

George Mason University
Department of Geography & Geoinformation Science

Spring Semester 2023
GGG 103-001: Human Geography

Name	: Maction Komwa, PhD	Meeting Times	: MW – 12:00 - 13:15 pm
Office	: Exploratory Hall, Room 2414	Location	: Planet 131
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)

Name: Szandra A. Péter

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Office: Exploratory Hall 1102-S

Office Hours: T: 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm or by appointment

Course Description:

Human geography investigates how human activities are connected to and interact with place. How does place influence people, and vice versa? What are the effects of global processes at the local scale? How is human activity—agricultural practices, industrialization, etc.—spatially distributed? Why do certain patterns of human activity exist on the landscape in the way that they do? Human geographers are committed to understanding the spatial distribution of human activity and humans' relationships with place in order to identify, interrogate, and reduce social inequalities.

This course satisfies the Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences Requirement.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, a student will be able to:

- Explain how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors
- Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs
- Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present
- Use geographic tools and data sources to interpret the distribution of spatial phenomena, especially the unequal distribution of phenomena
- Explain how people are influenced by contextual factors and interact with their surrounding physical and socio-cultural environments and landscapes
- Regarding the relationship between human activity and space, place, and landscape, ask and answer: Why this, here? Why that, there?
- Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs.

Course Prerequisites: None

Required Textbook

Contemporary Human Geography, 5th edition by Rubenstein with 18-week access to Mastering and eText
ISBN: 9780137631667 [Check the Bookstore to purchase your Mastering and eText Access Code]

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.

Course Assignments and Grading Breakdown

All assignments are to be completed according to the dates outlined in the syllabus. [See - Tentative Course Calendar pages: 5-6]

Grade/Requirements

A. Homework Assignments (300 points) – 30%

- You will complete 5 homework assignments aligned to specific chapters. Instructions regarding these assignments will be discussed in class and posted through the Blackboard. Some examples for these assignments include: physical settings and human settlement, describing themes of geography, research on HDI, etc. Some of these Assignments will be completed through Mastering Human Geography – Bb.

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

- Three Exams** will be administered. [*Exam 1; Exam 2 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 or the GTA immediately so that you can be accommodated accordingly.
 - EXAM I (100 points = 10%) & Exam 2 (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 Lesson Quizzes (100 points) = 15% [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. Some of these Quizzes will be completed through Mastering Human Geography – Bb.

D. In-class activities, online discussion and Participation – 100 points (5%)

- This will involve students engaging in short, informal discussions, answer a prepared question, define or give examples of key concepts. Most of these activities will be announced in advance or just pop-up activity.

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). If you use your “*Life Happens Pass*”, please include the word **TOKEN** just below your name on the assignment so that we can keep track of your late submission.

Grades will be assigned based on the distribution scheme below:

Range %	Grade Points Cutoffs	Letter Grade	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-			Note: There is No C-

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 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 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm - Planet 131]
- **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.

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.*

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.

Diversity Statement & Accommodations

GMU promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion ([see religious holiday calendar](#)), 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. If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with the professor and how best to address you in class through the Self-introduction assignment posted through the Blackboard.

I use He/Him for myself. Please consider updating your profile in PatriotWeb.

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.

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>
- vi. Full detailed Student Support Resources on Campus – check the Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning Website below: <https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/knowing-mason-students/student-support-resources-on-campus/>

Tentative Course Calendar: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Week	Date 3:00 pm – 4:15pm	Topic description	Readings	Assignments due date
1	1/23	Introduction to the Course Get to Know you	Introduction	
	1/25	Geographic Tools	Chapter 1	
2	1/30	Basics of Geography	Chapter 1	Online Self-introduction due 1/29 -----
	2/1	Basics of geography	Chapter 1	
3	2/6	Population	Chapter 2	Homework 1 due 2/5 <i>Online Practice Quiz # 1 - 2/5</i>
	2/8	Population	Chapter 2	
4	2/13	Migration <i>Review Exam</i>	Chapter 3	-----
	2/15	Exam 1 [Chapters 1 & 2]		
5	2/20	Migration	Chapter 3	Homework 2 –due 2/19 <i>Online Practice Quiz # 2 – 2/26</i>
	2/22	Complete Migration	Chapter 3	
6	2/27	Food & Agriculture	Chapter 9	-----
	3/1	Food & Agriculture		
7	3/6	Cultural Geography	Chapter 4	<i>Online Practice Quiz # 3 – 3/5</i>
	3/8	Cultural Geography		
8	3/13 - 3/15	Spring Recess (No Classes)		
9	3/20	Complete Cultural Geography <i>Review Exam</i>	Chapter 4	-----
	3/22	Mid-Term Exam [Chapters 3, 4 & 9]		
10	3/27	Ethnicity & Race	Chapter 7	-----
	3/29	Ethnicity & Race	Chapter 7	
11	4/3	Languages	Chapter 5	Homework 3 – due 4/2 <i>Online Practice Quiz #4 – due 4/2</i>
	4/5	Languages	Chapter 5	

Week	Date	Topic description	Readings	Assignment short description and due date
12	4/10	Religions	Chapter 6	-----
	4/12	Religions	Chapter 6	
13	4/17	Political Geography	Chapter 8	Homework 4 – due 4/16
	4/19	Political Geography	Chapter 8	
14	4/24	Development	Chapter 10	<i>Online Practice Quiz #5 due 4/23</i>
	4/26	Development	Chapter 10	
15	5/1	Urban Patterns	Chapter 13	Homework 5 – due 4/30 <i>Final Online Practice Quiz #6 [Will drop your lowest Quiz score]</i>
	5/3	Urban Patterns	Chapter 13	
	5/15	Final Exam		Final Exam