



THE UNIVERSITY
OF VERMONT

Global Environments and Cultures
Spring 2020
Course Syllabus

Geog 050 B, SU D2
MWF 12:00-12:50, Lafayette 108
Course Number: 14942
3 credits

Instructor:

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Dr Morse's Office Hours

203 Old Mill
Wednesdays 1:00-3:30
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Teaching Assistants

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Teaching Assistant Office Hours

220 Old Mill Annex
Zach: Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00
Eric: Thursdays, 12:00-1:00

Welcome to *Global Environments and Cultures*, and to the UVM Geography Department. This course introduces students to the discipline of Geography, and more specifically, to **thematic** and **process-based** geographic approaches to *understanding human-environment interactions*. The aim of this course is to provide 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 globe,
- 3) understand how scale and the distinctiveness of cultures and locations influence local experience of global problems,
- 4) adopt a multi-disciplinary, place-based approach to understanding earth's people and places.

In short, this course seeks to train students to **"think geographically"** and critically about global processes and problems. We will learn a place-based approach by focusing on several world regions. The thematic approach will be covered by considering several **key themes** (listed below) over the course of the semester. We will revisit these themes in different regions of the world to better understand how they interact with local processes, either in similar or dissimilar ways. The course content is divided into **nine units**; these are found at the end of this syllabus.

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

- Describe elements of the planet's physical and cultural diversity and analyze world events in terms of that diversity.
- Evaluate sustainability using an evidence-based and geographic 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.
- Have a general understanding of the many sub-disciplines of Human-Environment Geography.

THEMES

*Global Power, Measuring Well-Being
Biophysical Processes
Migration and Borders
Socio-Environmental Change*

*Health and Place
Justice, Identity, and Vulnerability
Cultural Diversity and Environmental Thought
Making a Difference and Sustainability*

University General Education Requirements

Geography 50 meets the D2 and Sustainability General Education Requirements, as defined below:

Diversity 2 (D2): The Diversity of Human Experience

A D2 course is intended to:

Promote an *awareness of and appreciation for the diversity of human experience in all its forms* including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and disability; and/or

Foster an *understanding of global and international issues* including the flow of people, cultures, diseases, and capital or other resources within or across political and geographical boundaries.

D2 courses prepare students to contribute positively to local, national, and global communities, to see questions from multiple perspectives, and to move capably among diverse groups and cultures.

Sustainability (S)

UVM's vision for sustainability embraces the goal of educating all of its students to understand and contribute to the sustainability of human society.

Knowledge: Students can have an informed conversation about the multiple dimensions and complexity of sustainability.

Skills: Students can evaluate sustainability using an evidence-based disciplinary approach and integrate economic, ecological, and social perspectives.

Values: Students think critically about sustainability across a diversity of cultural values and across multiple scales of relevance from local to global.

Personal Domain: Students, as members of society, can recognize and assess how sustainability impacts their lives and how their actions impact sustainability.

Readings and Other Materials

Textbook:

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.

The textbook is *required* for the course. Our exams will cover material from the text that we do not explicitly cover in class. The hard copy of the textbook is available at the [UVM Bookstore](#). One course copy will be available at the Howe Library, at the reserve desk. *All additional readings will be posted on our Blackboard site.*

Course Blackboard Site <http://www.bb.uvm.edu>

Announcements, assignments, due dates, reading and lecture guides, blank maps for quiz preparation, and grades are located here. It should be checked daily for new announcements.

Course Structure and Expectations for Student Success

Expected Workload: This is a three credit course. You should expect to spend six to nine (6-9) hours per week reading, preparing for quizzes and exams, and doing homework beyond the time spent in class.

Daily Assignments: All assignments and lecture topics will be listed in the Course Schedule. All materials required for assignments will be located in folders in Blackboard, organized by Course Unit and dates. Major assignment dates are listed in the Major Assignments folder. These are posted in Blackboard. Students are expected to **check BB daily** for updates and announcements.

Lectures: I expect you to attend each lecture on time, complete assigned readings before class, take quizzes and exams, come to office hours if you need help, and locate notes that you have missed due to absence. If you miss a class I suggest you request notes from another student. **Please do not ask me or a Teaching Assistant for lecture notes.** You must take the exams and quizzes at the scheduled date and time.

On-Line Learning Days: Some learning, like watching and responding to films or reading and creating written reflections based on personal experience, is best covered on a flexible schedule. There are several days when instead of attending lecture, students are required to conduct several learning activities using resources I provide on Blackboard. Often, there is a brief writing or other assignment which will be due in class as an outcome. The on-line learning modules are posted in their respective Unit folders on Blackboard and the dates for these can be found on the Course Schedule on Blackboard.

Lecture and Exam Guides: To assist students with note-taking, I post a lecture outline for each class on Blackboard. I **strongly suggest** that you print out the lecture guide and bring it to each class, or bring it on a device to record your notes. These will help you prepare for exams. We will watch films from time to time to illustrate concepts we are learning in class; we post guides for these as well and the content will appear on the exams. Exam guides are posted on Blackboard one week before a scheduled exam.

Reading and Reading Guides: You are expected to do your assigned reading before class so that the lecture material will add to your previous knowledge. Often, what I present in lecture will be different from what is in your text (why should you read about and then be lectured to on the same material?). Occasionally, I will assign readings in addition to the textbook. These will be posted in Bb. To help you navigate the reading, I will the deadlines for text readings and a reading guide of the terms and concepts you are expected to know for exams.

How to Get Support

The course instructor and teaching assistants hold a total of 5 office hours each week (listed at the top of this syllabus). We welcome you to come to our offices to talk to us about assignments, difficulties with the class or assessments, learning how to best prepare for quizzes and exams, and advice about navigating UVM in general. If you need specific support with accommodations, counseling, residential

life, etc., we will direct you to the appropriate offices. **Please come see us—it's our job to support your learning!**

Communication, Time Conflicts and Academic Integrity

Students who are experiencing difficulty with any aspect of the course should come to Dr Morse's or a Teaching Assistant's **office hours**. No appointment is needed during office hours. If you have class during all office hours, email us to make a special appointment. The office hours and our email addresses are listed at the top of this document. Communicate by email with Dr Morse immediately if you have a **UVM-sponsored conflict** or **religious conflict** with any of the exam or quiz dates. **Quizzes** are announced in class one week in advance of the quiz date. Conflicts with the final exam date must be communicated by **April 13**; *going home early is not a valid reason to re-schedule a final exam*.

Students using **accommodation services** or who have other special needs in the classroom should communicate directly with Dr Morse as soon as possible to ensure that all of the appropriate accommodations are available.

Students are expected to demonstrate **the highest level of academic integrity**. We will bring any suspected instances of plagiarism, cheating, or dishonesty directly to the Office of Academic integrity. It is always worth the effort to discuss problems with the course with the professor, rather than resorting to desperate measures.

We strive to create an environment in which students feel comfortable voicing their opinions and individual perspectives. This is accomplished when all members of the class **demonstrate respectful behavior** towards others.

Assessment and Course Grading

Homework Essay Assignment

There is one homework essay assignment for this course. The assignment is designed to offer students the opportunity to more deeply engage with a central topic in the course. Specific instructions will be posted on the Blackboard site. The due date is staggered, according to last name. It is the student's responsibility to know their deadline and to meet it!

Quizzes

There are two components to the quizzes. The map portion will test your knowledge of the political boundaries, country locations, capital cities and important physical features of the regions we are studying. Blank maps are posted on BB for practice. The second component will vary but will require you to analyze your personal connection to a global theme. You may be asked to prepare something in advance for this portion of the quiz. There will be **5 quizzes** during the semester. The specific quiz dates are not listed in this course outline; I will announce quizzes one week before they are given. Therefore, come to class! We will drop your lowest grade, so **only 4 quiz grades will count toward your final grade**. There will be no make-up quizzes unless you have an excused absence note from your college's Dean's office or were away on a university-sponsored activity. *Quizzes typically are given at the very start of class time. If you are late for class you will not be given another time to take the quiz.*

Exams

There are **3 exams** for this course (2 during the term and one final exam). Each student has areas of strength and weakness in specific kinds of assessments. For that reason, I have differentiated assignments and differentiated testing questions; your exams will contain multiple choice, short answer, spatial skill and essay questions.

Final Grade Calculation

Quizzes	25%
Homework Essay Assignment	10%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	25%
Exam 3	25%

Important Dates

Fri, Jan 24	Last name A-F homework due
Mon, Jan 27	Add/drop deadline
Mon, Feb 10	Exam 1
Fri, Feb 28	Last name G-P homework due
Fri, Mar 27	Last Day to Withdraw from Classes
Mon, Mar 30	Exam 2
Mon, Apr 13	Last day to discuss final exam conflicts with Dr Morse (<i>going home early is not a valid conflict</i>)
Fri, Apr 17	Last name O-Z homework due
May 7	Exam 3 (Final) at 10:30am

Letter Grades and Points

A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79	D+ 68-69	F = below 60
A 93-97	B 83-87	C 73-77	D 63-67	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Course Units and Schedule Overview

The course is structured into 9 units. Each unit has an overarching theme and explores several topics. In addition, each unit also focuses on one region of the world as a case study site. This provides exposure to the ways that cultural and geographic difference impacts human-environment relationships. As most of us are familiar with North America, this region will serve as a frequently called-upon comparative site throughout the course.

A detailed daily schedule is posted on Blackboard. Students are required to check this daily as changes may be made.

Dates		Assignments Due + Notes
UNIT 1 Introduction to Global Human-Environment Geography <i>Geographic Focus: Global, Europe</i> Topics: Introduction to Geography, Global Well-Being and Power, Geographic Tools, European Colonization, Cultural and Political Ecology, Postcolonial Worlds and Relations		
Jan 13- Jan 27		Textbook Chapters 1 + 4 Kristof, N. 2019.
Mon Jan 20	No class- Martin Luther King Holiday	
Fri Jan 24		Last Names: A -F Homework Assignment Due on Blackboard by midnight
UNIT 2 The Biophysical World <i>Geographic Focus: Latin America</i> Topics: Global Circulation, Biomes, Disturbance and Plants on the Move, Water Dynamics		
Jan 29- Feb 7		Textbook Chapters 3 + 12 Central and South America Map Quiz 1
Fri, Feb 10	Exam 1: Units 1 + 2, Textbook Chapters 1, 4, 3, 12, Kristof reading	
UNIT 3 'Nature', Environmental History and Conservation <i>Geographic Focus: North America and Africa</i> Topics: American Ideas about 'Nature,' Preservation and Conservation, National Parks Problems, Human-Animal Geographies		
Feb 12- Feb 21		Textbook Chapters 2 + 11 Africa Conservation reading TBA Morse, J. 2018.

		Quiz 2
UNIT 4 Justice, Identity and Natural Hazards <i>Geographic Focus: The Caribbean</i> Topics: Environmental justice, What is a natural disaster? Natural disasters and Vulnerability		
Feb 24 – Feb 28		Textbook Chapters 6 + 7
Fri, Feb 28		Last names G – P Homework Assignment Due on Blackboard , by midnight
UNIT 5 Agriculture, Food Systems, Working Landscapes <i>Geographic Focus: South Asia and Vermont</i> Is “How do we feed 9 billion people” the right question? Scale and Place in Agriculture; Working Landscapes in Vermont and Elsewhere, Food, Place and Identity; The River Ganges		
Mar 2 – Mar 18		Textbook Chapter 10 Monaco, E. 2017 Narayan, S. 2015 Quiz 3
UNIT 6 Island Geography and Climate Change <i>Geographical Focus: The Pacific</i> Topics: Climate Change dynamics, Physical and Political Geographies of Pacific Islands, Sea Level Rise and Global Response, Fire in Australia		
Mar 20- Mar 27		Textbook Chapter 8, pp. 191-214
Mon Mar 30	Exam 2: Units 3, 4, 5, 6; Textbook Chapters 2, 11, 6, 7, 8, 10; Naryan, Morse, J., Monaco	
UNIT 7 Conflict, Migration, and Environmental Stress <i>Geographic Focus: Middle East</i> Migration as a Result of Conflict, Conflict as a Result of Environmental Change and Racism, Rise of Eco-Nationalism		
Apr 1 – Apr 10		Readings To Be Announced Quiz 4
UNIT 8 Health Geographies, Energy and Indigenous Peoples <i>Geographic Focus: Indigenous Regions in the World</i> Health, Dislocation and Place, , Energy Economies,		
Apr 13 - 22		Textbook Chapter 8, pp. 214-226 Osofsky and MacFarlane, 2019 Livingstone, 2016 Quiz 5
Fri Apr 17		Last names O - Z

		Homework Assignment Due on Blackboard , by midnight
<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT 9 Making a Difference</p> <p>What contributions have geographers made to solving problems? What tools are required to improve life on the planet? What are some of the most helpful initiatives in recent years? Course Summary.</p>		
Apr 24 – May 1		Textbook Chapter 14. Student generated reading list
10:30 am Thurs May 7	Exam 3: Units 7, 8, 9. Chapter 8, Osofsky and MacFarlane, Livingstone, and additional readings,	

Sample Readings in Addition to our Textbook

Kristof, N. 2019. "Opinion: This Has Been The Best Year Ever." New York Times. 28 December. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/28/opinion/sunday/2019-best-year-poverty.html>

Livingstone, Grace. 5 September 2016. "Mapuche community in Argentina fights fracking site." BBC News: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-36892770?intlink_from_url=http://www.bbc.com/news/topics/f0e68d01-22ae-42a7-9e05-d299a29d4ce5/argentina&link_location=live-reporting-story.

Monaco, Emily. 2017. "The Secret History of Paris' Catacomb Mushrooms". Atlas Obscura. 31 October. <https://getpocket.com/explore/item/the-secret-history-of-paris-s-catacomb-mushrooms>

Narayan, Shoba. 2015. "The God of Small Feasts" *In Food: A Reader for Writers*, D. Holdstein and D. Aquiline, eds., Oxford University Press.

Osofsky, LuLing and Key MacFarlane. 2019. "A Road Trip Through New Mexico's Atomic Past." High Country News May 13. <https://www.hcn.org/issues/51.8/travel-a-road-trip-through-new-mexicos-atomic-past>.

Tsing, Anna. 2014. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. Chapter: "This earth, this island Borneo," pp. 155-170.

Wilson, Edward. O. 2014. *A Window on Eternity: A Biologist's Walk Through Gorongosa National Park*. New York: Simon and Schuster, pp 1-15.