

# World Regional Geography

## POLS: 104-003

Fall 2009  
Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00 to 3:15 PM  
Maybank Hall, Room 307

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Office hours: M: 3:30 to 5:30 PM;  
R: 2:00 to 4:00 PM & By appointment

### Course Description

This course surveys the world's major regions and their physical and human characteristics. Geographic concepts and principles are used to study the physical, economic, social, and political conditions, problems, and prospects in the culturally diverse world. The spatial expression of culture, as well as specialized behavior patterns, adaptations and ways of life in distinct environments are analyzed. The interdependencies among regions, the reasons for their existence and their implications for economic development are reviewed. By studying human relations and human experience around the world, students will learn about space, place, scale, and context as key processes that define the discipline of geography.

### Objectives

Students successfully completing World Regional Geography will be able to *identify* and *describe* the world's major geographic realms and their associated regions. Students will be able to *identify* and appropriately use key geographical concepts for analysis, explanation, and exploration of both foreign and familiar places. Students will be able to *explain* the economic interdependencies among realms and regions, as well as the cultural interconnections. Students will be able to *define* the major sub-disciplines within geography, and *give examples* of realms and regions of the world where associated sub-disciplinary perspectives and research have offered insight into the human condition and spatial patterns of phenomena that affect the social world.

### Course Philosophy

This course is designed to be an introduction to World Regional Geography and the discipline of geography. As an introductory, 1<sup>st</sup> year course, the basic educational goals

of knowledge and comprehension of geographical ideas, information, and concepts must be achieved. Because this course is offered within a Political Science Department, we will pay particular attention to issues of power and politics as they shape and are shaped by environmental conditions. We will also discuss the way that societies and groups within societies organize space to achieve political objectives. To facilitate the achievement of these goals, learning, assessment, and instruction are delivered in five ways:

(1) **Student engagement with the course texts through reading.** Reading is fundamental to the learning process, and it is expected that the bulk of the student's learning will be achieved via his or her careful and independent reading. The class time will provide an opportunity to reinforce the concepts in the textbook and clarify points of confusion.

(2) **Constant assessment**—both summative (graded) and formative (un-graded). Periodically over the course of the semester, I will issue writing assignments in class that I will use to assess whether or not you have mastered a key concept. These assignments will not be graded, but I will return them to you with feedback. I will calculate your formal grade by your performance on in-class discussion, 12 quizzes, a media journal project, a professional review and application of course concepts, and a take-home final exam. (Each of these assessments is described in detail below.)

(3) **Writing**—Writing is integral to this class, and it is fundamental to your academic and professional success. Research also shows that students remember more about a topic when they write about it. Nearly all assignments and assessments in this class will require you to write.

(4) **Discussion**—Willingness to speak up with valuable contributions and organized thoughts is also fundamental to your academic and professional success. This class provides an opportunity for you to engage with your peers and communicate ideas, all the while practicing for life outside of college.

(5) **Lecture**—Because this is an introductory survey course, there will be a varying lecture component to each class. In some classes, I will speak a lot, in others less. In every class, however, you will have an opportunity and an expectation to speak up.

## Course Texts

There is one assigned textbook for this course; it is available for purchase at the campus bookstore. The main readings for the course will come from this book. The cost of a used copy is \$107.25. A new copy is \$142.75.

de Blij, H.J. and P.O. Muller. 2008. *Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 13<sup>th</sup> edition.

Several short readings on key concepts in geography will be posted on WebCT.

You are also required to have a weekly five day subscription to *The New York Times* through the campus bookstore. You must receive hard copies of the paper (more on this below). You can pick up your subscriptions at the bookstore Monday through Friday. The bookstore opens at 8:00 a.m. The cost of this subscription for the semester is \$33.50.

## Course Overview

**26, 31\* August:** Introduction

**2, 7, 9\* September:** Europe

**14, 16\* September:** Russia

**21, 23\* September:** North America

+++**26 September:** Media Journal Analysis #1 is due.

**28, 30\* September:** Middle America

**5, 7\* October:** South America

**14, 19\* October:** Sub-Saharan Africa

**21, 26\* October:** North Africa / Southwest Asia

**28 October and 2\* November:** South Asia

+++**30 October:** Media Journal Analysis #2 is due.

**4, 9, 11\* November:** East Asia

**16, 18\* November:** Southeast Asia

**23\* November:** Austral Realm

**30 November:** Pacific Realm

+++**1 December:** Media Journal Analysis #3 is due.

+++**7 December:** Professional Application Letter is due.

+++**14 December:** Take home final exam is due.

\*denotes that a quiz is given on this day.

## Assignments & Evaluation

**Class participation** – The class participation grade will be determined by your attendance at each class, your engagement during the lectures, your responses to questions and other students' comments, and to postings on WebCT. Sleeping or putting one's head down during the course will adversely affect the grade. Lateness—both at the beginning of the course and after the break—as well as early departures, will adversely affect the grade. The participation grade will also be determined by your willingness to speak up and share thoughts, questions, and concerns during the course. For those students who prefer to use WebCT to participate, thoughtful, well-thought out and frequent responses on the WebCT forums can be used to supplement in-class participation, but in-class participation is still required. I will also give you ample opportunities to boost your participation grade by presenting on relevant *New York Times* articles that you are reading for your media journals. Participation counts as **15% of your grade**. Please see Rubric #1 “Evaluating Student Participation,” which is posted on WebCT, for more detailed information regarding how I will evaluate your participation.

**Quizzes on the reading** – There will be a 5-question quiz on the assigned reading for each realm that we cover, for a total of 12 quizzes for the semester. The days when you will take quizzes are noted with an asterisk (\*) in the schedule. The content that is tested on the quiz will be drawn from, but will not be identical to, the study questions that will appear on WebCT for each chapter's material. The quizzes will count towards **15% of your grade**.

NOTE: There are no make-ups for the quizzes. If you miss a quiz, you must provide a documented reason for your absence. With a sufficient, document reason for absence, your final grade for the quizzes will then be averaged from the scores for the quizzes that you did take. Further, quizzes will begin precisely at noon; students arriving late to class will not receive extra time for the quiz.

**Media Journal** – You are required to subscribe to *The New York Times* through the college bookstore, to sign up for a realm and regional focus, and to keep an electronic journal in which you analyze the articles you are reading and connect them to course material. The media journal will count towards **20% of your grade**. The purpose of this assignment is for you to apply course concepts and facts to the interpretation of real world, contemporary issues occurring in the places you are reading about. You must title each journal entry, and articulate a common theme that runs through all of the articles. Each journal entry (there are three) should not be longer than 2.5 pages. You must keep a “clippings envelope” in which you cut out each article you discuss in your journal; I will periodically ask to see your envelope. Due dates for the Media Journal are as follows: Saturday, 26 September; Friday, 30 October; Wednesday, 12 December. Journals must be submitted by noon on the day specified to my email box KeenanK@cofc.edu . Email

attachments arriving with an email time stamp of 12:01 p.m. or later on the date specified will be considered late. Late media journals will lose 6 points (out of 100) each day that they are late. Please see Rubric #2 “Evaluating Student Media Journals,” which is posted on WebCT, for more specific information on how I will evaluate your media journal entries.

NOTE: The media journals are due by noon on the date specified in my email box KeenanK@cofc.edu . It is YOUR responsibility to make sure this paper gets to me on time. (I will acknowledge receipt of all exams by return email.) The late policy will be strictly enforced.

**Professional Application Letter** – The purpose of the Professional Application Letter is for you to research a professional organization (such as a non-profit, consulting group, or government agency) that may find the skills you have learned in this class useful. You must then articulate, in a one page, business-formatted letter, why you should be hired into an internship at this particular organization. Your letter should creatively tailor the concepts and ideas that you have read about and discussed in the class to the mission and goals of the agency. I will give you detailed feedback on this letter, and you may wish to actually send it and see if you can get an interview. This assignment counts towards **10% of your grade**. The Professional Application Letter is due by noon on Monday, 12/1 in my email box [KeenanK@cofc.edu](mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu) . Because this assignment counts towards a small percentage of your overall grade, there are no opportunities for turning in a late assignment. If you fail to turn in your assignment by noon on 12/1, you will forfeit 10% of your grade. Please see Rubric #3 “Professional Application Letter,” which is posted on WebCT, for more specific information on how I will evaluate your media journal entries.

NOTE: The Professional Application Letter is due by noon on 12/1 in my email box KeenanK@cofc.edu . It is YOUR responsibility to make sure this paper gets to me on time. (I will acknowledge receipt of all exams by return email.) The late policy will be strictly enforced.

**Take home final exam** – I will post on WebCT five essay questions on Monday, 7 December 2009. You are required to answer all of these questions by noon on the following Monday, 14 September. Responses should not exceed 2 pages per question and must be typed, double spaced, 12 point, Times New Roman font. The final exam will count towards **40% of your grade**. You will be evaluated on organization, grammar, spelling, and presentation in addition to correct content. You may use the textbook, but you are not permitted to discuss the content of your answers or to consult others on how to answer a question. Your final exam must be submitted to my email box KeenanK@cofc.edu as a Microsoft Word document by noon. Email attachments arriving with an email time stamp of 12:01 p.m. or later on the 14<sup>th</sup> will be considered late. Late exams will lose 3 points (out of 100) each day that they are late. All final grades for the

class are due on 12/18, so students who have not turned in a final exam by noon on the 18<sup>th</sup> will receive an 'F' for 40% of their grade.

NOTE: The take home final exam is due by noon on the 14<sup>th</sup> in my email box KeenanK@cofc.edu . It is YOUR responsibility to make sure this paper gets to me on time. (I will acknowledge receipt of all exams by return email.) The late policy will be strictly enforced.

**Your final grade for the course will be calculated using the following grade distribution (percentage of total score of all assignments).**

A = 93 – 100	B = 82.5 – 87.4	C = 72.5 – 77.4	D = 62.5 – 67.4
A- = 90 – 92.9	B- = 80 – 82.4	C- = 70 – 72.4	D- = 60 – 62.4
B+ = 87.5 – 89.9	C+ = 77.5 – 79.9	D+ = 67.5 – 69.9	F = 0.0 – 59.9

## General Policies and Procedures

- **Statement on Academic Integrity:** The College of Charleston regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the Student Honor Code and the Code of Conduct. The College will pursue cases of academic dishonesty.

Complete information about the College of Charleston's academic integrity policies is available through the Office of Student Services. Please see the following document, available online:

[http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/general\\_info/honor\\_system/index.html](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/general_info/honor_system/index.html) .

- **Student Email:** Students are required to have a College of Charleston email account and to check it at least once per day. All notices regarding the course will be sent to the College of Charleston account.
- **Faculty Email:** The professor uses KeenanK@cofc.edu and will check it at least once per day. Immediate responses via email should not be expected, but can generally be expected within a 24-hour period.
- **Cell phones and pagers** may be left on, but they must be turned to silent mode.

- **Special needs or concerns:** Any students who have special learning needs or concerns are urged to speak with me during the first week of the semester if accommodations are needed. The Center for Disability Services provides a comprehensive list of accessibility resources available at the College on the following website: <http://spinner.cofc.edu/~cds> .
- **Mutual respect for differing questions and ideas:** The College is a place for open inquiry and exchange of ideas. All members of the College should treat all other members of the College and members of society with mutual respect and appreciation.

### Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Date	Topic	Assignment	Notes
W 8/26	Inro.		Introductions; Syllabus overview
M 8/31	Intro.	Muller pgs. 1-37	Quiz today
W 9/2	Europe 1	Muller pgs. 48-63	
M 9/7	Europe 2	Muller pgs. 63-86 Thrift on Space	
W 9/9	Europe 3	Muller pgs. 87-105	Quiz today
M 9/14	Russia 1	Muller pgs. 104-34	
W 9/16	Russia 2	Muller pgs. 135-49	Quiz today
M 9/21	North America 1	Muller pgs. 150-76	
W 9/23	North America 2	Muller pgs. 177-203	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keenan at START conference; Watson to cover.</li> <li>• Quiz today</li> </ul>
S 9/26 Media Journal #1 analysis due as MS Word document to <a href="mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu">KeenanK@cofc.edu</a> by noon.			
M 9/28	Middle America 1	Muller pgs. 204-16	
W 9/30	Middle America 2	Muller pgs. 217-41	Quiz today
M 10/5	South America 1	Muller pgs. 242-55 Castree on Place	
W 10/7	South America 2	Muller pgs. 255-87	Quiz today
M 9/12			Fall Break – no class
W 10/14	Sub-Saharan Africa 1	Muller pgs. 288-311	
M 10/19	Sub-Saharan Africa 2	Muller pgs. 312-41	Quiz today

W 10/21	North Africa & Southwest Asia 1	Muller pgs. 340-57 Katz on Resistance	
M 10/26	North Africa & Southwest Asia 2	Muller pgs. 358-99	Quiz today
W 10/28	South Asia 1	Muller pgs. 400-417	
F 10/30 Media Journal #2 analysis due as MS Word document to <a href="mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu">KeenanK@cofc.edu</a> by noon.			
M 11/2	South Asia 2	Muller pgs. 418-449	Quiz today
W 11/4	East Asia 1	Muller pgs. 450-72	
M 11/9	East Asia 2	Muller pgs. 473-98	
W 11/11	East Asia 3	Muller pgs. 498-21	Quiz today
M 11/16	Southeast Asia 1	Muller pgs. 522-40 Herod on Scale	
W 11/18	Southeast Asia 2	Muller pgs. 540-69	Quiz today
M 11/23	Austral Realm 1	Muller pgs. 572-91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz today</li> <li>• Professional application letter is due.</li> </ul>
<i>W 11/25</i>			Thanksgiving Break – no class
M 11/30	Pacific Realm	Muller pgs. 592-609	
W 12/1	Open		
W 12/1 Media Journal #3 analysis due as MS Word document to <a href="mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu">KeenanK@cofc.edu</a> by noon.			
M 12/7	Open		
M 12/7 Professional Application Letter is due as MS Word document to <a href="mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu">KeenanK@cofc.edu</a> by noon.			
***12/14 Final exam is due by noon; Submit to my email box <a href="mailto:KeenanK@cofc.edu">KeenanK@cofc.edu</a> as an MS Word document.			

Enjoy the winter break!