

GGG 101: Major World Regions

Course Syllabus, Summer 2020, 3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR

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COURSE BASICS

Meeting times: Asynchronous
Location: Online
Web location: Blackboard (courses.gmu.edu)
Office hours: By appt.

TEXTS

Nijman, Jan; Shin, Michael; and Peter O. Muller. 2020. *Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts*. Wiley. ISBN: 9781119607328

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

This course is designed as an introduction to the discipline of geography while providing the student an overview of the world's major regions as defined by their physical and cultural characteristics. It is also intended to present critical geographic concepts associated with applying a spatial perspective to understanding the world.

We will examine how forces across various scales, from local to global, shape the character of place and space. Furthermore, we will explore how regions differ from one another, are similar to one another, and interact with/interrelate to one another in today's globalizing world. Emphasis will be made on areal differentiation and the role geographic differences play in the interpretation of the current world scene. Acquiring a familiarity with and a foundation in the geography of the major world regions allows us to ask more critical questions about the unevenness of various geographical processes and patterns on the landscape in addition to reflecting on our own role in the larger world.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course fulfills the Mason Core requirement in **Global Understanding**. The intention is for you to be capable of the following at the end of this course:

1. Identify the distribution of patterns of human and physical geographical features across the globe.
2. Describe world regions based on their physical and cultural traits in the context of modern events.
3. Explain similarities and differences among world regions across multiple scales.
4. Explain the interconnectedness, difference, and diversity of a global society that are manifested in the regions of the world.
5. Understand how to profile a place, analyze problems, and read and interpret information on maps, charts, and photos.

STRUCTURE & EXPECTATIONS

GGG 101 is an asynchronous course, taught with the help of Blackboard, accessed through <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>.

- All submissions will be done through Blackboard.
- Unlimited submissions are permitted in Blackboard for homework assignments. Only the grade of the most recent submission will be counted. Assignment submissions should be PDF documents.
- Unless otherwise stated, you have **one** attempt to take each module quiz. You should expect quizzes to be a mix of multiple choice, true/false, with the occasional fill in the blank.
- Submissions are due at 11:59pm on the stated due date unless noted otherwise. Assignments become unavailable in Blackboard past the due date.

- No late work will be accepted without a documented excuse. Examples of third-party documentation include a calendar of religious observances, a conference program that includes your presentation, a letter from your coach that specifies the days on which you will need to miss class because you are away from campus for a competition, an obituary or funeral program, or a note from your doctor. In the case of illnesses or emergencies for which it is impossible to notify your instructor in advance, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible via email and then provide documentation as soon as you are able to return to class.

George Mason University is dedicated to preparing staff and students in the event of an emergency. All students in this class are encouraged to register for Mason Alert, a system that allows university officials to contact the community during an emergency by sending a text message. If you are not currently registered for Mason Alert please text MASON to 411911 or visit the website: <https://alert.gmu.edu>.

Modifications to class will be announced via Blackboard. **Assignments due on a closure or delay date are STILL due on that day** unless otherwise specified.

My last name is pronounced LES-LEE. My preference is that you address me as “Professor,” “Professor Leslie” or “Dr. Leslie.” If there is a specific way that you would like me to address you—including certain pronouns—please notify me as you are comfortable.

GRADING SCHEMA

Assessment	% (of final grade)
Homework Assignments	30%
Module Quizzes	70%

Grades generally follow 90/80/70 with plus/minus being within 3 percent of the cutoffs. I reserve the right to alter the exact boundaries at the end of the semester.

If you are not satisfied with your progress during the semester, please see me as early as possible; do not wait until the end of the semester to address these concerns.

EXTRA CREDIT

I will not entertain requests for extra credit opportunities in this class. Extra credit is extra work, and students who are having difficulty completing the required coursework seldom have the time to complete additional assignments. Students who perform poorly on course assignments may not be devoting adequate time and effort to their academic responsibilities. Please contact me if you are having difficulty in this course.

If extra credit opportunities arise throughout the course of the semester, they will be announced and appear in the Extra Credit Opportunities folder on Blackboard. These opportunities are rare.

PRIVACY

Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of any course. Your instructor cannot discuss your educational record with your parents, your friends, or anyone except for you. Because your GMU email is the only one that we can explicitly identify as belonging to you, your instructor will only communicate with you via email using your GMU address.

If you send communications from a non-GMU email account, you will receive a response telling you to use your GMU email. If you send an email outside of regular business hours, you are unlikely to get a response until the next working day.

Please copy Dr. Leslie on any e-mail correspondence to outside parties if it is related to this course.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

You will need to be able to use a computer to participate in the course and complete the required work. This course assumes you have the ability to work within an electronic environment without assistance.

When the campus is open during the semester, you are encouraged to use the GGS departmental computer lab (Exploratory 2102), for which you receive “swipe” access (using your Student ID) within the first two weeks of the course. Students seeking to use proprietary software off-campus and/or on non-Windows machines are encouraged to use the Citrix Virtual Lab, for which instructions are provided on the course website. Software keys for self-installation are not provided.

I do not serve as technical support.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity and dishonest practices. 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.

Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format (or similar). It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and familiarize yourself with the Honor Code. Under no circumstances is it permissible to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters relating to academic work.

While working on labs near other students is acceptable (and often encouraged), creative efforts are to be individual to a student. You are responsible for making certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on an assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

The principle of academic integrity is taken seriously, and violations are treated gravely. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct, and ignorance is not an excuse. It is my policy that all Honor Code referrals recommend a sanction of *at least* course failure. The official GMU policies are available from the Office of Academic Integrity: <https://oai.gmu.edu/>

DIVERSITY

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion,

age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected. Notably, individuals are asked not to speak for the experience of others, nor to ask others to account for an entire demographic of which they may belong. The University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, AND INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.

As a faculty member and designated “Mandatory Reporter,” I am required to report all disclosures of threats or occurrences of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703- 380-1434), Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380), Student Health Services, or Mason’s Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

I am committed to the accessibility of education of all students. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University.

If you are seeking accommodations for this class related to any sort of disability, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Students who suspect that they have a disability, temporary or permanent, but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. I encourage students who are considering using their accommodations to declare and discuss them with me as soon as possible, as I can only provide accommodations after receiving the authorizing documentation from Disability Services.

OTHER GMU RESOURCES

There are numerous campus resources that are available to help you succeed in this class, your academic career, your career after you leave GMU, and to manage the many challenges that all of us face at some point. For more details, please see a list of some of these resources online at <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus/>. A few of these include

- University Writing Center
- Student Health Services
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- University Career Services