

Geography 104: Honors World Regional Geography

Course Syllabus Spring 2018

[Explore Society, Global Citizenship]

Instructor: Dr. Heike C. Alberts

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Office Hours: MW 12:45-1:45, TTh 11:30-1:00

Prereq: Good Standing in Honors Program

Credit Hours: 3

Classroom: N/E 41

Meeting Times: TTh 9:40-11:10

Course Description

Are you interested in other places? Do you appreciate cultural diversity? Are you concerned about human rights abuses and conflicts? Do you think about the reasons for economic disparities in the world? Are you worried about environmental degradation? These are some of the topics geographers are interested in. In regional geography we study the physical, socio-cultural, economic, political, and environmental characteristics of different world regions. While we will explore these five themes for all ten world regions we will look at in this course, we will study a few of these issues for each region in depth. At the end of this class, you will have good background knowledge about the diverse ways in which people live their lives and the most important issues shaping people's experiences all over the world.

My role in this course is to guide you through this whirlwind tour of the world. I will help you work through the large amount of material covered in this class by providing you with structured lectures and in-depth case studies, leading discussions, guiding you in activities, and helping you visualize issues by showing maps, photos, and videos. I look forward to working with you!

Learning Goals

In this course, you will work towards a variety of different learning outcomes, both in terms of gaining a better understanding of and appreciation for different places and people's diverse lifeways, but also in acquiring important academic and life skills. You will:

1. Acquire knowledge of and appreciation for diverse beliefs, ideas, traditions, and social, political, and economic systems
2. Learn how geographers study different peoples, places, and environments
3. Engage with global challenges and opportunities
4. Improve your critical thinking, and written and oral communication skills.

Geography 102 (World Regional Geography) or 104 (Honors World Regional Geography) is a required core course for geography majors. This course will allow you to identify, understand and synthesize the basic themes and patterns of human activities that create the cultural,

economic, and political landscapes found on the earth, a major Geography Student Learning Outcome. We will also encounter other Geography Student Learning Outcomes such as:

1. Recognize the connections between geography and globalization
2. Understand the complexity and diversity of global cultures
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact humans have on the environment

Global Citizenship

This class has been designed to meet the Global Citizenship Requirement in the University Studies Program. Global Citizenship is the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world.

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to providing students with the knowledge of nations, cultures, and societies beyond the United States and to gain the skills you need to be a responsible citizen of this globalized world. This global approach is also closely connected to a liberal education, the goal of the University Studies Program. The well-rounded education that liberal education provides you with prepares you for successful and rewarding personal and professional lives, as you will be aware of broader perspectives that allow you to respond to challenges and to help build a just, humane, and global society.

Teaching Philosophy

For me learning is an interactive process, with both teachers and students learning from one another. I do not see you as containers into which I pour knowledge, and I also do not see you as sponges that readily absorb whatever is presented to you. Rather I see you as individuals with different backgrounds and histories, strengths and weaknesses, and styles of acquiring and processing information. Therefore I will present my material in a variety of forms (lectures, films, discussions, activities, etc.), and provide you with ample opportunities to contribute to class both in oral and written form. The more you participate in class, the better the learning experience will be for all of us. To that end, diversity in opinion is highly encouraged. I look forward to working with you!

Contact Information

You are welcome to come to office hours. I am happy to talk about any concerns you might have with the class, clarify class material, or just chat about issues that are important to you. You can also ask me a quick question before or after class. I check my email regularly and respond to *polite* and *professional* emails as soon as I can.

Class Policies

- **Attendance** and **participation** in class are crucial to your learning. You will get the most out of this class when you take an active role in your learning by contributing to discussions, asking questions, and engaging with your instructor and fellow students in a professional way.
- If you have to miss class due to illness, a family emergency or a university-approved event (e.g. athletic competition, conference), make sure to find out from other students what we covered in class.
- Carefully follow all instructions and guidelines in the syllabus and on assignment sheets and submit your work **on time**. You will lose points for each day that your assignment is late.
- You can make up a missed exam only when you have a valid excuse for missing it and contact me in timely manner with an adequate explanation.
- **Academic honesty** and integrity are expected at all times. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be handled according to university guidelines.
- All assignments and exams must be attempted to earn a passing grade for this class; Incomplete (I) will only be given in documented cases of illness or family emergencies.
- Please be **respectful** at all times towards your fellow students and the instructor. Be critical of ideas, not people; listen to and respect everyone's ideas even if you don't agree. Diversity of opinion is an asset in class discussions.

Required Readings

We will be using a textbook for this class. Please complete the readings before the class for which they are assigned and be prepared to discuss them. Our textbook is:

Zaniewski, Kazimierz J., Alberts, Heike C. and John T. Bowen, Jr. (2017). *World Regional Geography*. Cognella Academic Publishing (Preliminary Edition)

Exams, Assignments, and Grading

- There will be **two exams** in this class. Each exam consists of about 7 short answer questions to assess your understanding of complex issues, 10 terms or "quick questions" to test concepts and some factual knowledge, and a map section. Make-up exams will only be offered to students who notify me of their absence in a timely manner and provide proper documentation. Each exam is worth 50 points.
- You will write a **term paper** (8-10 pages double-spaced) about a complex issue such as a conflict, human rights violation, or environmental challenge. You can earn up to 100 points for this assignment. Please see below for a short summary of my expectations.
- You and one or two other students will prepare a 25-minute **introduction** to a world region. You can present the information in an interactive presentation, through a game or quiz, or in

another format that is both educational and engaging. Creativity in presenting the material is highly encouraged! You can earn up to 25 points for this small-group assignment.

- 25 points are reserved for your in-class **participation**. Please note that active participation is a requirement in honors classes; if you do not participate regularly throughout the semester, you will not receive a satisfactory participation grade.
- The maximum number of points you can reach in this class is 250. There is *no* curving, rounding of points, or extra credit.

Course grades will be based on the following table:

A	≥ 95	B-	≥ 81	D+	≥ 67
A-	≥ 91.5	C+	≥ 77.5	D	≥ 63.5
B+	≥ 88	C	≥ 74	D-	≥ 60
B	≥ 84.5	C-	≥ 70.5	F	Below 60

Written Assignments: Writing is one of the most important skills you will practice at university. Regardless of your current major or future career, the ability to write clearly, to synthesize and critically discuss information, and to follow directions are important skills to have.

- An “**A** paper” is well organized and well-written, with no grammatical, orthographic or stylistic problems. It makes a convincing argument, supports statements with facts and/or sources, has high quality illustrations, and shows clear evidence of a critical engagement with the issue. The paper follows all academic conventions.
- A “**B** paper” is mostly well organized and well written, with minor/few grammatical, orthographic and/or stylistic problems. It makes an overall argument, supports most statements with facts and/or sources, has relevant illustrations, and shows evidence of a good understanding of the issue. The paper follows all academic conventions.
- A “**C** paper” has some problems with organization and/or writing and is solid in content (facts presented are correct, but there is little depth). Illustrations may contribute little to the content. There may be minor problems with citations and other academic conventions.
- A “**D** paper” has major problems with organization and/or writing, contains unsubstantiated or problematic statements and/or factual errors, or has otherwise problematic content. There may be problems with academic conventions.
- An “**F** paper” is incomplete and sloppy. Guidelines and academic conventions are not followed.

Honors Integrity Policy

All Honors students are expected to write and sign the Honor Pledge on all assignments:

“On my Honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this [assignment/paper]”

Students who violate the Honors Integrity Policy will be excluded from The Honors College.

General Information

The University Studies Program and Liberal Education: You may wonder why you have to take classes in the sciences (e.g. biology, geology), arts and humanities (e.g. English, philosophy) and the social sciences (e.g. history, geography), when you want to major in, say, business or nursing. While courses in your major prepare you for your chosen career, a liberal education is designed to do much more, such as providing you with a broader set of skills and making you a well-rounded individual intellectually and socially. The University Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is designed to help you acquire important knowledge and skills you will need to succeed at the university and in life through a liberal education and awaken or stimulate your thirst for learning. This course is classified as an **Explore** course within the USP curriculum.

Early Alert: A few weeks into the semester your instructors will send you an early alert message if they think that you are struggling with class. This message will let you know whether your instructors have noticed any academic problems, attendance problems, or both. Please do not panic when you get such a message, but see it as a chance to identify and address problems before they become serious issues.

Resources: There are a large number of resources available on campus. For example, you can get help with your writing at the *Writing Center*, talk about your university career with an advisor at *Academic Advising*, work with a tutor for a class through the *Center for Academic Resources*, or get study tips from the *Reading Study Center*. You can find more information about campus resources on the university website or ask me for help with a specific problem and I will direct you to the appropriate office.

Students with Special Needs: It is university policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Please contact me as soon as possible during office hours to discuss any accommodations you might need and provide appropriate documentation.

Topics Covered, Readings, and Assignments

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
T 1/30	Welcome to World Regional Geography	
Th 2/1	Europe: Introduction	Chapter 3
T 2/6	Europe: Population and Migration	
Th 2/8	Europe: Genocide	
T 2/13	Europe: Division and Unity	
Th 2/15	Russia and Neighbors: Intro, Environment	Chapter 4
T 2/20	Russia and Neighbors: Cold War and Frozen Conflicts	
Th 2/22	North America: Introduction, Migration	Chapter 2 <i>Student Intro I</i>
T 2/27	North America: Natural Hazards	
Th 3/1	Latin America: Introduction, Native Heritage	Chapter 7 <i>Student Intro II</i>
T 3/6	Latin America: Urban Challenges	
Th 3/8	Latin America: Conflicts, the Amazon	
T 3/13	Exam 1	
Th 3/15	Middle East: Introduction, Water	Chapter 6 <i>Student Intro III</i>
3/18-25	Spring Break	
T 3/27	Middle East: Israel/Palestine	
Th 3/29	Middle East: Understanding Islam	
T 4/3	Sub-Saharan Africa: Introduction, Apartheid	Chapter 6 <i>Student Intro IV</i>
Th 4/5	Sub-Saharan Africa: Health Challenges	
T 4/10	Sub-Saharan Africa: Conflicts	
Th 4/12	Film: Hotel Rwanda	
T 4/17	East Asia: Introduction, Religion	Chapter 8 <i>Student Intro V</i>
Th 4/19	East Asia: Population and Human Rights	
T 4/24	South Asia: Introduction	Chapter 9 <i>Student Intro VI</i>
Th 4/26	South Asia: War and Peace in Afghanistan and Kashmir	<i>Term Paper Due!</i>
T 5/1	South Asia: Social Issues, Women	
Th 5/3	Southeast Asia	Chapter 10 <i>Student Intro VII</i>
T 5/8	Australia and Oceania	Chapter 11
Th 5/10	Exam 2	