

# **GGG 103 (01): HUMAN GEOGRAPHY**

SPRING 2018  
MONDAYS 1:30PM

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Liz Mason-Deese  
**EMAIL:** lmasonde@gmu.edu

**OFFICE:** Exploratory Hall 2413  
**OFFICE HOURS:** TUES 2-3PM; WED. 1-3PM; AND BY APPOINTMENT

**Course Description:** This course introduces key concepts and sub-fields of human geography framed through the lens of globalization and other contemporary issues. Over the course of the term, we will explore environmental, economic, social, political, and cultural processes of globalization and how they are experienced differently around the world. In doing so, we will see how globalization has simultaneously connected and disconnected people and places across the globe, in different and unequal ways, and why some aspects of globalization have been contested. We will also think about the spaces around us at George Mason and how our everyday lives are entangled with much broader social, economic, and political processes. Our discussions will allow us to consider many of the major subfields of human geography and understand how geographers are approaching important questions of the day.

**TEXT:** No required textbook! All readings will be available on Blackboard under “Course Content.”

## **COURSE GOALS:**

In order to achieve the course objective of learning to think geographically about our globalizing world, the course has five broad learning outcomes:

1. To identify and analyze problems related to globalization and the changing global environment, and to recognize how these themes are connected to your everyday life and our university.
2. To learn how to use some of the basic concepts and methods of inquiry and communication that characterize human geography, including how to observe and interpret human-environment relations and uneven development at different scales.
3. To learn how to assess, respect, and engage competing arguments and perspectives. To analyze how knowledge, practices, and power are different in different places and spaces, and from different perspectives and social locations, particularly in relation to processes of globalization.
4. To be able to read and analyze maps, and use maps to analyze and display information in relation to other themes of human geography.
5. To develop your critical thinking, and writing, research, reading, speaking, listening skills.

## Grading & Assignments

**Attendance & Participation [16%]:** I expect you to come to class every day, arrive on time, and stay until class ends. Lectures and class discussions supplement readings by introducing new material and concepts. Class lectures will often be complemented with small-group discussions or other in-class activities; therefore, you should come to class prepared to discuss the readings and to learn from one another. You are expected to be attentive and respectful during lectures and discussions. While I will not be taking daily attendance, there will be regular in-class activities that will be graded for participation. There may be additional participation activities on Blackboard that will be graded for completion and count toward your final participation grade.

**Key Words Assignments [36%]:** You are required to turn in three key words assignments during the semester. Each assignment should be approximately 2-3 pages and should include three parts: **Part 1)** Identify a key concept or term from the associated weeks' readings and define the concept/term in your own words, referencing readings where appropriate. **Part 2)** Find a newspaper article (from a reputable source, a list will be provided) summarize the event/issue, b) explain how it is connected to your chosen key word, be as specific and precise as possible here. **Part 3)** References: include full bibliographic information for your newspaper article and any readings that you reference. Assignments are due on: **February 9, March 2, and April 20** and will be turned in **via Blackboard**. Additional information on the assignments will be made available in class.

**Reading Responses [18%]:** During the semester you are required to turn in **NINE** reading responses. You can decide which weeks to submit responses but they must be turned in on Blackboard the Sunday before class and correspond to one of that week's readings. The responses should 1) clearly identify the reading you are responding to, 2) explain the main argument of the reading in your own words in 1-2 sentences; 3) include 1-2 sentences on either a) something you learned or found interesting in the reading or b) something you didn't understand and would like to discuss more in class. Responses will be graded on a pass/fail basis. If you turn in more than nine, your top nine grades will count.

**Group Assignments:** During the semester you will participate in two small group projects, counting for 30% of your final grade. While you will be given some class time to work on these projects, groups are expected to communicate outside of class, as they may require additional research and coordination.

**Commodity Chain Project [15%]:** You will work in small groups to produce a map that explores the commodity chains of products that we regularly purchase. More information about this project will be made available on Blackboard and discussed in class. Along with the map itself, each group will submit a short reflection analyzing the map and discussing the experience of producing it, guided by a set of questions.

**Local Landscapes Project [15%]:** To better understand the spaces around us at the university and in Fairfax County, and how they are entangled with broader social, political, and economic processes, students will work in groups to map a particular human geography topic in relation to either George Mason University or a local city or county. You will be given a prompt and then asked to explore campus both physically and virtually and then make a map documenting the results of that exploration. Detailed instructions will be made available on Blackboard and discussed in class.

**Grade Breakdown**

Participation/In-Class Activities	16%	Commodity Chain Project	15%
3 Key Words Assignments	36%	Local Landscapes Project	15%
Reading Responses	18%		

**Grading:** The following scale will be used to determine your final letter grade:

	A	93-100	A-	90-92	(Outstanding)	
B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82	(Commendable) <u>Pass/Fail</u>
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72	(Average) P = 60% & above
D+	68-69	D	60-67			(Marginal) F= below 60%
F	59 and below					(Failure)

**POLICIES**

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Although you can work in groups to develop and share ideas, graded work is done individually and evaluated on that basis, unless otherwise noted. When you draw on the work of others, be sure to cite authors appropriately. You are expected to adhere to the principles of the George Mason Honor Code and any plagiarized assignments will automatically receive a 0. If you have any questions about citations or plagiarism, please come speak to me or see: <http://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/>

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have a disability and require accommodations, please meet with me early in the semester so we can discuss your learning needs. If you wish to request reasonable accommodations, you will need to register with Disability Services (<http://ds.gmu.edu/>). All information will be kept confidential.

**COMMUNICATION:** If you have a question, feel free to email me at [lmasonde@gmu.edu](mailto:lmasonde@gmu.edu). Be advised that I usually do not check email between 9pm and 9am, please do not wait until the last minute to contact me. Additionally, you are responsible for checking your email/Blackboard notifications on a regular basis for announcements about the course.

## **SCHEDULE**

**Readings are to be completed by class on the date assigned on the syllabus**

### **Week 1 (January 22) What is Human Geography?**

### **Week 2 (January 29) Geographical Imagination**

Giesecking, J. 2017. "Geographical Imagination." In *International Encyclopedia of Geography* (eds. D. Richardson, N. Castree, M. Goodchild, A. Jaffrey, W. Liu, A. Kobayashi, and R. Marston). New York: Wiley-Blackwell and the Association of American Geographers.

Massey, Doreen. 1994. "A Global Sense of Place." In *Space, Place, and Gender*, 146-56. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Krygier, John and Denis Wood. 2009. "Ce n'est pas le Monde." In *Rethinking Maps*, edited by Martin Dodge, Rob Kitchin, and Chris Perkins, 190–219. London: Routledge.

### **Week 3 (February 5) Natures**

Mann, Charles. 2002. "1491." *The Atlantic*.  
[https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/302445/?utm\\_source=atfb](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/302445/?utm_source=atfb)

Cronon, W. 1996. "The trouble with wilderness: or, getting back to the wrong nature." *Environmental History*, 1(1): 7-28.

Union of Concerned Scientists. 2017. "Hurricanes and Climate Change." December 1.  
<https://www.ucsusa.org/global-warming/science-and-impacts/impacts/hurricanes-and-climate-change.html>

Smith, Neil. 2006. "There's no such thing as a natural disaster." *Social Science Research Council*, June 11. <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/>

### **KEY WORDS 1 due FEBRUARY 9**

### **Week 4 (February 12) Land and Colonialism**

Sharp, Joanne. 2009. *Geographies of Postcolonialism: Spaces of Power and Representation*. Los Angeles: SAGE. Excerpt: "Knowledge and Power," pp. 29-54.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. 2014. *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press. Excerpts: Introduction, pp. 1-14; and "Sea to Shining Sea," pp. 117-132.

**Week 5 (February 19)**  
**Economic Geography I: Capitalism, Labor, & Commodities**

Marx, Karl. "Estranged Labour." In *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*.  
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm>

Galeano, Eduardo. 1997 [1973]. *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*. New York: Monthly Review. Excerpt: "King Sugar and Other Agricultural Monarchs," pp. 59-134.

**Week 6 (February 26)**  
**Economic Geography II: Globalization**

Harvey, David. 2006. "Neo-Liberalism as Creative Destruction." *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 88 (2):145–58.

Subcomandante Marcos. 1997. "The fourth world war has begun."  
<https://mondediplo.com/1997/09/marcos>

Federici, Silvia. 1990. "The Debt Crisis, Africa, and the New Enclosures" in *Midnight Notes*, no. 10.

**KEY WORDS 2 due MARCH 2**

**Week 7 (March 5)**  
**Labor & Commodity Chains**

Cook, Ian. 2004. "Follow the thing: Papaya." *Antipode*, 36(4): 642-664.

Ramamurthy, Priti. 2004. "Why is Buying a 'Madras' Cotton Shirt a Political Act? A Feminist Commodity Chain Analysis." *Feminist Studies*, 30(3): 734-769.

**March 12 – Spring break!**

**Week 8 (March 19)**  
**Political Geography**

Agnew, John. 1999. "The New Geopolitics of Power" in *Human Geography Today*, Doreen Massey, John Allen, Philip Sarre, editors. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 171-193.

Koopman, Sara. 2011. "Alter-Geopolitics: Other Securities Are Happening." *Geoforum*, Themed Issue: Subaltern Geopolitics, 42 (3): 274-84.

Miley, Thomas Jeffrey. 2017. "The Perils and Promise of Self-determination," *ROAR Magazine*, October 17. <https://roarmag.org/essays/self-determination-kurdistan-catalonia-thomas-jeffrey-miley/>

**COMMODITY CHAIN PROJECT DUE MARCH 23**

**Week 9 (March 26)**  
**Cultural Geography & Landscapes**

Cosgrove, Denis. 1989. "Geography Is Everywhere: Culture and Symbolism in Human Landscapes." In *Horizons in Human Geography*, edited by Derek Gregory and Rex Walford, 118-35. *Horizons in Geography*. Macmillan Education UK.

Michels, J. 2016. "What's in a Name?" *Scalwag Magazine*. October 16.  
<https://www.scalawagmagazine.org/2016/10/whats-in-a-name/>

Feminists Liberating Collective Knowledge. 2017. *Ruptures, Vol. 1*.  
<https://flockgeographies.files.wordpress.com/2017/10/zine-draft-for-website.pdf>

**Week 10 (April 2)**  
**Geographies of Difference I**

Fluri, Jennifer L. 2018. "The Body, Performance, and Space" in *Feminist Spaces: Gender and Geography in a Global Context* edited Ann Oberhauser, Jennifer L. Fluri, Risa Whitson, and Sharlente Mollett. New York: Routledge.

Oberhauser, Ann. "Gendered Work and Economic Livelihoods" in *Feminist Spaces*.

**Week 11 (April 9)**  
**Geographies of Difference II**

McKittrick, K. and C. Woods. 2007. "No One Knows the Mysteries at the Bottom of the Ocean." In *Black Geographies and the Politics of Place*, 1-13. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Gilmore, Ruth Wilson, and Craig Wilson. 2003. "The Other California." In *Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World*, edited by David Solnit. San Francisco: City Lights Publisher.

"The Detroit Geographic Institute and Expedition: A Case Study in Civic Mapping."  
<https://civic.mit.edu/blog/kanarinka/the-detroit-geographic-expedition-and-institute-a-case-study-in-civic-mapping>

**Week 12 (April 16)**  
**Urban Geography**

"Cities for Whom? The Contours and Commitments of Critical Urban Geography"  
and "Production, Economy, and the City" in *Urban Geography: A Critical Introduction*, edited by Andrew E.G. Jonas, Eugene McCann, and Mary Thomas.

**KEY WORDS 3 due April 20**

**Week 13 (April 23)**  
**Migration**

Hyndman, J. 2012. "The geopolitics of migration and mobility." *Geopolitics*, 17(2), 243-255.

Rübner Hansen, Bue and Manuela Zechner. 2017. "Intersecting Mobilities: Declassing and Migration from the Viewpoint of Organising within and against Precarity." *Movements Journal* 3(1): 109-126.

**Week 14 (April 30)**  
**Geographies of Resistance**

TBD

**\* LOCAL LANDSCAPES PROJECT due MAY 14 at 4pm**