

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:

- *The New York Times* , read thoroughly, Monday thru Thursday
- 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.

Readings: Students will read the *New York Times*. A listing of specific articles and editorials to be read will be posted on Professor Melcon's website. 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 during the month of February. A listing of evidence of globalism and a two-page review of the site will be prepared and submitted on the date of the first exam. More than three grammar or spelling errors on any page will result in the paper being assigned a grade no higher than 'C'.

On the Creek Lecture: Students will attend and write a critical review of the lecture titled *Get Lost* by Doug Lansky. A two-page review of the play will be prepared and submitted on the date of the third exam. More than three grammar or spelling errors on any page will result in the paper being assigned a grade no higher than 'C'. In a free Laxson Auditorium lecture on Tuesday, April 14, adventurer, award-winning author, and world travel expert Doug Lansky will present lessons learned while backpacking through more than 100 countries. This lecture is free but tickets should be picked up prior to the event.

Theater Performance: Students will attend and write a critical review of the play "*In the Blood*." IN THE BLOOD written by Suzan-Lori Parks and directed by William J. Johnson. The play will be presented March 4, 5, 6, 7 at 7:30 p.m.; March 8 at 2:00 p.m. in the Harlen Adams Theatre. A two-page review of the play will be prepared and submitted on the date of the second exam. More than three grammar or spelling errors on any page will result in the paper being assigned a grade no higher than 'C'.

Course paper: Each student will collect three news articles from the *New York Times* and other press resources covering a single country in Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa). An analysis of the articles, along with printed copies of the articles themselves, will be submitted at the final exam. The paper will be in essay format, typed and double-spaced, and no more than four pages in length. The paper will discuss the articles in the context of course concepts. More than three grammar or spelling errors on any page will result in the paper being assigned a grade no higher than 'C'.

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
Bidwell Mansion	1 @20 points	20 points
Lecture Review	1 @20 points	20 points
Play Review	1 @20 points	20 points
Paper	1 @30 points	30 points
Midterm Exams	3 @30 points	90 points
Final Exam	1 @40 points	40 points
Total		220 points

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

GEOG 303 COURSE SCHEDULE

Date (week of)		Events	Exams
January	26		
February	2		
	9	Bidwell Mansion tour	Exam 1 Thursday or Friday
	16		
	23		
March	2	<i>In the Blood</i> March 4 ,5, 6, 7, &8	
	9	<i>In the Blood</i> review due Friday 13 March	Exam 2 Thursday or Friday
	16	No classes held—Spring break	
	23		
	30	Cesar Chaves Day March 31, no classes	
April	6		
	13	Doug Lansky lecture Tuesday April 14 th	Exam 3 Thursday or Friday
	20	Doug Lansky review due Friday 24 April	
	27		
May	4		
	11		
	20		TuTh Section—Final Exam Tuesday 12:00-1:50 May 19 th MWF Section—Final Exam Wednesday 10:0-11:50 May 20 th