

**George Mason University**  
Department of Geography & Geoinformation Science

**GGG 101- 002: MAJOR WORLD REGIONS – Spring 2025**

---

|        |  |               |  |
|--------|--|---------------|--|
| Name   | : Maction Komwa, PhD                                 | Meeting Times | MW: 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm  |
| Office | : Exploratory Hall, Room 2414                        | Location      | James Buchanan Hall - D023   |
| Email  | : <a href="mailto:mkomwa@gmu.edu">mkomwa@gmu.edu</a> | Office hours  | M [11:00 am - 12: -00 pm] W- 10:30 am – 11:30 am (In-person/Virtual) |
| Phone  | : 703-993-5646                                       | Credits       | 3.00   |

**Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)**

Name: Zheng Gong  
Email: [zgong@gmu.edu](mailto:zgong@gmu.edu) Office: Exploratory Hall - 1102-J  
Office Hours: TBA

**Learning Assistant (LA)**

Name: Meghan Drzewiecki  
Email: [mdrzewie@gmu.edu](mailto:mdrzewie@gmu.edu) 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**

Upon completing a Global Contexts course, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain how patterns of global connections across nations and/or cultures have shaped societies to create interdependence and inequality.
- Use a disciplinary lens to demonstrate knowledge of how at least one nation and/or culture participates in or is affected by global contexts.
- Apply an understanding of one's own positionality within a globally interdependent and unequal world to analyze solutions to global problems.
- Compare and contrast different places or regions based on their geographic characteristics.

**Mason Core:** This course is part of the Mason Core curriculum and fulfills requirements for Global Contexts.

**Global Contexts**

The Global Contexts (GC) Mason Core requirement is to enable students to explore global connections through a disciplinary lens and to understand how global systems have created both interdependence and inequalities that engaged citizens must understand in order to work toward an equitable and sustainable future.

## Required Textbook

**Title:** Diversity Amid Globalization: *World Regions, Environment, Development* Edition: 7<sup>th</sup> 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. **To register for Mastering Geography, please refer to the instructions posted on Blackboard.**

## Learning Management Systems

- Canvas is our course management system which provides access to course materials, assignments, and class discussions. You will log in to Canvas 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](mailto:support@gmu.edu); | Phone: 703-993-8870.

## Assignments Procedures and Evaluation

Students are expected to submit high-quality assignments throughout the course. For assignments that do not require direct entry into Canvas (e.g., quizzes, surveys, text boxes), please save your work as a Word document and upload it to the designated assignment area within Canvas.

### Important:

It is your responsibility to ensure that your uploaded assignment displays correctly within Canvas. Assignments will be graded based on how they appear when viewed through Canvas, including any issues with blank documents.

## Map Quizzes & Exercises (300 points)

- There will be a map quiz per each region of the week. In these Map Exercise Assignments, students will explore a series of maps and charts that showcase one world region at a time. These resources visually represent geographic information, highlighting both the commonalities (climates, language systems, etc.) within and between regions and the disparities and inequalities that exist. Examples include: Human Development Index scores, carbon emissions, climate vulnerability, social indicators such as average life span of a person in a particular country or region, economic indicators (e.g. GDP) income inequality, gender disparities in education (as measured by mean years of schooling for boys and girls), and global displacement patterns (such as the flows of asylee seekers and refugees from different countries across the globe), environmental indicators (e.g. Carbon footprint, water scarcity, biodiversity loss), etc.

### B. Examination (450 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 & Exam 2 (125 points each) = 250 Points**
  - **Final Exam [200 points]** NO MAKEUP EXAMS will be given without supporting documents.

### C. Final Group Project (150 points)

- The Final Group Project is worth 150 points. Groups will select a country from one of the following regions: Latin America, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), Europe, and Southwest Asia and North Africa. Group members must choose a country based on shared interests, and no two groups can select the same country. A project proposal must be submitted at a later date, outlining the chosen country, the reasons for the selection, and the specific research focus. Students are encouraged to apply the concepts learned in this course to their research. Detailed instructions and guidelines for the Final Group Project will be provided on Blackboard at a later date.

#### D. Class Activity and Participation – 100 points

- This component will assess your active engagement in class activities. This includes:
- **In-class discussions:** Contributing thoughtfully to class discussions and debates on global issues.
- **Interactive activities:** Participating actively in interactive activities such as Kahoot games, country profile exercises, and Debate on Global Issues.

#### 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).

#### Extra Credit

While I typically do not offer extra credit, I may occasionally provide opportunities for bonus points, such as through successful participation in Kahoot games or exceptional contributions to class discussions. If I decide to offer extra credit opportunities, I will announce them in advance. Any such extra credit opportunities will generally be awarded to the entire class rather than to individual students.

#### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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    | Jan 21-26      | Course Overview  | NA                   | Self-Introduction and Orientation Quiz       |
|      |                | Syllabus Week  | Syllabus             |  |
| 2    | Jan 27 – Feb 2 | Concepts of World Geography  | Chapter 1            | Class Activity #1                            |
|      |                | Mapping Our World & Geographic Tools   Globalization                                     | Chapter 1            |  |
| 3    | Feb 3 - 9      | Physical Geography & the Environment   | Chapter 2            | Kahoot Game 1   Map Quiz                     |
|      |                | The Global Environment & Climate Change  | Chapter 2            |  |
| 4    | Feb 10 - 16    | Europe   | Chapter 8            | Map Quiz                                     |
| 5    | Feb 17 - 23    | Exam 1 Review Finish Europe  | <b>[Exam Review]</b> | <b>Exam 1 – 2/19   Group Project Topic</b>   |
| 6    | Feb 24 – Mar 2 | North America  | Chapter 3            | Class Activity # 2                           |
| 7    | Mar 3 - 9      | Finish North America   | Chapter 3            | Map Quiz                                     |
| 8    | Mar 10 - 16    | <b>Spring Recess (no classes)</b>  |                      |  |
| 9    | Mar 17 - 23    | Latin America  | Chapter 4            | Kahoot Game 2   Map Quiz                     |
| 10   | Mar 24 - 30    | Southwest Asia and North Africa  | Chapter 7            | Class Activity # 3   Map Quiz                |
| 11   | Mar 31 – Apr 6 | <b>Exam 2 Review   Group Project Presentation # 1</b>                                    | <b>[Exam Review]</b> | Kahoot Game 3   <b>Exam 2 [April 2]</b>      |
| 12   | Apr 7 - 13     | Sub-Saharan Africa   <i>Group Project Presentation # 2</i>                               | Chapter 6            | Map Quiz                                     |
| 13   | Apr 14 - 20    | South Asia   <i>Group Project Presentation # 3</i>                                       | Chapter 12           | Class Activity # 4   Map Quiz                |
| 14   | Apr 21 - 27    | The Caribbean   <i>Group Project Presentation # 4</i>                                    | Chapter 5            | Map Quiz                                     |
| 15   | Apr 28 – May 4 | Australia & Oceania   <i>Group Project Presentation # 5</i>                              | Chapter 14           | Map Quiz                                     |
| 16   | May 5 -11      | <i>Group Project Presentation # 6 - May 5   Exam Review  </i><br><b>Final Exam May 7</b> |                      |  |