

GEOG 303 Geography and World Affairs

A commonly held belief of Americans is "deep down, the people of the world are the same." This belief too frequently translates into an egocentric conviction that the world is either just like Americans or is striving to become more like us. This failure to recognize the world's cultural, religious, political, economical, and historical differences is a basic flaw of Americans. It limits our ability to understand, appreciate, assist, and compete with the people, businesses, and governments of other countries of the world. This course will examine topical world events and stress a non-American perspective.

The size and complexity of the world means that you are regularly faced with media reports of events in places that you are unfamiliar with. This course will identify themes and patterns in world affairs that will provide you a conceptual basis for analyzing world affairs.

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Geography in the news. Analysis of current world conflicts and problem areas, with an emphasis upon examination of social, economic, political, and environmental realities. This is an approved General Education course. This is an approved Non-Western course.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT GOALS: COURSE GOALS

- To examine how humans modify and are affected by natural environments: This is a persistent theme and an analytical strength of a geographic approach to the study of world affairs: Geographic analysis identifies the integral role the natural environment in human society.
- To examine the physical and human characteristics of places and be able to identify them: Weekly map quizzes require students to learn the locations, while newspaper reading, books, and lectures provide meaning to these places.
- To examine the patterns, characteristics, and complexities of human populations and their interactions with spaces and places: The study of the geopolitical significance and patterns of human societies is fundamental to the understanding of world affairs.
- To examine the patterns and networks of political, socio-cultural, and economic interdependencies: Geography is an integrating discipline; this course will focus on the studies on relationships and linkages among the countries and peoples of the world. Newspaper readings will provide numerous and regular examples of "ripple effects" in world affairs.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Diversity Amid Globalization by Rowntree et al, Prentice Hall, 2009
- Readings posted on Professor Melcon's website (<http://wizard.csuchico.edu:8092/>).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams: There will be three midterm examinations and one final examination. The exams are a combination of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, matching, and essay questions. The final exam is comprehensive.

Exam questions: By 5:00 on the Friday before each exam, each student will submit five multiple choice questions for the exam. The questions must include either four or five possible answers and the correct answer must be underlined. The questions must be emailed to pmelcon@csuchico.edu with the subject line GEOG_303_Exam.

Readings: Students will read the assigned textbook. Specific news articles, editorials, and other readings will be posted on Professor Melcon's website. (<http://wizard.csuchico.edu:8092>).

Mansion Tour: Students will visit the Bidwell Mansion Visitor Center and tour the mansion. A listing of evidence of globalism and a one-page review of the site will be submitted.

Course paper: A paper presenting the content and discussing the significance of five news articles from a national paper of a Sub-Saharan country in Africa will be completed and submitted on the last class day before the thanksgiving break. The articles should be related or be part of a theme identified in the discussion. A copy of each article must be attached to the paper. The paper will be in essay format or follow a journalistic style. The bibliography must contain references to each of the five news articles. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, and either four or five pages in length. A successful paper generally discusses the selected articles in the context of course concepts. Paper having more than three errors in spelling or grammar on a page will be assigned a 'C' (21 points).

Course Grading

Attendance is not mandatory, but absences generally have an adverse impact on a student's grade. Make-up work will be permitted only with instructor approval. Grades will be awarded in accordance with University catalog standards. Classroom participation will be considered when resolving borderline grades. Course grades will be determined in the following manner:

Assignment	Value	Total
Exam questions	4@5 points	20 points
Bidwell Mansion	1@10 points	10 points
Paper	1@30 points	30 points
Midterm Exams	3@40 points	120 points
Final Exam	1@70 points	60 points
Total		240 points

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

GEOG 303 COURSE SCHEDULE

Fall 2009

Week of		Text Chapter	Exams and papers	Furlough Days
August	24	1		
	31	2		
September	7	3		8 Tu, 17 (Th)
	14	4	Midterm #1	
	21	5		
	28	6	Bidwell Mansion review due in class (W or R)	
October	5	7		13 (Tu), 14 (W), 15 (Th)
	12	8	Midterm #2	
	19	9		
	26	10		
November	2	11		2 (M), 12 (Th)
	9	12	Midterm #3	
	16	13	Paper submitted	
	30	14		
December	7	Open		2 (W), 8 (Tu)
	14	Final Exam	Thursday 17 December for TR section	
			Wednesday 16 December for W section	