

George Mason University
Department of Geography & Geoinformation Science

Spring Semester 2023
GGG 101-003: MAJOR WORLD REGIONS

Name	: Maction Komwa, PhD	Meeting Times	: MW – 3:00 pm – 4:15 pm
Office	: Exploratory Hall, Room 2414	Location	: Horizon 2014
Email	: mkomwa@gmu.edu	Office hours	: M: 10:30 am – 11:30 am T- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm or by appointment
Phone	: 703-993-5646	Credits	: 3.00

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

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Learning Assistant (LA)

Name: Josias Christian Torres Gella

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Office: Exploratory Hall – 2400, Office Hours: TTh: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm or by appointment

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:

- Understand the geographic approach to studying spatial distribution of Earth's phenomena.
- Demonstrate a foundational knowledge of the world's physical characteristics such as climate or landforms
- Describe world regions in terms of cultural characteristics such as language or religion.
- Identify and describe how humans interact with and adapt to their environment
- Understand the relationship and importance of people and places.
- 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

Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts

Nijman, Jan, et al.

Publisher: Wiley; 18th edition (August 4, 2020)

Learning Management Systems

- 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.

Safe Return to Campus & COVID-19 Requirements

As of today, there are currently no Covid-19-related university-wide policies that will affect teaching and learning, however, students are encouraged to check the [Safe Return to Campus](#) site to keep track of any updates and changes.

Course Activities

The course is designed to engage students with pre-class (online), in-person and post-class activities. These activities are graded. The instructor expects students to prepare well, read assigned materials before class meeting, participate in all assigned activities, and discussions through the Blackboard by due dates. Some activities will require team work and such activities will be specified by the instructor.

Course Assignments and Grading Breakdown

Students are expected to submit high quality assignments during this course via the Blackboard. All assignments are to be completed according to the dates outlined in the syllabus. [See - Tentative Course Calendar pages: 5-6]

Description of Assignments

A. Map Exercises [10] (250 points) – 25%

- You will build your map literacy and ability to analyze spatial information through these assignments. Knowing geographical location, place, regions, movement of objects from one location to another, etc. are part of the geography themes that you will learn from these activities.

B. Examination [Total = 500 points] – 50%

- **Three Exams** will be administered. [Exam 1; Mid-Term and Final Exam]
- **Final Exam** will be COMPREHENSIVE
- Exams will comprise of *Multiple- Choice-Questions, True/False Questions and Fill-in-the blank* questions.
- Please note that under no circumstances will the final exam be administered on a different date than scheduled because of travel plans or family events, etc. If there is a medical crisis or unforeseen circumstances, please contact me immediately so that you can be accommodated accordingly.
 - **EXAM I (100 points = 10%) & Mid Term (100 points (10%))**
 - **Final Exam [300 points] = 30%**
- NO MAKEUP EXAMS will be given without supporting documents.
- We'll take some time to talk about study strategies and answer any possible review questions

C. 6 Post-Reading Quizzes (100 points) = 10% [Will drop the Lowest grade]

- Quizzes will be administered both online through the Blackboard or in-class [Open Book]
 - These quizzes are designed to make sure that you have read and understood the readings, practice and prepare you for exams, and help you revise the key points discussed in class or through the readings.

D. 4 Current Events Assignment [25 points each (Total of 100 points) = 10%

- Find any news and events that are happening across the globe. You will complete 4 current news by searching articles from newspaper or magazine including TV and be able to analyze and dissect the article according to the instructions that will be provided through the Blackboard.

E. In-class activities, small group discussion and Participation – 50 points (5%)

- This will involve students engaging in short, informal discussions, answer a prepared question, define or give examples of key concepts. [Easy grade to get – show your willingness to learn!]

Late/Make-up Assignments Policy

- Due dates for all assignments are provided in the course schedule as well as the Blackboard. Unless otherwise specified all assignments are due on those dates. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the assignments are submitted by the established due date.
- Assignments turned in **within seven (7) days will result in a 25% deduction** for the assignment. Assignments **later than seven (7 -14 days) will result in a 50% deduction** and **after 14 days** will result into **75% deduction, then Zero grade afterwards**. Please see class schedule for detailed due dates, etc. You will be given an opportunity to use a “Life Happens Pass” for 2 assignments as described below.

A “Life Happens Pass”

You will be given a “Life Happens Pass” for two assignments. An automatic 48 hours extension will be given (i.e. past the original due date without penalty). There is no need to send an email to Instructor or GTA if using this **TOKEN** in one or two of your late assignments. Just submit your work through the Bb within 48 hours!

Grades will be assigned based on the distribution scheme below:

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:

- Review the course material and follow the course calendar.
- Read and check your email and Blackboard daily for any announcements, due date etc.
- Reach out to your Instructor/GTA/LA if you are stuck on something else
- Work at full pace to avoid missing class activities.
- Read the assigned chapter/pages every week and associated lecture notes. It will be great for you to read the textbook first so that you can understand the concepts discussed in the Instructor’s lecture notes.
- Be active participants in discussion forum throughout the course period.
- Communicate with you instructor to ask for help or clarification of an assignment or class activities.
- Keep an open mind to the constructive criticism from classmates and use it to improve your work.
 - We are in this class to share information and learning from each other.
 - By sharing and discussing each other’s ideas, you will be able to examine your own thoughts and feelings hence, making the course interesting and enjoyable!
- Write your messages in formal language.
- Be On-Time [Class starts at 3:00 pm - Horizon 2014]
- **Emails:** Strictly, use Mason Email Account. If you sent email from non-Mason account that email will not be read.
- Strictly **NO** Texting, **NO** Chit-Chat during lecture.
- **Cell phones** must be turned **OFF** at all times. If you are expecting an important call, you can take it outside classroom.

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/>). The Honor Code Pledge reads as follows:*
 - *To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set for this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*
- It is expected that you understand these definitions. If you have any doubts about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, stealing, or lying in the academic context, please see your professor. *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	Topic description	Readings	Assignment short description and due date
1	1/23	Introduction Course Overview	Introduction	Online Self-introduction due 1/29
	1/25	A Global Perspective	Chapter 1	
2	1/30	Development & Economy Population Clusters	Chapter 1	Map Exercise 1 due 2/5
	2/1	The European Realm	Chapter 5	Online Practice Quiz # 1 - 2/5
3	2/6	The European Realm	Chapter 5	Map Exercise 2 – Europe due 2/12
	2/8	The European Realm	Chapter 5	<i>News Event -Europe – 2/10</i>
4	2/13	The Sub-Saharan African Realm	Chapter 8	Map Exercise 3 – Sub-Saharan Africa due 2/19
	2/15	The Sub-Saharan African Realm	Chapter 8	Online Practice Quiz # 2 – 2/19
5	2/20	The Sub-Saharan African Realm	Chapter 8	<i>News Event -Sub-Saharan – 2/26</i>
	2/22	Exam 1 [Chapters 1 & 5]		
6	2/27	The Middle American Realm	Chapter 3	Map Exercise 4 – Middle America due 3/5
	3/1	The Middle American Realm	Chapter 3	
7	3/6	The South American Realm	Chapter 4	Map Exercise 5 – South America due 3/12
	3/8	The South American Realm	Chapter 4	Online Practice Quiz # 3 – 3/12
8	3/13 - 3/15	Spring Recess (No Classes)		
9	3/20	The North African/Southwest Asian Realm	Chapter 7	<i>News Event -South America– 3/26</i>
	3/22	Mid-Term Exam [Chapters 3, 4 & 8]		
10	3/27	The North African/Southwest Asian Realm	Chapter 7	Map Exercise 6 – North Africa/Southwest Asian – due 4/2
	3/29	The North African/Southwest Asian Realm	Chapter 7	
11	4/3	The North American Realm	Chapter 2	Map Exercise 7 – North American Realm – due 4/9
	4/5	The North American Realm	Chapter 2	Online Practice Quiz #4

Week	Date	Topic description	Readings	Assignment short description and due date
12	4/10	The North American Realm	Chapter 2	<i>Online Practice Quiz #5 – due 4/16</i>
	4/12	The South Asian Realm	Chapter 9	<i>News Event -North America – 4/16</i>
13	4/17	The South Asian Realm	Chapter 9	Map Exercise 8 – The South Asian Realm – due 4/23
	4/19	The South Asian Realm	Chapter 9	
14	4/24	The Austral Realm	Chapter 12	Map Exercise 9 – The Austral Realm– due 4/30
	4/26	The Austral Realm	Chapter 12	<i>Final Online Practice Quiz #6 [Will drop your lowest Quiz score]</i>
15	5/1	The Pacific Realm and Polar Regions	Chapter 13	Map Exercise 10 – The Pacific Realm and Polar Regions – due 5/7
	5/3	The Pacific Realm & Polar Regions Final Exam Review	Chapter 13	
	5/15	Final Exam [Comprehensive – though majority of the questions will come from Chapters 2, 7, 9, 12 & 13]		