

July 19, 2013

1. College: **Liberal & Applied Arts**
2. Department: **Social & Cultural Analysis**
3. Course status: **existing; does not require modification**
4. Course prefix and number: **GEO 131**
5. Course title: **World Regional Geography**
6. Course catalog description: **Broad investigation of the world's culture regions. Basic cultural, economic, political and physical patterns, with current events highlighted.**
7. Number of semester credit hours: **3**
8. Estimated total course enrollment per year: **300**
9. Course prerequisites and/or required qualifications for enrolling in the class: **none**
10. Course **is/will be** available online.
11. Foundational Component Area: **Social and Behavioral Sciences**
12. Explain why this course fits into this foundation component area: **Because geography addresses the interface between physical environment and human behavior, this course introduces students to a variety of empirical and scientific methods including the creation and interpretation of maps, the use of global positioning systems (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS), accessing existing statistical databases such as census data and the Human Development Index (HDI), and, because geographers also gather data on resident populations, direct observation and survey methods. Students come to better understand the human condition as they learn of spatial variations of cultural, social, physical and biological phenomena around the globe. In this course, students are taught and learn about the regional differences among people, groups (for example, kinship networks), institutions (such as government and economic structures), and cultures (for example, isolated or outward-reaching). The course shows how events such as changes in the physical environment, famine and natural disasters affect society and create varied responses in different places.**
13. Core Objectives
 - o Critical Thinking - World Regional Geography instructors explain the essential elements of critical thinking in class. Readings and class instruction provide data and diverse explanations for spatial variations in human population, cultures, settlement patterns, economies, political systems and use of the Earth's resources. Students acquire critical thinking skill by interpreting maps and geographical data in order to understand and explain spatial phenomena. Students practice critical thinking in class discussions and exams when they are asked to identify and describe contrasting explanations for regional variations, assess the adequacy of evidence for particular explanations, identify what additional evidence would be required, and develop a position of their own supported by evidence. In the regional summative essays and the individual response essay, students will analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information on regional problems and possible solutions. The writing assignments again ask students to develop and defend possible solutions to regional conflicts and to describe what responsibilities they have as global citizens.

- **Communication Skills** - After class instruction in the expectations for technical writing in the social sciences which include clarity and evidence-based argument, students develop written communication skills by writing essays about issues, problems, and resources found within the world's regions. After instructors have explained the guidelines for effective group discussion, students practice communication skills in discussion about current events and solutions they identify to contemporary problems. After instruction in class, supplemented by readings, students practice visual communication skills by examining and interpreting maps, graphs, charts and photographs to describe spatial patterns evident in different world regions. Students demonstrate these skills through written assignments, class discussion and examinations. Students write regional summative essays on four of the world regions covered in the course. Each essay addresses current problems facing the region and possible solutions. Students also write a fifth essay, an individual response essay, which addresses their responsibilities as an educated individual to the global community. In that fifth essay, they indicate how they intend to stay informed about developments not just in their local community but in the world's major regions.
- **Empirical and Quantitative Skills** - Students receive in-class instruction on how to manipulate and analyze numerical data or observable facts in order to reach more informed conclusions. They practice these skills through mapping exercises and by locating and working with simple data sets used to describe regional differences in populations. Students demonstrate these skills by using data to confirm demographic transition theory, to construct population pyramids, and to calculate regional total fertility rates. In the regional summative essays, they must correctly interpret statistical information about geographic regions which appeared in tabular, graphic, or map form in the text and in current newspaper articles.
- **Social Responsibility** - Readings and lectures in World Regional Geography instruct students about the significance of regional differences in human culture and physical environments. This enables students to better understand values, norms, and actions of societies other than their own. Civic responsibility is encouraged by assigned readings about current events. Students consider the meanings and implications of such events in class discussion and written essays. Students develop the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities when they make use of class material and readings in class discussions and written essays about current events and world problems. In addition, students learn the value of lifelong learning that may occur when they continue reading news sources that describe global, national, and local subjects. In the regional summative essays, they must demonstrate that they understand the views of opposing groups within a region and consider how any proposed solutions to regional controversies would impact the various groups within the region. In the individual response essay, they address their responsibilities as educated individuals to the global community how they intend to stay informed about developments not just in your local community but in the world's major regions.

Contact person for questions about this submission:

- a. Robert Szafran
- b. 468-2009

rszafran@sfasu.edu