

George Mason University
Department of Geography & Geoinformation Science

GGG 101-002: MAJOR WORLD REGIONS - Spring 2024

Name	: Maction Komwa, PhD	Meeting Times	: TR – 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm
Office	: Exploratory Hall, Room 2414	Location	: Horizon Hall – 2010
Email	: mkomwa@gmu.edu	Office hours	: M: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm (Zoom) & W- 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm (In-person) or by appointment
Phone	: 703-993-5646	Credits	: 3.00

Learning Assistant (LA)

Name: David E Woodbury

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Office: Exploratory Hall - 2400 – Cubicle #D

Office Hours: **TBA**

Course Description:

This course is designed as an introduction to the discipline of geography. Students will gain knowledge on the patterns, problems, prospects of the world's principal human-geographic regions and the role of geographic differences in interpreting world current scene. The course emphasizes a real differentiation, similarities of these world regions and how they interact/interrelate to another in today's globalizing world. The skills and knowledge gained from this course will become the basis for students to ask critical geographic questions about various geographic processes, features, patterns on the landscape at different scales.

Expected Learning Outcomes

This course is a global learning course. Upon course completion, a student will be able to:

- Identify locations of countries and their physical features such as climate or landforms in each world region.
- Describe world regions in terms of cultural characteristics such as language or religion.
- Examine and describe how humans interact with and adapt to their environment
- Distinguish between the different types of regional distinctions recognized in geography.
- Understand the spatial nature of geography and how each place or region is examined, analyzed and compared with other places or regions.
- Learn about the geographical tools and data sources geographers use to study the Earth's surface.

Mason Core: This course fulfills the Mason Core requirement in Global Understanding.

Required Textbook

Title: Diversity Amid Globalization:
World Regions, Environment, Development

Edition: 7th

Author: Rowntree

Mastering Geography Options

Mastering Geography (with eBook and Learning Catalytics)

ISBN: 9780134610788

Mastering Geography (with eBook and Learning Catalytics)

Direct Purchase option (no ISBN) offered during registration

For Mastering Geography Registration, check the Bb.

Learning Management Systems

- This Blackboard is our course management system which provides access to course materials, assignments, and class discussions. You will log in to Blackboard using your George Mason username and password through this link: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>.

- If you have computer problems, please contact ITS Support Center:
<http://itservices.gmu.edu>;
- Email: support@gmu.edu; | Phone: 703-993-8870.

Course Activities

This course is packed with interactive online pre-work, in-class sessions that'll blow your mind, and post-class activities where you'll team up with awesome classmates. Delve into assigned readings, spearhead engaging Blackboard discussions, and collaborate effectively on teamwork projects with your peers. Earning points is easy as pie: just show up, read, speak up, team up, and meet those deadlines outlined in this syllabus!

Assignments and Evaluation

Students are expected to submit high quality assignments during this course via the Blackboard.

Map Quizzes & Exercises (150 points)

- You will build your map literacy and ability to analyze spatial information through these assignments. Map assignments are designed to sharpen your map literacy and equip you with powerful spatial analysis skills.

B. Mastering Geography Assignments (200 points)

- Mastering Geography is your essential companion for this course. It's an online platform designed to boost your learning and engagement through interactive activities and assignments. More than just test prep, Mastering Geography is your learning compass, ensuring you not only complete those unit tests but also truly grasp the material with deep-rooted comprehension.

Here's what you need to know:

- Access code required: Each student needs a unique access code to unlock Mastering Geography. Remember, codes are one-time-use, so choose wisely!
- Chapter-by-chapter practice: Dive into each chapter with dedicated homework assignments.
- In these assigned chapters, get ready for a mix of question types, from interactive map puzzles to reading comprehension quizzes. Each assignment complements what you learn in class, filling in the gaps and solidifying your understanding.
- Your own pace, but with deadlines: Take your time mastering each chapter, but aim to finish the homework before the corresponding unit test.

C. Documentary Films (50 points)

- Engaging with diverse perspectives is critical to understanding our world. That's why this course isn't just about lectures. We'll dedicate a significant portion of this course to exploring impactful documentaries. These films act as our window to the world, granting us front-row seats to experiences rarely seen in mainstream media. Moreover, they offer insightful viewpoints on issues central to the course, fueling vibrant class discussions and providing compelling empirical evidence that enriches our understanding of the course's central themes – understanding global context

D. Examination (400 points)

- **Three Exams** will be administered. [Exam 1; Mid-Term and Final Exam]
- Exams will comprise of Multiple- Choice-Questions, True/False Questions and Fill-in-the blank questions.
- The final exam date is strictly fixed and cannot be changed for personal reasons. For unexpected emergencies, contact the instructor immediately for potential accommodations.
 - **EXAM I & Mid Term (100 points each) = 200 Points**
 - **Final Exam [200 points] NO MAKEUP EXAMS** will be given without supporting documents.

E. Current Events Journal (100 points)

- Staying informed about global events is crucial to understanding our interconnected world. This semester, you'll embark on a personal journey of discovery through the Current Events Journal. I will provide detailed instructions through the Blackboard in the assignment folder.

For the time here's a quick heads-up as you prepare for this assignment.

- **Explore & Choose:**
 - Throughout the semester, you'll delve into four distinct regions of the world, focusing on one region per assignment. Specific instructions and region assignments will be provided by your instructor.
 - Choose newspaper or magazine articles, or even news segments you watch, that resonate with you within the designated region. This allows you to explore diverse perspectives and topics that pique your interest.
- **Analyze & Reflect:**
 - Once you've chosen your news item, it's time to dig deeper! Analyze the article or segment according to detailed instructions provided on Blackboard. This will involve dissecting key information, understanding different viewpoints, and evaluating the story's broader context.
 - Go beyond analysis and add your own voice! In a 4-6 sentence paragraph, share your personal reactions and critical reflections on the news item. What does it tell you about the region? How does it connect to the course themes? This is your chance to make personal connections and engage in deeper learning.
- **Share & Discuss:**
 - On designated due dates, your journey doesn't end there! You'll have the opportunity to share your journal entries with classmates in small groups. This is a space to learn from each other, exchange diverse perspectives, and refine your understanding of the world.
 - Each group will then select one story to present and discuss with the entire class. This will be a platform to showcase your analysis, share your reflections, and spark engaging discussions that enrich the learning experience for everyone.

F. In-class activities, small group discussion and Participation – 100 points

- This will involve students engaging in short, group discussions, Kahoot Games guided by the LA, etc. [Easy grade to get – show your willingness to learn!]

Late/Make-up Assignments Policy

- Stick to the schedule! Due dates are listed clearly in the syllabus and Blackboard. But "**life happens,**" so you have two **flex days** to submit up to two assignments up to 2 days late (no penalty). After that, late penalties apply - 5 points per day, down to zero (no grade).

Grading Scale

Percentage Range	Grade Points Cutoffs	Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Grade Points Cutoffs	Letter Grade
>=98%	980 - 1000	A+	77 -79.9%	770 - 799	C+
93 – 97.9%	930 – 979	A	70 -76.9%	700 - 769	C
90 – 92.9%	900– 929	A-	60 – 69.9%	600 - 699	D
87 – 89.9%	870 - 899	B+	<60%	0-599	F
83 – 86.9%	830 - 869	B			
80 – 82.9%	800- 829	B-			<i>Note: There is No C-</i>

All students are expected to:

- Stay engaged with material, discussions, and deadlines.
- Respect classmates and express opinions courteously.
- Value and learn from diverse perspectives.
- Communicate clearly and professionally in writing.
- Emails: Strictly, use Mason Email Account. If you sent email from non-Mason account that email will not be read.

Recording and/or sharing class materials

All course materials posted to Blackboard are private to this class; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must NOT be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- Electronic video, image capture, and/or audio recording is not permitted during in-class meeting, or online, unless the student obtains permission from the instructor.
- As a faculty member who will spend a lot of time creating course material for classroom use, unauthorized sharing of any of my course materials outside the class would violate important ethical standards.

Academic integrity:

- *The following statement is adapted from the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code, which you can read fully at the Office for Academic Integrity (<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>). Acts of academic dishonesty in this course may be penalized with failure of either the work in question or the entire course.*

Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993- 2474.

GMU Nondiscrimination Policy

George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, pregnancy status, or genetic information. George Mason University shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.

TITLE IX

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Student Support Services

George Mason University has several academic support and other resources to facilitate your success. Some of these resources are presented below:

- i. Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu/>
- ii. Learning Services, University Career Services: <http://careers.gmu.edu/>
- iii. The Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- iv. University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>
- v. University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>

Tentative Course Calendar: *Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.*

Week	Date	Module Description	Readings	Assignment due by specified date(s) 11:59 pm
1	1/16	Course Overview	NA	NA
	1/18	Intro & Key Concepts of World Regional Geography	Chapter 1	Self-Introduction (1/21)
2	1/23	Mapping Our World & Geographic Tools	Chapter 1	
	1/25	Globalization	Chapter 1	
3	1/30	Physical Geography & the Environment	Chapter 2	Mastering Geography [1] – 1/28
	2/1	The Global Environment & Climate Change	Chapter 2	
4	2/6	Test 1	Test 1	Test 1
	2/8	Europe	Chapter 8	Mastering Geography [2] –2/11
5	2/13	Europe	Chapter 8	
	2/15	Europe	Chapter 8	Map Exercise/Quiz – [1] – 2/18
6	2/20	Latin America	Chapter 4	
	2/22	Latin America	Chapter 4	Current Events Journal Part 1 - 2/25
7	2/27	Latin America	Chapter 4	
	2/29	The Caribbean	Chapter 5	
8	3/5	Spring Recess [No Classes]	No Classes	No Classes
	3/7	The Caribbean	Chapter 5	Mastering Geography – [3] – 3/3
9	3/12	Test 2 [Mid Term]	Test 2	Test 2 [Mid Term]
	3/14	Southwest Asia and North Africa	Chapter 7	
10	3/19	Southwest Asia and North Africa	Chapter 7	
	3/21	Southwest Asia and North Africa	Chapter 7	Map Exercise/Quiz – [2] – 3/24
11	3/26	Sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 6	
	3/28	Sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 6	Current Events Journal Part 2 [3/31]
12	4/2	Sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 6	
	4/4	South Asia	Chapter 12	Mastering Geography – [4] – 4/7
13	4/9	South Asia	Chapter 12	
	4/11	South Asia	Chapter 12	Map Exercise/Quiz – [3] 4/14

Week	Date	Module Description	Readings	Assignment due by specified date(s) 11:59 pm
14	4/16	Australia & Oceania	Chapter 14	
	4/18	Australia & Oceania	Chapter 14	Map Exercise/Quiz – [4] 4/21
15	4/23	Current Events Journal Presentation	NA	Current Events Journal Final Part
	4/25	Current Events Journal Presentation	NA	Current Events Journal Final Part
16	4/30	Final Review Session	NA	Final Kahoot Games
	5/7	Final Exam 1:30 pm – 4:15 pm		

Note:

Occasional impromptu group discussions, Kahoot games, and other class activities will be integrated throughout the course to augment learning and engagement. Your active participation in these activities is highly encouraged, as it directly contributes to your overall learning outcomes and participation grade (100 points). In-person attendance is strongly recommended to ensure seamless participation.