

GEG 100 INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

Department of Political Science and Global Affairs

The City University of New York - College of Staten Island

Fall 2018

This course provides an overview to the field of Geography. It approaches the central issues of the discipline through a systematic fashion, exploring the basics of such themes as: physical geography, climate change, political geography, cultural geography, urban geography, economic geography, agriculture, globalization, and resources and development.

BASIC COURSE INFO

Section:	15480
Units:	3
Schedule:	Fri, 10:10 AM- 1:10 PM
Room:	1S 116
Professor:	Dr. Nerve V. Macaspac
Office hours:	Tues and Thurs 1-2 PM, Fri 2-3PM (or by appointment), 2N-117
Email:	nerve.macaspac@csi.cuny.edu

NOTE: In your emails, write 18F GEG 100 at the subject line. I prioritize responding to emails regarding concerns related to the course that have not been covered in the syllabus and class announcements. I reply to emails within 48 hours and between 830AM – 5PM during weekdays. If you sent me an email on weekends, you will get a response on Monday. I am not available by phone or social media.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Why do places look differently across the world? How does the environment affect people's health? Why do people disagree about changes in climate? Where does our garbage go, and why does it matter? Why do we think about location and distance

in our daily lives? Why does New York City look the way it does? Why do people act in particular ways in particular places? Why is there inequality in the world? How can we understand connections among people's lives across the world?

If you have ever asked yourself any of these questions, you have already started thinking like a geographer. Geographers are interested in the relationships between people and their environments, and particularly in the dynamics of these relationships. In this class, you will develop an understanding of some of the ways geographers think about the world, and you will gain a basic familiarity with some of the conceptual tools geographers use.

The first half of the course will focus on our physical environment. We will learn to identify geographic processes and interactions and explore how they differentially impact people's lives and vice versa. We will also consider assumptions about nature. In the second half of the course, we will turn to explore the politics of environmentalism. Then we will focus on borders and transnational migration, cities and social differences, and commodity chains as forms of global interconnection. The course will end in considering select visions of alternative futures, specifically looking at the kinds of spatial relationships these require. By the end of the course, you will be able to answer the question, "What is geography?" and, hopefully, you will see geographies everywhere!

This course offers a survey of the discipline of Geography by examining key concepts in the subfields of Physical Geography and Human Geography and in dialogue with contemporary issues in the world we live in. Students will learn how to think geographically, demonstrate familiarity with maps and geographic concepts, and become conversant on a broad range of subject matter including ecological, political, economic, cultural, and urban issues. Key concepts and ideas are reinforced through lectures, presentations, discussions, in-class activities, thematic forums, exams, and individual projects. This course requires a significant amount of independent work and time management.

NOTE: This course syllabus is a living document. In other words, assigned readings and materials may be updated as the semester progresses.

TEXTBOOK

David Hassenzahl, Mary Catherine Hager, and Linda R. Berg. 2017. Visualizing Environmental Science (5th edition). NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
ISBN: 978-1-119-27916-7

NOTE: An e-textbook (digital copy) is available for purchase (\$76.00) at: wiley.com/en-us/Visualizing+Environmental+Science%2C+5th+Edition-p-9781119279167

A limited number of copies of the book have been requested to be placed on reserve at the CSI Library Reference section.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

There are seven core objectives to this course:

1. Develop, sharpen, and reinforce your geographical knowledge;
2. Familiarize and become conversant with a broad range of subject matter of Geography including ecological, political, economic, cultural, and urban issues;
3. Articulate key concepts, analyses, and arguments from the assigned readings, the theoretical and research work that shape these, and contributions to our understandings of the world;
4. Analyze, synthesize, and articulate key contemporary geographic issues and challenges with global and local implications;
5. Gain and demonstrate a deeper and dynamic perspective and appreciation of the multifaceted character of the world we live in;
6. Demonstrate how a geographic perspective can complement, extend and be applied across the physical, biological, environmental, and social sciences;
7. Improve technical and communication skills essential for your studies and professional lives.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course is organized into fifteen (15) units. For each Unit, course content (e.g., readings, thematic forum topics, etc.) will be available to students on the course website via Blackboard. An online delivery of course materials allows students to learn and review course content in a flexible manner. Students are expected and required to access and read all course content for each Unit before attending class.

NOTE: All course content and materials will be made available to each student on the course website on a rolling basis (e.g., new content released every Sunday at 9:00 AM each week). Students are expected to access and read all content as soon as they are made available.

CLASS SPACE

All of us in this class, individually and collectively, are responsible in creating our classroom as a safe, respectful, enjoyable and intellectually engaging space for learning and critical thinking. I encourage everyone to offer respect, dignity, kindness, empathy, and collegiality to each other at all times and particularly if there is a conflict of opinions during our discussions. Integrity, respect, ethics and professionalism will guide our critical engagement to maintain a productive, supportive and intellectually rewarding discussion in our class.

As CUNY students, be mindful that you are governed also by the following policies:

- a) Manual of General Policy (policy.cuny.edu/general-policy/);
- b) Rules and Regulations for the Maintenance of Public Order pursuant to Article 129-A of the Educational Law (cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/ovsa/policies/rules-for-maintenance-of-public-order/);
- c) CUNY Bylaws (policy.cuny.edu/bylaws/article-xv/); and the
- d) core values of Impact, Excellence, Partnerships, Equity, Curiosity, and Teamwork that CUNY is known for (cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/evaluation/about-us/our-mission-vision-core-values-2/).

Any case of disorderly behavior, non-cooperation, obstruction or disruption of teaching and student learning, conduct that threatens the health and safety of any person, and other violations of the above-mentioned policies will be referred to the Student Affairs Officer for investigation (see policy.cuny.edu/bylaws/article-xv/).

OFFICE HOURS

Consultation during my office hours are opportunities for you to receive feedback and recommendations in improving your work in our course, clarify thoughts or questions you may have regarding the readings or assignments that have not been

addressed in class, or discuss other matters related to our course and Geography in general.

Office hours are on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-2 PM, and Fridays 2-3PM (or by appointment) at 2N-117. An online sign up sheet will be sent to students where you may sign up for a 15-minute consultation. Make sure to sign up as early as possible and at least an hour before office hours to reserve a time slot that works for you. I encourage each of you to come to office hours at least once throughout the semester.

If you wish to visit but did not sign up, you would have to wait for an available time slot or after the visit of the last student who has signed up for office hours. If you are late to your chosen time slot and there is another student waiting in line, the professor will meet with the next student and you would need to sign up for the next available time slot. Due to the large number of students enrolled in the course, I will limit individual office hour visits to 10 minutes if there are many other students waiting.

If you cannot attend regular office hours, send me an email to request for an appointment. In the email subject line, write 18F GEG 100 office hour request and include in your letter at least two (2) dates and time slots when you are available to meet along with a brief description (i.e., one or two sentences) of the purpose of your visit.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Each student is responsible for the following:

1. Completely reading the syllabus and understanding course requirements;
2. Attending, cooperating, and participating in class lectures, presentations, discussions and office hours, and reading all course-related announcements;
3. Maintaining our classroom as a safe, respectful, enjoyable and intellectually engaging space for learning and critical thinking;
4. Staying informed and up-to-date on all course-related work each and every week; and
5. Completing all coursework by the assigned deadlines.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

Each of you will earn your respective final grade in the course by completing the following requirements and that are weighted accordingly:

- **Syllabus quiz (5%):** On the course webpage there is a quiz about our course syllabus to ensure that course requirements and expectations are understood by each student. This quiz will count 5% towards your final grade. To access the syllabus quiz, you must first complete the Student Survey, Plagiarism Quiz, and Academic Integrity Agreement. These will be made available between Wednesday, August 29 and Sunday, September 2. **NOTE: The syllabus quiz must be completed by Sunday, September 2, 2018 at 11:55 PM.** Completing the syllabus quiz is a requirement to access course content for Week 2. Do not delay.
- **Attendance and in-class participation (10%):** Since it is impossible for you to participate in in-class discussions of the course content and materials if you are not present in class, both attendance and active engagement in class discussions and activities are required in the course and will count 10% towards your final grade. Active engagement includes articulating thoughtful reflections in class that demonstrate you completed the assigned reading and other materials for each Unit, that you can synthesize the different materials we discuss throughout the course, that you can effectively engage in classroom discussions or debates about different interpretations of the reading, and that you improve your skills in written and oral communication and cooperation over time. Active engagement also includes asking questions when you are not sure how to interpret the reading to demonstrate that you are thinking through and grappling with concepts, analysis, and implications of the assigned reading and other materials. In-class exercises (individual, paired or group), pop quizzes, and other activities are also be factored into your participation grade. Active engagement in class also involves listening to your classmates and to your professor.

NOTE: It is impossible to actively engage in class while you are involved in other activities or another discussion on your mobile phone, laptop or tablet, if you are listening to music on your headphones, if you are chatting with seat mates or passing notes to one another on loose-leaf paper (if you are 'old school'). These actions distract you, your classmates, and course professor. Students who are repeatedly engaging in outside discussions via text, chat, web browsing, and other activities will be asked to excuse themselves and will be marked absent for that

session. Finally, attendance in class will be checked in random period during the class (e.g., beginning, middle, end of the class, etc.) and through variety of forms (e.g., roll call, sign up sheet, activity submissions, in-class exercises and quizzes, etc.).

If you need to be absent from the class temporarily for emergency reasons or reasons beyond your control, or if you are arriving late, you should notify me via email as soon as possible. Students who are absent in class are required to submit a printed or digital copy of an excuse letter determined valid by a corresponding CSI office (e.g., CSI Health and Wellness Services for medical-related reasons, etc.). Regardless of the reasons for absence, you are expected to reach out and ask your classmates what transpired in the class. If you accumulate three (3) absences with or without a valid excuse, or if you regularly arrive late in class, consult with the course professor to determine the implications of your absences and tardiness to your course performance.

- **Unit Thematic Forums (15%):** For each Unit there will be one (1) thematic forum prompt that you must complete. Thus, it is imperative that you access and review the forum prompt per Unit and complete them as early as possible. Specific requirements will accompany each forum prompt, and students will be graded on the completeness and overall quality of forum responses. A total of 15% of your final grade will be based upon your forum responses. **NOTE: Unless specified otherwise, the deadline for all required Unit thematic forum activities is on Wednesdays 12:00 noon.** Responses posted after the cut off time and date will receive a grade of zero (0). No excuses, no exemptions.
- **In-class Midterm Exam (20%):** The midterm exam may be comprised of multiple choice, true or false questions, identifications, definitions, short answers, map reading, and essay-type questions that evaluate your understanding of key concepts, analysis, readings, and other materials we have discussed up to that point in the semester. **NOTE: In-class midterm exam will be held on October 11 Thurs/ 12 Fri.** Details and instructions will be provided in class at least two (2) weeks before the midterm exam. If you are absent during the day of the midterm exam, you are required to submit a printed or digital copy of an excuse letter determined valid by a

corresponding CSI office (e.g., CSI Health and Wellness Services for medical-related reasons, etc.) and to consult with the course professor to determine the implications of a missed exam to your overall course performance. If a student is absent without a valid excuse during the in-class midterm exam, the student automatically will earn a grade of zero (0) for the midterm exam.

- **Geography 100 Projects (GP) (30%):** Students are required to complete **two (2) GEG 100 Projects** that complements the course content and demonstrates your critical understanding and relevant application of your geographic knowledge. Projects include mapping and writing a position paper. Requirements for the GEG 100 Projects will be posted on the course website respectively. Students will submit their GEG 100 Projects through the course website. Projects that are emailed to the professor will not be reviewed and will receive a grade of zero (0). Grading rubrics will accompany each project. **The deadlines for each project will fall on Sundays at 11:55 PM. NOTE:** Each student is required to submit project ideas, outlines and a list of reading and other resources at a due date determined by the professor. These submissions will be factored in your project grade along with at least one (1) consultation with the professor during office hours.
- **Take home Final Exam (20%):** A take home final exam will evaluate the students' understanding of the range of themes and key concepts discussed throughout the course. Details about the final exam will be discussed in the latter part of the course.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Academic Honesty:** Submitting assignments, exams, and projects that include parts or an entire work of another individual in exactly the same words constitute **plagiarism**, and have serious implications to your academic and professional life. CUNY policy states that academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, internet plagiarism and obtaining unfair advantage multiple submissions is prohibited, and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. For the definitions of these terms and other specific examples of what acts constitute a violation of academic honesty, see csi.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/facultystaff/handbook/Appendix_L_CUNY_Policy_Academic_Integrity.pdf Be proactive in

protecting your academic integrity. You may review the list of specific strategies in preventing academic dishonesty including proper citations at the link above.

2. **Accessing course content and completing course requirements for each Unit.** I

expect that you have read the assigned readings and submitted your thematic forum responses before coming to each class. In preparation for class discussions, I encourage you to make a note or a list of topics or questions about the readings and materials that you may want to clarify or discuss in class. You are also expected to review what you wrote on your thematic forum posts and bring the readings and your notes in class each time.

3. **Written assignments:** Each week, you are expected to answer the thematic forum prompts and use specific arguments or themes from the assigned readings as evidence to support your response. I recommend that you refer to your notes from the readings when you are writing your forum posts to help you begin and structure your responses. Please maintain professional and respectful language and decorum in the online thematic forums. All your forum posts and written assignments, including GEG 100 Project # 2, should be original work and should have proper citations. To review what citation is and how to cite others' work including online materials in your written assignments and projects, visit library.csi.cuny.edu/how-do-i-cite-my-sources/. Avoid plagiarism at all costs! (More on "Academic Honesty" below.)

NOTE: All written assignments will be submitted by uploading them on the respective course webpage. Please do not email your response papers. Emailed written assignments and projects will not be reviewed and will automatically earn a grade of zero (0).

4. **Discussions:** After you have read the assigned readings and written and submitted your thematic forum posts, I expect you to be able to articulate in the class some of the key points, analysis and arguments of the assigned readings per each Unit. At many times in the semester and based on your thematic forum posts, I will call students to offer a summary, analysis, comparison, synthesis or implications of some of the topics or arguments that were discussed in the readings. Depending on the

topic of each Unit, you may be asked to lead discussions and participate in interactive classroom activities including, but not limited to, small group or large group discussions, individual and group presentations, debates, free writing, paired work, and mapping activities.

5. **Mobile phones, earphones, headphones:** Do not use your mobile phones to call, receive a call, send and read text messages, or browse the web or your social media while in class. Keep your mobile phones in your bags and restrain yourselves from taking your phones out during class and engaging in distracting activities with your mobile phones or any electronic devices throughout the duration of the class.

Remove your earphones and headphones when entering the classroom and keep them in your bags. You will not need them throughout the duration of the class. Students who are repeatedly using mobile phones and engaging in outside discussions via text or chats, as well as wearing headphones in class, will be asked to excuse themselves and will be marked absent for that session.

6. **Laptops and tablets:** Students are allowed to use laptops and tablets in class **only in designated periods** during class as determined by the professor. In other words, **do not bring out, open or use your laptop or tablet in class unless instructed by the professor** to do so to complete specific in-class activities. **NOTE:** Not only is taking notes by hand more effective in long-term comprehension but it also requires you to engage effectively and 'be present' in the discussion (see Asso. for Psychological Science, 2014, "Taking notes by hand for better long-term comprehension," sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/04/140424102837.htm).

7. **Late policy:** Any required work – syllabus quiz, thematic forum submissions, or GEG 100 Projects – that is completed and submitted late will not be evaluated and will receive a score of zero (0). Extensions are granted only under the most pressing of circumstances and supported by a valid excuse determined by a corresponding CSI office. Do not delay in completing course requirements to avoid late submissions.

SUPPORT

As a CUNY CSI student, you may request and receive support that will help you achieve your academic and professional objectives. **Reach out for support** and maximize the services CUNY provides to students to help you succeed (note that most of these services have been covered by your fees). Some of these include:

1. **The Writing Center:** Schedule individualized consultation to improve your writing and how to navigate particular reading and writing assignments with The Writing Center. The Center assists students in improving writing skills in all subject areas by providing the students with meaningful feedback and guidance and through a better understanding of course requirements, assignments and readings. Learn more here: english.csi.cuny.edu/writing-center.html and visit the Center in [2S-216](#) or call at 718.982.3635.
2. **Tutoring:** The Center for Academic Student Assistance offers drop-in tutoring in 1L-117 and 1A-108. Click here to learn more about their services: csi.cuny.edu/students/academic-assistance/tutoring
3. **Research Support:** Access the CUNY library catalog; articles from journals, magazines, and newspapers; and unique digital content from the library through CSI OneSearch. onesearch.cuny.edu/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vid=si
4. **Library Subject Specialists:** Our expert librarians offer assistance with research assignments and projects. Visit library.csi.cuny.edu/how-do-i-contact-a-librarian/, call the reference desk at 718.982.4010 or email your research-related questions to reference@csi.cuny.edu.
5. **Counseling:** The Counseling Center offers support to students with academic difficulties, such as developing time management skills or coping with test anxiety, as well as personal development. If you wish to receive counseling services or support, please contact the Counseling Center at 718.982.2391 or counseling@csi.cuny.edu. You may also visit csi.cuny.edu/students/counseling-center/academic-counseling. Students are given the opportunity to develop effective strategies that will help them

achieve academic and personal success. All counseling services are free and confidential.

6. **Student Accessibility Support and Services:** If you have temporary or permanent disability and require support in order for you to successfully fulfill the requirements of this course and discussion section, please review the information at csi.cuny.edu/campus-life/student-services/center-student-accessibility and contact the CUNY CSI Center for Student Accessibility at 718.982.2510 or email CSA@csi.cuny.edu. You may also visit their office in Building 1P, Room 101 to explore and request what services and support you may avail based on your specific needs.
7. **Office hours:** Finally, if you have concerns that are not addressed in this syllabus, if you need further clarification, or if you are experiencing challenges with this course, I encourage you to visit me during office hours.

Welcome to GEG 100 and good luck!

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Department of Political Science and Global Affairs
College of Staten Island, The City University of New York
Fall 2018
Section: 15480

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Aug 31 Fri

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Discussion of the syllabus

What is Geography? And why does it matter?

An introduction to Physical and Human Geography

Sept 2 Sun

DUE: Syllabus Quiz

WEEK 2

Sept 7 Fri

ENVIRONMENT AND HUMANITY

Environment and Humanity

Toward a Sustainable World

Read: Chapter 1 (p. 2-25), Visualizing Environmental Science.

WEEK 3

Sept 14 Fri

MAPPING STATEN ISLAND

Mapping the geographies of Staten Island

Details of GEG 100 PROJECT # 1 StoryMaps: Mapping Staten Island (due on Week 6)

Read: Kramer, D.C. and R.M. Flanagan. 2012. "Suburban Borough in a Global City," Staten Island: Conservative Bastion in a Liberal City. Maryland: University Press of America, 1-23.

WEEK 4

Sept 21 Fri

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY AND BIOGEOGRAPHY

Earth's major biomes

Ecological interactions

Sept 22 Sun

DUE: Outline of GEG Project # 1 StoryMap

Read: Chapter 5 (p 96-116), 6 (p. 126-154), Visualizing Environmental Science.

WEEK 5

CLIMATE

Nov 21 Fri

No classes scheduled - Happy Thanksgiving!

WEEK 14

GEOGRAPHIES OF GLOBALIZATION

Nov 30 Fri

Globalization

Read:

Cook, I. 2004. "Follow the Thing: Papaya." *Antipode*, p. 642-664.

Duhigg, C. and D. Barboza. (2012) "In China, Human Costs are built into an Ipad," *New York Times*.

WEEK 15

GEOGRAPHIES OF HOPE

Dec 7 Fri

Social movements

Read:

Kelley, R. 2002. "When History Sleeps: A Beginning", *Freedom Dreams*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Federici, S. (1975). *Wages Against Housework*. Failing Wall Press.

Offenhardt, J. (2016) "Inside the Churches that are Leading New York's Sanctuary Movement," *The Nation.com*.

FINALS WEEK

COURSE SUMMARY

Dec 14 Fri

Course Summary

Dec 18 Tues

DUE: FINAL EXAM

NOTE: Course schedule and reading assignments are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and reflected on the course website. Please visit the course website regularly for the most recent version of the syllabus.