

World Regional Geography (GEO 131)  
3 Semester Hours  
Department of Social and Cultural Analysis

Semester:	Instructor:
Section:	Office:
Time:	Phone:
Room:	Fax:
	E-mail:
	Office Hours:

**Catalog Course Description**

GEO 131: Broad investigation of the world's culture regions. Basic cultural, economic, political and physical patterns, with current events highlighted.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

GEO 131 is a required course in the Geography Program for majors and minors. It supports the following program learning outcomes:

1. The student will possess geographic knowledge as evidenced by the identification of the major concepts involved with human spatial and ecological relationships.
2. The student will be able to prepare written and verbal presentations of geographical research using the analyses and synthesis of appropriate documents and primary data.
3. The student will be able to apply geographical knowledge and skills to a variety of real world settings.
4. The student will recognize the implicit assumptions behind claims of knowledge about the social world, will be able to evaluate and distinguish between strong and weak arguments, and will be able to draw conclusions from a set of premises.
5. The student will be able to read geographical research and to identify its major methodological strengths and weaknesses.

## Core Curriculum Objectives

GEO 131 satisfies the university core curriculum requirement for three semester hours in the social and behavioral sciences. It supports four core curriculum learning objectives:

- A. **Critical Thinking Skills** including creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
- B. **Communication Skills** including effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
- C. **Empirical and Quantitative Skills** including the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
- D. **Social Responsibility** including intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to do the following things at a basic level:

- Identify major concepts involved with human spatial and ecological relationships.
- Prepare written presentations of geographical research using the analyses and synthesis of appropriate documents and primary data. (Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills)
- Apply geographical knowledge and skills to a variety of real world settings. (Social Responsibility)
- Recognize the implicit assumptions behind claims of knowledge about the social world, evaluate and distinguish between strong and weak arguments, and draw conclusions from a set of premises. (Critical Thinking Skills)
- Read geographical research and identify its major methodological strengths and weaknesses. (Empirical and Quantitative Skills)
- Identify on a map the world's major culture regions and understand regional variations in society, religion, language, and ethnicity. (Social Responsibility)
- Identify on a map the world's major physical regions and understand variations in climate, landforms, and vegetation. (Social Responsibility)
- Describe and graphically illustrate the demographic transition and implications of each stage in various nation-states. (Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills)
- Describe and graphically illustrate the population pyramid, and how it differs among various developed and developing nations. (Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Communication Skills)
- Describe the process of globalization.
- Identify locations and underlying geographic and historical issues behind major current events. (Social Responsibility)

**Text and Materials** (variations permitted with approval of department chair)

The following text is required for the:

Lydia and Alex Pulsipher, *World Regional Geography, Global Patterns, Local Lives*, W.H. Freeman Company, New York.

You are also to subscribe to the *New York Times* online edition and read it daily. You may be asked to read selections from the following world news sources which are available free online: *The London Times*, *The Times of India*, *The Jordan Times*, *The Standard* (Hong Kong), and *The Daily Maverick* (South Africa).

**Course Requirements: Regional Summative Essays and Individual Response Essay**

As you scan the New York Times and other news sources, look for and read articles about society, ethnicity, religion, language, climate, landforms and vegetation as they affect particular region(s) of the world. Be sure that at least some of the articles include statistical information in tabular, graphic, or map form. Save copies of those articles organized by region, have those copies available, and be prepared to discuss them in class.

Based on class presentations and articles read, you are to write separate summative essays on four of the world regions covered in the course. Your essays should address current problems facing the region and possible solutions. You are to also write a fifth essay which addresses your responsibilities as an educated individual to the global community. In that fifth essay, indicate how you intend to stay informed about developments not just in your local community but in the world's major regions.

Your essays should demonstrate an understanding of the material (including the statistical information) presented in class and in the readings. They should demonstrate an ability to understand, evaluate, and synthesize the available evidence. They should demonstrate that you understand the views of opposing groups within the region and you should consider how your proposed solutions would impact the various groups within the region. The regional summative essays will be used to assess mastery of three core objectives: critical thinking, communication skills, and quantitative and empirical skills. The individual response essay will be used to assess mastery of the social responsibility core objective.

**Course Requirements: Exams** (variations permitted with approval of department chair)

There will be three exams for the course. Exams will be a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

**Course Calendar** (variations permitted with approval of department chair)

<b>Topics</b>	<b>% of Course Time</b>
<b>Introduction to World Regional Geography</b>	7.5%
<b>Explicit instruction in critical thinking, communication skills, empirical and quantitative skills, and social responsibility</b> This is in addition to instruction on these topics as it naturally occurs in discussion of the physical and cultural attributes of each geographic region and the impact of geography on world issues. This includes explanation of expectations for the written assignment.	5%
<b>North America</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Central and South America</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Europe and Russia</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>North Africa and Southwest Asia</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>South Asia</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>East Asia</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Southeast Asia</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Australia, New Zealand, and South Pacific Islands</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Antarctica</b> Physical Attributes: Climate, Landforms, Vegetation Cultural Attributes: Society, Religion, Language, Ethnicity	7.5%
<b>Geographic Insights into World Issues</b>	7.5%
<b>In-Class Exams</b>	5%

**Grading Policy** (variations permitted with approval of department chair)

The final grade for the course is based on the three exam grades and one paper grade. Each exam will determine 25% of the final grade. The assignment will determine the remaining 25%. The final letter grade will be assigned as follows:

<u>Final Average</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90.00 to 100	A
80.00 up to 90.00	B
70.00 up to 80.00	C
60.00 up to 70.00	D
0 up to 60.00	F

**Attendance Policy** (variations permitted with approval of department chair)

Attendance is mandatory and adheres to SFA Policy A-10.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

## **Withheld Grades**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the department chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

## **Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD), as early as possible in a semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to <http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/>.