

GEOG 50: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTS & CULTURES

Spring 2020 – 3 Credits

MWF 1:10 to 2:00pm, Lafayette L108

Instructor

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This course offers an introduction to Geography from global, regional, and place-based perspectives. Over the term, we will examine social and environmental transformations that arise from interactions between natural systems and human activities. More generally, the course encourages students to “think geographically” and critically about global processes and their various social, political and environmental impacts. This course provides students with instruction, resources and opportunities to: 1) acquire geographic concepts and tools; 2) gain awareness of numerous processes and themes that shape places across the planet; and, 3) adopt a multi-disciplinary, place-based approach to understanding Earth’s people and places.

This course aims to:

- Provide a global comparative framework for understanding political, economic, and environmental systems.
- Demonstrate how society and nature are linked through co-productive and co-evolutionary processes.
- Offer foundational perspectives on the different meanings and practices of “diversity”.
- Offer foundational perspectives on the different meanings and practices of “sustainability”.

This course reinforces the “Four Sustainability Learning Outcomes”:

- Students can have an informed conversation about the multiple dimensions and complexity of sustainability. (knowledge category)
- Students can evaluate sustainability using an evidence-based disciplinary approach and integrate economic, ecological, and social perspectives. (skills category)
- Students think critically about sustainability across a diversity of cultural values and across multiple scales of relevance from local to global. (values category)
- Students, as members of society, can recognize and assess how sustainability impacts their lives and how their actions impact sustainability. (personal domain)

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Better understand the planet’s physical and cultural diversity and be able to analyze world events in terms of that diversity.
- Have an informed discussion about the multiple dimensions of political, economic, and environmental challenges.
- Evaluate sustainability using an evidence-based disciplinary approach and integrate economic, environmental, and social perspectives.
- Think critically about sustainability across a diversity of cultural values and across multiple scales of relevance from local to global.

Pre-requisites: None

General Education: This course satisfies the Diversity Category Two (D2) and Sustainability (SU) requirements.

Required Course Materials:

1. Required Text: Moseley, William G., Eric Perramond, Holly M. Hapke, and Paul Laris. 2014. *An Introduction to Human-Environment Geography: Local Dynamics and Global Processes*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. (Note: You may decide to purchase a cheaper electronic version from the publisher or a used version from a wide range of sellers.)

2. Additional required readings will be posted on Blackboard

Course Website (Blackboard):

This course’s website will be run through Blackboard, which you can access here: <https://bb.uvm.edu>. Blackboard will be primarily used for the following: Course announcements, basic course information including the syllabus, grades, quizzes, and lecture and reading guides. Quizzes and lecture/reading guides can be accessed via links on the left side-bar of the website, under the “quizzes” link and the “course materials” link.

Attendance Policy and Classroom Environment Expectations:

Attendance: Primarily, this course is a lecture-based course. Students are expected attend each lecture. If a lecture is missed, students will be expected to obtain notes from another student. To ensure regular attendance, 6 random attendance checks will be implemented. Attendance at each check is worth 5 points.

Fostering a Critical and Responsible Learning Environment: Throughout the course, please feel free to express your ideas and enter into dialogue with your fellow students. Although I encourage you to express your views, I expect that you will be courteous to others, respect different views, and refrain from personal attacks—in class, outside of class and on-line. In this class we do not debate, we discuss. Failure to abide by these expectations will result in a reduced class engagement grade or disenrollment. During class, all phones must be turned off (no texting allowed). Laptops may be used for taking notes or engaging in class activities *only* and must not be connected to the Internet during class unless otherwise directed during specific activities. All assigned readings must be completed before class and all students must arrive on time.

Athletic and religious schedule accommodations follow UVM policy, which can be viewed at <http://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/academicinfo/rightsandresponsibilities/>. Students participating in inter-collegiate athletics should plan their schedules with special care, recognizing the primary importance of all of their university academic responsibilities. Each semester, members of UVM varsity and junior varsity teams are responsible for documenting in writing any conflicts between their planned athletic schedule and the class schedule to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes. Students and instructors should then discuss potential conflicts between course requirements and intercollegiate competitions. When an unavoidable conflict exists, the student and instructor should seek a resolution, which permits the student to address the course requirement and participate in the athletic competition. The instructor has final authority on this matter. Regarding religious holidays: Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Each semester students should submit in writing to their instructors by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. Faculty must permit students who miss work for the purpose of religious observance to make up this work.

Recording and Transmission of Course Materials: Consistent with the University’s policy on intellectual property rights, teaching and curricular materials (including but not limited to classroom lectures, class notes, exams, handouts, and presentations) are the property of the instructor. Therefore, electronic recording and/or transmission of classes or class notes is prohibited without the express written permission or request of the instructor. Such permission is to be considered unique to the needs of an individual student (e.g. ADA compliance), and not a license for permanent retention or electronic dissemination to others.

Learning Resources:

SAS (formerly ACCESS): I encourage students with documented disabilities to contact me in the first two weeks of classes to discuss and arrange accommodations in co-ordination with the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) office. In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact SAS. SAS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations via an accommodation letter to faculty with recommended accommodations as early as possible each semester. Contact SAS: A170 Living/Learning Center; 802-656-7753; access@uvm.edu; or www.uvm.edu/access.

Assessments:

Exams: There will be 4 exams. The dates are listed on the course schedule. Students will be tested on information from lectures, films, and readings. There will be short-answer, multiple-choice, and essay questions. The final exam is cumulative and will focus on modules 8-10 in addition to prior course material. There will be no make-up exams without written excusal from the Dean's office or proof of absence due to a university-sponsored activity.

Assignment 1: Drawing on course content regarding recycling and electronic waste, the goal of this assignment is to conduct a week-long self-assessment of plastics and technology consumption patterns. The primary aim is to recognize and assess how sustainability impacts your lives and how your actions impact sustainability. This assignment is worth up to 15 points. More detail will be provided on Blackboard.

Assignment 2: Addressing to the Future. Drawing on course content regarding ethics and the future, the goal of this assignment is to address the future through a critical analysis of the present. Put differently, in view of current circumstances, patterns, and/or policies, your task is to write a brief letter to future generations explaining how and why the present has impacted their lives. You may take a pessimistic, optimistic, and/or cautiously optimistic approach. This assignment is worth up to 15 points. More detail will be provided on Blackboard.

Reading Quizzes: Over the term students will complete 5 online quizzes drawing on assigned readings. Quiz questions will be in either True/False or Multiple-Choice format and will be made available on the course Blackboard site. Quizzes are worth up to 15 points each, with the lowest quiz grade being dropped.

Attendance Checks: Attendance is strongly recommended for each class. To ensure regular attendance, 6 random attendance checks will be implemented. Attendance at each check is worth 5 points.

Grading Criteria/Policies:

Late work: All assignments are due on the day listed in the course schedule. In cases where students are working with their Dean of Students Office to coordinate documented illness or other serious matters requiring deadline leniency, please contact Prof. Morehouse as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity: All submitted work must be your own, except in the specific instances when an assignment calls for collaboration. You must distinguish your own words and ideas from those of others by utilizing proper citations and references. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Detailed style guides are in our course 'Learning Resources and Guides' folder. Please also refer to UVM's Code of Academic Integrity and the Academic Integrity Program in The Center for Student Ethics and Standards for further clarification.

Exams (4) – 295 points total

- Exams 1-3 are worth 65 points each
- Exam 4 is worth 100 points

Assignments 1 & 2 – 30 points total

Quizzes (top 4 of 5) – 60 points total

- Each quiz is worth 15 points.

Attendance (6 random checks) – 30 points total

Total Points Possible: 415

Grade Matrix:

A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F – below 60
A 94-97	B 84-86	C 74-76	D 64-66	
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	D- 60-63	

Course Evaluation:

All students are expected to complete an evaluation of the course at its conclusion. Your feedback is crucial as the information gained, including constructive criticisms, will be used to improve the course. Your evaluations will be anonymous and confidential.

Tips for Success:

Lecture Guides: To assist students with note-taking, lecture guides are posted on the course Blackboard site. Students are encouraged to print out lecture guides for each class or bring laptops for note-taking purposes only.

Readings: Students are expected to complete assigned reading before class. Often, lecture content will differ from what is in your text, with the textbook serving as a valuable backdrop to lecture material. Occasionally, additional readings outside the textbook will be assigned.

Reading Guides: To help students navigate required textbook readings, reading guides are posted on the course Blackboard site. Like the lecture guides, readings guides feature key terms and concepts students are expected to know for exams.

GEOG 50 Course Schedule Spring 2020

Note: This schedule is subject to change due to scheduling logistics and solicited student input.

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
1	Mon	1/13	1. Course Introduction	Syllabus	
	THEME 1: INTRODUCING GEOGRAPHY				
	Module 1: What is Geography and why is it important?				
	Wed	1/15	2. What is Geography?	Textbook CHS 1 & 2; Lewis and Maslin (2015), Bradley (2019)	
Fri	1/17	3. Key Concepts in Human Geography: Space, Place, and Scale			
Mon	1/20	NO CLASS – MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY			
2	Wed	1/22	4. Key Concepts in Nature-Society Relations		
	Fri	1/24	5. Geography and the Environmental Condition (The Anthropocene)		QUIZ 1 DUE
X	THEME 2: POLITICAL ECOLOGY				
	Module 2: What is Political Ecology and how can it help us face the climate emergency?				
3	Mon	1/27	6. Political Ecology: Key Concepts & Strategies	Textbook CHs 4 & 8 (191-213); Albrecht (2007) McDougall (2019); Rec: Robbins (2012)	
	Wed	1/29	7. Political Ecology & the Climate Emergency: Technocratic Strategies		
	Fri	1/31	8. Political Ecology & the Climate Emergency: Grassroots Strategies		
4	Mon	2/3	9. Climate Grief: Greenland		
	Wed	2/5	10. Synthesis & Review Lecture		QUIZ 2 DUE
	Fri	2/7	EXAM 1		
X	Module 3: What role does energy play in the production of social and environmental crisis?				
	5	Mon	2/10	11. Extraction, Production, Consumption: Globalizing Pollution	Textbook CH 8 (214-226); Dunbar-Ortiz (2014); Montoya (2016) Rec: Estes (2019)
Wed		2/12	12. Case Study: Niger Delta		
Fri		2/14	13. Case Study: Dakota Access Pipeline Resistance		
X	THEME 3: HAZARDS AND VULNERABILITY				
	Module 4: How does modern industry produce risk?				
6	Mon	2/17	NO CLASS – PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY		
	Wed	2/19	14. Hazards, Vulnerability, and Resilience	Textbook CH 6; Video: Chernobyl and Risk Society	
	Fri	2/21	15. Case Study: Electronic Waste		
7	Mon	2/24	16. Case Study: Chernobyl		
	Wed	2/26	17. Synthesis & Review Lecture		QUIZ 3 DUE
	Fri	2/28	EXAM 2		

Module 5: What causes water insecurity and who is most impacted?					
8	Mon	3/2	18. Water: A Global View	Textbook CH 12; Sultana (2018); Democracy Now! video	ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
	Wed	3/4	19. Water & Gender: Bangladesh		
	Fri	3/6	20. Water & Race: Flint, MI Documentary (View outside class)		
9	Mon	3/9	NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS		
	Wed	3/11			
	Fri	3/13			
THEME 4: CONFRONTING CHALLENGES					
Module 6: Introducing Environmental Justice					
10	Mon	3/16	21. Gorongosa Park in Mozambique and the politics of bioblitzes (<i>Guest lecture, Dr. Ingrid Nelson</i>)	Textbook CH 7; Sims (2019)	
	Wed	3/18	22. Environmental Justice: Key concepts and debates		
	Fri	3/20	23. Case Study: Indigeneity and Development in the Amazon		
Module 7: Agriculture, Food, and Identity					
11	Mon	3/23	24. Green Revolution	Textbook CH 10; Additional Readings TBD	
	Wed	3/25	25. Bhopal Gas Disaster		
	Fri	3/27	26. Bioprospecting and Biopiracy in India		
12	Mon	3/30	27. Global Food Systems and Regenerative Agriculture (<i>Guest lecture, Dr. Cheryl Morse</i>)		
	Wed	4/1	28. Synthesis & Review Lecture		QUIZ 4 DUE
	Fri	4/3	EXAM 3		
Module 8: How does environmental change impact migration and ideology?					
13	Mon	4/6	29. Environment & Migration	Textbook CH 9; Lennard (2019)	
	Wed	4/8	30. Central America: Cultures at the Crossroads		
	Fri	4/10	31. Resource Anxiety & the Rise of Eco-Nationalism		
Module 9: What does life look like during extinction?					
14	Mon	4/13	32. The 6th Extinction	Textbook CH 11; Van Dooren (2014)	
	Wed	4/15	33. Vultures and Double Death in India		
	Fri	4/17	34. Geographies of Silence (Guest co-presenter Leah Kelleher)		QUIZ 5 DUE
THEME 5: FUTURES					
Module 10: To where from here?					
15	Mon	4/20	35. Nuclear Semiotics and the Deep Future	Textbook CH 14; Rose (2015), Tsing (2015)	
	Wed	4/22	36. Facing Environmental Uncertainty		
	Fri	4/24	37. Cultivating the Arts of Attention		ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
16	Mon	4/27	38. Toward an Imperfect Commons: Gardening in the Ruins	Textbook CH 14; Rose (2015), Tsing (2015)	
	Wed	4/29	39. Synthesis + Review, Course Conclusion		
	Fri	5/1	NO CLASS – INSTRUCTOR AWAY FOR CONFERENCE		
XXX		XXX	FINAL EXAM (XXXXX, L108)		

Bibliography

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- "Chernobyl – How the World Became a Risk Society." YouTube video, 18:49. "Like Stories of Old," June 30, 2019. <https://youtu.be/Y21TGmzHHik>
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2014. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
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- Van Dooren, Thom. 2014. "Circling Vultures: Life and Death at the Dull Edge of Extinction." In *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction*. New York: Columbia University Press.