CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY - GEOG 3410 (B)

Time and Place: Mondays & Wednesdays 6:30 pm – 7:45 pm  
2075 Nevins Hall  
CRN 80258

Instructor: Prof. Michael G. Noll  
2216 Nevins Hall  
333-7143  
mgnoll@valdosta.edu  
http://ww2.valdosta.edu/~mgnoll/

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays (9:00 am – 11:00 am) and ***by appointment***.

Note: You have access to my teaching materials on my website and on Blazeview.

Course Objectives:

The discipline of geography involves the study of the earth as the home of people. Geographers concentrate on the spatial aspects of people's relationship with the earth and with each other. In simple terms, we examine the WHY of WHERE. In this course we study the spatial variations of cultures on the earth's surface and analyze the ways in which factors like religion, language, politics, and others influence our collective human behavior. In order to fully understand these spatial variations, we will closely examine the most important concepts in cultural geography: culture region, cultural diffusion, cultural ecology, cultural interaction, and cultural landscape.

In addition to these general course objectives, we will follow the aspired education outcomes of VSU's Core Curriculum. Thus, among other things, students in this course will:

- develop a general understanding of the different concepts in cultural geography  
- gain cross-cultural perspectives and knowledge of other cultures in our society and on our planet  
- use computer and information technology to further explore the cultural richness of our planet  
- demonstrate a good knowledge of the different popular and folk cultures in our society and elsewhere  
- and build on the knowledge gained of other cultures to reflect on our own society and culture(s)

For more information on VSU's general education outcomes, please visit the following website: https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/general-education-council/ge-outcomes.php

Warning: This course will present and discuss controversial materials to examine different aspects of culture like religion and politics. If you suffer from xenophobia or get your information of current events only from sources like Fox News or MSNBC, this will be an eye opening and challenging experience. However, it is ultimately not important for your success in this course if you consider yourself a “conservative” or a “liberal”. In the end the only thing that truly matters is that you keep an open mind, that you use your textbook, and that you study your materials!

Required Textbook:


Class Attendance and Participation:

I will do everything possible to make our class a fun learning experience. To a degree your success in this course will depend on your attendance and participation. The evidence is overwhelming that regular class attendance and participation correlates with higher grades. To encourage your attendance, **I will add two extra points to your final grade point average if you miss less than 3 classes.** On average, more than 10% of the class will be able to use these points to get a better final grade! To keep record of your attendance, I will take roll at each class. **It will be your responsibility to sign these class rolls!** Note: those who sign an attendance sheet and then simply leave will automatically lose the chance to get extra credit for regular attendance.
In addition, please note the following VSU policy:

“A student who misses 20% of the scheduled classes of a course will be subject to receiving a failing grade [F] in the course.” (Undergraduate Catalog, 2014-2015, p. 71)

**VSU Withdrawal Policy:** VSU has a new withdrawal policy since Fall 2010. Students are now limited to a total of 5 drops with a grade of “W” during their undergraduate work. Make sure you are aware of this policy and understand the consequences before you decide to drop this class. (Undergraduate Catalog, 2014-2015, p. 69)

**Cellular Phones, I-Pads and Laptops in the Classroom:**

Cellular phones need to be turned off/silenced during class sessions. If your phone goes off during class, you may be asked to leave. Please refrain from sending and responding to text messages during class.

Do not use your I-pads or laptops for checking emails, social networking, surfing the internet, or playing games as it distracts you and your neighbors. Be courteous of others and observe professional behavior in the classroom.

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:**

The VSU Student Handbook states among other things:

“No student shall engage in plagiarism, which is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were the student’s own. Essays, term papers, laboratory reports, tests, online writing assignments, and other similar requirements must be the work of the student submitting them.” (p. 71)

Anyone found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course. In addition, current VSU policy dictates that all instances be reported to the administration for disciplinary action.

**Disabilities:**

Students requiring classroom accommodations because of a documented disability should contact the Access Office located in Farber Hall. The phone number of the Access Office is 245-2498.

**Title IX:**

Valdosta State University (VSU) is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive work and learning environment free from discrimination and harassment, where all campus community members feel valued, respected, and included. VSU prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, disability, or veteran status. If you are experiencing discrimination or harassment at VSU, please contact the Office of Social Equity via email (titleix@valosta.edu) or by phone (229-333-5463).

**Research Paper:**

Since this is an upper-division course, you will have to work on a research paper of your choice, but within the framework of cultural geography. Students can team up with fellow students to share the responsibility for research, data analysis, and discussions! Up to three students may work together on a research paper. The research paper is worth 30% of your final grade.

**Please note the following guidelines for your research paper:**

1) **Everyone** must turn in a proposal no later than September 15! This proposal (including an annotated bibliography of 6 scholarly sources) will count for 15% of your research paper grade!

2) Please note that your scholarly sources must be **relevant** to your paper topic!

3) Web sites per se (e.g. Wikipedia) are rarely considered scholarly sources! Make sure you gain access to academic/scholarly sources with the help of available databases at Odum Library and via GALILEO.

4) Those who turn in no proposal or a poorly written proposal will see their research paper grade reduced!

5) Due date for the research paper itself is November 18! Late papers will see a reduction in their grade!
6) If you do not know how to do research, evaluate sources, or cite references, talk with a reference librarian at Odum Library or visit the following website for a number of useful tutorials:

http://ww2.valdosta.edu/library/learn/index.shtml#using

7) Good starting points for doing your research are the following databases accessible via GALILEO:

Academic Search Premier (EBSCO)
Research Library (ProQuest)
Social Sciences Abstracts

Research paper format guidelines:

1. Use headings, subheadings and paragraphs to structure your paper
2. Use margins of one-inch on all sides
3. Use a 12-point font
4. Put page numbers on every page except the title page
5. All papers must be double-spaced
6. Italics must be used for foreign words or titles of books and journals
7. Cite original references in the body of your paper
8. A maximum of 10% of your research paper can consist of direct quotes.
9. Your research paper must have a minimum of 6 pages and a maximum of 10 pages, excluding tables, illustrations, etc.
10. Thoroughly proofread and spell check your paper before you hand it in
11. List references in the bibliography of your research paper alphabetically
12. Depending on your major you may either use the APA, the MLA, or the Chicago Manual style. Please indicate on your paper's title page what style you are using!

NOTE: Start early as you may have to order materials through Interlibrary Loan Services at Odum Library!

Exams:

There will be three exams. Each exam will be graded on a separate curve. Cheating on exams will not be tolerated (see the above section on “Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism”)! I will give you my best during class meetings and I expect the same from you during exams. Note: If you are 20 minutes late to an exam, or a fellow student has already finished by the time you arrive, you will NOT be able to take it.

Grading:

Final grades will be calculated from your three exam scores plus the score from your research paper. Each of your two highest exam scores plus the score from your research paper will be worth 30% each of your final grade (or 90% in total). Your lowest exam score will only count for 10% of your final grade.

Final grades will be based on the following scale:

- A = 90 - 100%
- B = 80 - 89%
- C = 70 - 79%
- D = 60 - 69%
- F = < 60%

To help you study for the exams, I will make my lecture notes available online and we will have a short review session prior to each exam. Thus, the best way to prepare for my exams is to take good class notes, read your textbook, work with my lecture notes, and ask questions during classes and review sessions.
READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY!

**Make-Up Exam:** There will be **NO** make-up exam! In other words, do not, for any reason, miss a scheduled exam.

**Extra Credit:** With the exception of the **2% extra credit for regular attendance** (see above), there will be **NO** other opportunity for you to boost your final grade with any extra credit! So don’t slack!

**Cellular Phones:** Cellular phones need to be **turned off or silenced** during **ALL** scheduled classes. No exception.

**Tentative Lecture Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>“The Eleventh Hour”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Cultural Geography: An Introduction</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Cultural Geography: An Introduction</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Cultural Geography: An Introduction</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Folk and Popular Cultures</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Labor Day</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Folk and Popular Cultures</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Folk and Popular Cultures</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Geography of Religion</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Field Trip to “Sunset Hill Cemetery”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>The Geography of Religion</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>“Islam: Empire of Faith”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“Inside Mecca: The Hajj”</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Geography of Religion</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td><strong>Fall Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Population Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>“Baraka” or “Affluenza”</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Population Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Population Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The Geography of Language</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Do You Speak American”?</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Geography of Language</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Geography of Language</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Political Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“War Made Easy”</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Political Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-27</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>“Peace, Propaganda &amp; the Promised Land”</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Political Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>December</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Concluding Discussions about the “Human Mosaic”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam, Friday, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm, 2075 NH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>