University of South Carolina
Carolina Core

GEOGRAPHY 103
INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

BULLETIN INFORMATION
GEOG 103 - Introduction to Geography (3 credit hours)
Course Description:
A survey of the principles and methods of geographic inquiry. Not required for the geography major.

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW
This course explains the various subfields of geographic inquiry and illustrates how geographic expertise is used in important decision-making and problem solving contexts. This course has two goals: To introduce students to the exciting conceptual and topical breadth of the discipline of geography; and to engage students in the culture-environment, locational, area analysis, and environmental traditions of geographic research and writing. The material focuses on a wide array of interdisciplinary issues encountered in diverse local contexts around the world today. These issues include: migration; political conflicts; economic development; global climate change; and degradation of natural resources, among others. Furthermore, this course will emphasize how current processes of globalization are increasing the linkages between various people and places, and are demanding an interdisciplinary geographic approach to studying these diverse interconnections.

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of Geography 103 students will be able to:

1. Compare spatial variations, patterns, distributions, and relationships in the physical and cultural world.
2. Use analytic principles of space, place, and scale to explore diverse cultural identities and local issues.
3. Analyze global political, economic, and environmental issues from a geographic perspective.
4. Use spatial approaches to explain fundamental elements of the physical environment including weather systems, landforms, and natural resources, and to evaluate the complex interrelationships between peoples and their environments.
5. Analyze current events in the context of the complex, global and local cultural and physical factors that influence them.
6. Use academic journals and online resources in Geography to research concepts and topics.
7. Communicate geographic analysis effectively to others through writing, speaking, research, and examinations.

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS

1. Getis, A., Getis, J., Bjelland, M., and Fellmann, J.D. 2010. *Introduction to Geography*, 13th ed. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0073522872.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS

Grades will be based on student performance on three exams and four exercises

1. **Exams:** This course has three non-cumulative tests, the third of which will occur during our final exam slot. These tests are multiple choice and will require students to demonstrate familiarity with the concepts, methods, examples, and information covered in the readings and lectures. Students will also be required to analyze new examples using concepts and methods they have learned in class.

2. **Exercises:** Exercises are designed so that students will:
    a. Explore diverse cultures through film and textual resources and articulate their understandings of these cultures and the issues they are facing through writing;
    b. Demonstrate their knowledge of the interrelationships between numerous places, issues, and processes through interpretive illustrations, charts and diagrams;
    c. Use different media sources and professional journals to learn more about availability of natural resources and how they are distributed amongst the global population. Students will also have the opportunity to use online tools to calculate their own personal impacts on the natural environment, and
    d. Become more familiar with geographic techniques and tools such as mapping, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Global Positioning System (GPS) technology.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

Section I: Techniques, Systems, and Human/Environment Relationships

Week 1 Introduction to class

Week 2 Introduction: Chapter 1
Introduction continued/Maps: Chapter 1 and 2

Week 3 Maps/GIS, Remote Sensing: Chapter 2
Physical Geography: Landforms: Chapter 3

Week 4 Weather and Climate: Chapter 4
Weather and Climate
Exercise 1 Due: Mapping a Place: Chapter 4

Week 5 Geography of Natural Resources: Chapter 5

Week 6 Human Impacts on the Environment: Chapter 12

Week 7 Human Impacts on the Environment
Exercise 2 Due: Ecological Footprints and Consumption: Chapter 12
Exam 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 12)

Section II: Landscapes, Populations, and Diversity

Week 8 Urban Geography: Chapter 11

Week 9 Urban Geography: Chapter 11
Population Geography: Chapter 6

Week 10 Population Geography: Chapter 6

Week 11 Cultural Geography: Chapter 7
Exercise 3 Due: The End of Suburbia: Chapter 7

Week 12 Exam 2 (Chapters 6, 7, and 11)

Section III: Thinking Spatially: Global Economics and Politics
Spatial Interaction: Chapter 8

Week 13 Spatial Interaction: Chapter 8
Economic Geography: Chapter 10

Week 14 Economic Geography: Chapter 10
Political Geography: Chapter 9

Week 15 Political Geography
Exercise 4 Due: Graphing and Illustrating Geographic Linkages: Chapter 9

Week 16 Political Geography: Chapter 9
Film

Final Exam (Chapters 8, 9, and 10) according to university exam schedule