave her/his country? What were the push and pull factors involved in their decisions? What are the continuing difficulties facing him/her in beginning a new life (economic, religious, cultural)? What parts of her/his culture has each person carried with him/her? What differences between their culture and the culture of the United States do they articulate? How do they talk about the relationships between themselves and members of their own national/ethnic/regional community? Between themselves and Americans who are part of other communities?
- February 11: **Population and Migration: Immigration**
Read pp 179-200
Map Quiz – US States
- February 15: *Online Activity:* Read the definition of a **subculture** on p. 213 in the textbook. Identify and describe a subculture not listed in the book. This can be either a subculture formed around popular culture or an ethnic group. How would someone in that subculture identify her/himself through dress, behavior, relationships, food, or other characteristics? What is the relationship between that subculture and a larger culture? How might people who are not part of this subculture perceive members of the group?

- February 18: **Cultural Geography – Identity and Regions**
 Read 203-228
 Map Quiz – Continents
- February 22: *Online Activity:* Think about your family’s culture. What elements are distinctive and clearly part of a particular national, cultural, or religious heritage? What elements might be considered part of a global culture (i.e., shared among many people or derived from a culture that you are not directly a part of)? Do you or other family members ever experience tension between particular customs and the assumptions of a global culture? How might a global culture enrich more localized or specific customs?
- February 25: **Cultural Geography – Imperialism and Global Culture**
 Read 228-245
 Map Quiz – Oceans
- Writing Assignment:* Read excerpts from Frantz Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* (see document on Blackboard). How does Fanon describe the relationship between violence and decolonization? What does he consider to be the greatest barriers to becoming a nation in Algeria? How does he view the relationship between Algerians and their former colonizers, the French? Who does he put his hope in among the people of Algeria and why?
- Online Activity: Browse the NYPL exhibit “The African Diaspora in the Indian Ocean.” Read at least one of the essays, flip through images, and watch a video or two in the multimedia section. How did Africans arrive in the various regions in the first place? How did their arrival – whether forced or voluntary – affect their roles in society? What roles were they granted within the society? How much social mobility did they have? How have Africans and their descendents affected the societies to which they traveled? How have the original societies also transformed African traditions? Use specific examples from the website and cite the essays, images, and videos by title and author (when possible).
- March 4: Spring Break Begins – No Class
- March 9: *Online Activity:* Post any questions you might have about definitions or concepts that may be on the midterm. I invite you to answer one another’s questions. I will fill in the gaps when necessary.
- March 11: **Midterm Exam**
- March 18: **The Geography of Languages and Religions**
 Read 248-250, 257-264, and 264-288
 Map Quiz – Australia and Oceania
- March 22: *Online Activity:* Go investigate the grocery store, corner store, or even your refrigerator and cupboards. List ten items and their regional or national source. Now consider how many different states or countries your food comes from. What surprises you? How is this evidence of a globalized culture? What are the positive and negative effects of transporting food over vast distances? How has this system transformed our eating habits and, consequently, our bodies and health? (Unsure? Ask your parents or parents what foods they *did not* have access too earlier in their lives.)

- March 25: **The Human Food Supply**
 Read 295-304, 310, 320-336
 Map Quiz – Europe
- Writing Assignment:* Read the excerpt from *Eating Animals* by Jonathan Safran Foer (see Blackboard for document). What arguments is the author making about food and culture? What prompts him to reconsider the way he eats – to become a vegetarian or go back to eating meat? Why does he think that what we eat says something about our family and national cultures? Why is this such a personal journey for him?
- March 29: Tentatively scheduled trip to the Tenement Museum – Foods of the Lower East Side Tenements Walking Tour (Exact time and date TBD)
- April 1: **Cities and Urbanization**
 Read 375-380, 384-389, 397-419
 Map Quiz – Asia
- April 5: *Online Activity:* Read 428-442. Define state, nation, and nation-state. Give examples of nations that are not states. Why do they consider themselves nations? What do they see as the characteristics that bind them together? What historically have been some of the difficulties encountered by states that seek to transform themselves into nation-states? (Think back to our discussion of Fanon.) You may need to use some sources in addition to the book for this activity. Please provide a reference for any websites, articles or books you may use.
- April 8: **A World of States**
 Read 442-463
 Map Quiz – South America
- April 12: *Online Activity:* While we often think of economies as national or global, there is also a local flow of goods and resources. Think about your neighborhood. What businesses are present? What services and goods do these businesses provide? What resources might your neighborhood “export” to other regions in your city or suburb? (In other words, why would people from other neighborhoods come to your place of residence?) What do you need to “import”? (What do you need to seek out in other neighborhoods?) Think creatively.
- April 15: **Paths to Economic Growth: National Production and Consumerism**
 Read 468-487
 Map Quiz – Central America and the Caribbean
- April 20: *Online Activity:* Like our food, the goods we possess come from all over the world. Take a moment to look at the tags and labels on your shoes, clothing, books, school supplies, appliances, electronics and knickknacks.
- Make a list of ten items and where these items were produced. Why do you think certain goods were produced in certain countries? Were the raw materials of the item already present in that country, or were they imported? Does the country have an abundance of fuel that allows it to excel at manufacturing? Does it have a massive labor force or advanced technology that allows for production of this good?

Calculate the rough distance at least one of your items traveled to get to you, including the distance any raw materials traveled to the site of manufacture. (Use Google Maps to get a rough estimate of the number of miles between, say China and Bloomfield. You may need to convert from kilometers to miles.)

April 22:

Paths to Economic Growth: Global Trade and Investment

Read 487-512

Map Quiz – Africa

April 26:

Online Activity: Read 554-562. Then choose one of organizations listed below and browse that institution's website. (You may also use an organization you already know. Just double check with me first.) Describe the projects that this organization is undertaking. How do they see their work fitting into the culture, economy, and politics of a given country or countries? What portions of the population, if any, is the organization targeting and why? Is the organization partnering with any local organizations? If so, why is this important to the development organization? And if not, why not?

Global Goods Partners

Engender Health

Bread for the World

Doctors Without Borders – USA

Oxfam

UNICEF

Seva Foundation

Amnesty International – USA

Greenpeace

Habitat for Humanity International

World Wildlife Fund

International AIDS Society

April 29:

Global Challenges and the Scale of Response

Read 515-517; 529-554

May 3:

Online Activity: Please take a moment to reflect on what you think you will take away from this course. What surprised you about the course? What topics proved most interesting to you? What activities best allowed you to connect to the course material? Any other thoughts on what you have learned throughout the semester are most welcome.

You should also post any questions you have concerning the Final Exam. Feel free to help each other by answering one another's queries. I will fill in the gaps when necessary.

May 6:

Final Exam