

# GGG 540/399: Health Geography

## Course Syllabus, Fall 2015, 3 Credits

### INSTRUCTOR

Name: Dr. Paul L. Delamater  
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### COURSE BASICS

Meeting times: Monday, 7:20-10pm  
Location: 2310 Exploratory Hall  
Web location: Blackboard  
Office hours: Wed 1-3pm, Thur 4:30-6pm, or by appt

### REGISTRATION DATES

Drop without tuition penalty: September 8, 2015  
Drop with tuition penalties: September 9 - October 2, 2015

### REQUIRED TEXT

Meade, M.S., and M. Emch. 2010. Medical Geography (Third Edition). Guilford Press, New York. ISBN: 1606230169

Make sure to get the **Third Edition!** Available at the GMU Bookstore or [from Amazon](#)

### OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

GGG 540/399 surveys health geography, a subdiscipline of geography which encompasses a broad range of topics regarding human and environmental health. At its core, health geography is the study of human-environment interactions and the influence of these interactions on population health – i.e., how people interact with their physical and social environment to promote health and wellbeing or to increase their vulnerability to disease and/or illness. The approach taken in this course will focus on examining health-related issues (e.g., disease, illness, health care access, nutrition) from the perspective of populations. Major health issues and health care systems from around the world will be evaluated and discussed. The course covers three major integrated approaches to health geographic research: ecological (relationships between people and their environment), social (human behavior), and spatial (mapping and spatial analysis).

### ASSIGNMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

All assignments will be available on Blackboard. Assignments must be submitted electronically through Blackboard prior to the due date/time. Late submissions will be penalized 20% for each day late. Late submissions will only go unpenalized for the usual documented medical reasons or by previous agreement with the instructor.

GGG 540/399 is being offered as a combined graduate/undergraduate course. Weekly meetings will include both lecture- and discussion-based material. All students are expected to not only attend class, but also be active participants. I encourage healthy, constructive discussion of the course material. I operate under the assumption and requirement that everyone will be respectful of their fellow classmates in this endeavor.

### GRADING SCHEMA

#### 399 Students

Assessment	Points	% (of final grade)
Assignments (5)	180	45%
Participation	20	5%
Midterm Exam	100	25%
Final Exam	100	25%

#### 540 Students

Assessment	Points	% (of final grade)
Assignments (5)	180	36%
Participation	20	4%
Midterm Exam	100	20%
Final Exam	100	20%
Final Paper	100	20%

Grades will be based on the following cutoff values, although I reserve the right to modify the exact values at the end of the course:

GGG 399: A (93%), A- (90%), B+ (87%), B (83%), B- (80%), C+ (77%), C (73%), C- (70%), D (60%)

GGG 540: A (93%), A- (90%), B+ (87%), B (83%), B- (80%), C (70%)

The midterm exam will cover the first 7 weeks of the course. The final exam will be semi-comprehensive, focusing on the final 7 weeks of the course, but also covering key topics from throughout the entire semester.

There will be 3-4 *ungraded* pop quizzes during the semester. The quizzes will be used to evaluate how well the course information is being presented and retained; they also provide an opportunity to preview potential exam questions.

**OUTLINE & SCHEDULE** (subject to change)

*NOTE 1: The assignment dates below refer to the date they are assigned (due dates are provided for each assignment).*

*NOTE 2: Readings identified as "Chp X" are Meade and Emch. Additional readings will be provided on Blackboard. For the readings, the dates below refer to the date they are expected to be completed (e.g., you will be expected to have read and be ready to discuss Chapters 1 & 2 when you come to class on 9/14).*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topics</b>	<b>Readings / Assignments</b>
8/31 M	Introduction to GGS 540 Questions in Health Geography, Defining Health	
9/7 M	No Class, Labor Day Break	
9/14 M	Disease Ecology	Chp 1, Chp 2 Assignment #1, Essential Health Terms and Concepts
9/21 M	GIS, Maps, and Spatial Analysis in Health Geography	Chp 3, Chp 12
9/28 M	Landscape Epidemiology	Chp 4, Root and Emch 2010 Assignment #2, Diseases and Study Area
10/5 M	Demographic and Epidemiological Transitions	Chp 5
<b>10/13 T</b>	Climate and Weather Environmental Exposure	Chp 6 (207-236), Chp 7 Assignment #3, EpiInfo
10/19 M	Neighborhoods and Health Review for Midterm Exam	Chp 9
10/26 M	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
11/2 M	Political Ecology of Noncommunicable Diseases	Chp 8 Assignment #4, Demographic and Epidemiological Transitions
11/9 M	Disease Diffusion in Space	Chp 10, Sabel et al 2010
11/16 M	Health Care and Health Promotion Health Care Access	Chp 11 Assignment #5, Health Care Systems Final Paper (540 students only)
11/23 M	Health in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia	
11/30 M	Health in Western Pacific, Americas	
12/7 M	Course Wrap Up and Case Studies Review for Final Exam	TBD
<b>12/14 M</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions.

## **GMU EMAIL ACCOUNTS**

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

## **OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

## **RESOURCES**

The Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

University Libraries, Ask a Librarian: <http://library.gmu.edu/ask>

Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu>

University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu>

University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>