

## 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.

**Exam questions:** Prior to each midterm or final exam, each student will submit five multiple-choice questions for consideration for inclusion in the exam.

**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. 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: Terry Tempest Williams:** Environmental advocate and author Williams will be speaking about her newest book Finding Beauty in a Broken World. This book chronicles Williams' search to find a reason for the mindless destruction and despair that surrounds us. A two-page review of the lecture 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'.

**Theater Performance:** Students will attend and write a review of the play "The Laramie Project" by Moises Kaufman. The play will be produced at the Blue Room Theatre (above Collier's Hardware store at 1st and Broadway in downtown Chico) during the first three weeks of November. 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'.

**Course paper:** Each student will collect ten 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
Exam questions	4@5 points	20 points
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	2@40 points	80 points
Final Exam	1@40 points	40 points
<b>Total</b>		<b>230 points</b>

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

# GEOG 303 COURSE SCHEDULE

Date (week of)		Topic/ Activity	Tuesday/Thursday Section	Wednesday Section
Aug	25			
Sept	1			
	8			
	15			
	22			
	29	Bidwell Mansion review due at exam	Midterm Exam Thursday 10/2 Bidwell review due Thursday 10/2	Midterm Exam Wednesday 10/1 Bidwell Review due Wednesday 10/1
Oct	6			
	13		Terry Tempest Williams, Lecture 10/15	Terry Tempest Williams, Lecture 10/15
	20			
	27		Williams lecture review due Thursday 10/23	Williams lecture review due 10/22
Nov	3			
	10			
	17	Blue Room Review due at exam	Midterm Exam Thursday 11/20 <i>Laramie</i> review due Thursday 11/20	Midterm Exam Wednesday 11/19 <i>Laramie</i> review due Wednesday 11/19
	24	Thanksgiving Break		
Dec	1			
	8			
	15	News log due at exam	Final Exam 12/18 Thursday 10:00-11:50	Final Exam 12/17 Wednesday 6:00-7:50