

**Hunter College - CUNY**  
**Dept. of Geography & Environmental Science**  
**GEOG 101 Lecture Presentation Summary**  
**Spring 2021**

**NOTE:** *In the absence of in-person lecturing and face-to-face explanation of the material presented in the PowerPoint lecture slides, I will summarize the content of each lecture presentation, stressing the concepts and interrelationships that are essential to an introductory geography course. In essence, it is like giving you a transcript of my classroom lectures.*

*If, after reading this summary and viewing the lecture presentation, the imbedded short videos and hot links to articles, you have any questions, or if you would like to contribute a comment or two, need clarification by other examples or have additional information on the topic, please do not hesitate to email me at [agrande@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:agrande@hunter.cuny.edu).*

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### **LECTURE 01: Course Introduction**

- The purpose of this lecture is to give you an overview of the course, review the syllabus, explain the requirements and introduce some basic concepts in Geography.
- **GEOG 101: People and their Environment** is an introduction to the field of geography. This course will present the fundamental concepts of geography and show how these concepts are applied to our everyday lives. Geography is both a physical and social science.
- GEOG 101 is a topical course highlighting the major subfields in geography. Examples from all over the world are used to illustrate concepts and processes. Just about every textbook chapter is a separate course at Hunter. My job is to introduce you to them in the hope that your interest will be aroused and you will want to explore the subject matter in depth.

This section of GEOG 101 is an **asynchronous class** which means that there are no formal class meeting times. Lectures may be viewed at any time after posting. Assignments based lecture material and the instructional segments of the course will have due dates and times to keep you moving forward at a steady pace. At the end of each segment there will be an exam that focuses on the material covered in that segment. Throughout the semester I will email the class with reminders of due dates, textbook readings and supplemental information, including the Atlas Extra Credit assignments. Always check your Hunter email on a regular basis.

- **Review the syllabus.** It was sent to your “myHunter” email address (or the email address) listed on the CUNYFirst course registration roster.
- **Slides 2 and 3: The required textbook and atlas are shown.** It is important that you have access to both. The course is presented through lectures and readings. I do not follow the textbook closely and incorporate additional material in lecture. Both need to be mastered to get a good grade.
- **Slides 4-6.** Throughout the semester, course material will be made available to you via CUNY’s **BlackBoard** site and through the Home Page for this course that is accessed through the Department of Geography’s web page. **The direct link is:** [http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/geog101\\_grande/index.html](http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/geog101_grande/index.html).

- **Slide 7** lists the required and extra credit grading components of the course. **Slides 8 and 9** give details.
  - All exams are of equal weight and are focused just on that third of the course. They are not cumulative. Each exam is available over a 3 day period. However, once you open an exam you cannot close it and return later to complete it. Each exam will shut down 1 hour 15 minutes after it is accessed. Every student will see the same questions but in different order and the answer choices will also be scrambled.
  - The 10 written required assignments are worth 40% of your grade. Topics are selected from a menu according to a formula that must equal 10. See the **Written Assignment Handout** on BlackBoard or the Course Home Page for details, including Presentation Guidelines. Due dates and lateness penalties apply.
  - Extra credit options can only help you (never hurt you) by reinforcing course material. There is extra credit attached to the exams. There is extra credit attached to the textbook readings and there is extra credit for any special project approved by me in advance.
  - Since there are no formal meeting times it is essential that you self-pace yourself to keep up with the work. Cramming at the end of an instructional period prior to an exam usually does help your grades.
  - See the syllabus and written assignment handout for details
  
- **Slide 10: Semester calendar.** See the syllabus for the complete calendar. The dates are firm unless I need to make an adjustment or CUNY decides to change the academic calendar, so plan accordingly.
  
- **Slide 11: Sequence of Topics.** This is the progression of material covered with an exam at the end of the instructional segment. Exams are NOT cumulative and focus just on the topics shown in the boxes. We start with **basic concepts** then we look at the **natural environment** (physical geography), ending with **people** living on earth and utilizing earth resources (human geography).
  
- **Slide 12: Learning Outcomes.** By the end of the course if you keep up with the course work you will become geographically literate. Literate not in the sense of knowing where every place on earth is located but by knowing the “story behind the scenery” as portrayed in concepts, data gathering, map construction, map reading and location analysis
  
- **Slides 13-14** offer my guidance on how you can succeed in this course and earn a high grade. Remember I am available by email and will get back to you as quickly as possible depending on the time of day and nature of the question. **Do not hesitate to contact me.** Review the list of responsibilities that is included on the syllabus.
  
- **Slide 15:** If you become enthralled by the fields of geography and the environmental sciences, Hunter College offers two major programs (with associated minors), that provide an in-depth study. Click on the links to see the requirements for each major and minor.

*This ends the syllabus review. Now we will begin our introduction to the field of Geography.*

- **Slide 16** shows the topics we will cover in Part I of the course. All of this is touched on in Chapter 1 of the textbook. However, I will expand all the topics to fill the first one-third of the course because of the importance of background material and the understanding of

geographical concepts, terminology and definitions. Exam 1 follows Geographic Information Systems. *NOTE: The topics listed in the menu of the Required Assignment under PART I: Introduction to Geography: Concepts and Techniques for reflect the material covered in textbook chapter 1 readings and the lecture slides.*

- **Slide 17.** Here we define Geography as “description of the earth.” But as we will see throughout the course it is much more than a description or inventory of what we find on Planet Earth. In reality, geography is an analysis of place: a location analysis. We add names to places and devise a locational system to find them. All living things make locational decisions based on their needs or perceptions. The yellow side bar illustrates this point. We all make locational decisions based on an in-depth analysis or instantaneous feeling we have about a place. As we will see this also includes considerations of distance and means of movement between places.
- **Slide 18. This is a very important slide.** It includes the 4 basic concepts that geographers use to study the earth, shows the importance of the human factor, and emphasizes the significance of the map as a special tool.
- **Slide 19 emphasizes the role of people in this field of study:** “Geography is the study of people living on the surface of the earth interacting with the natural environment.” Our relationship with nature comes into play here. We will focus on nature and the earth’s physical systems in Part II of the course. The “cultural” reference in landscape development refers to the works of people. Culture is not natural but a learned response by people to what is around them.

This slide also points out that place names in geography are an analytical tool not something that are committed to rote memory. They help us to identify features and to locate them again so we can find them when studying or discussing the significance of what is found there.

**NOTE:**

***That being said, you will see in the description of the exam format that place names are part of each exam. Exam 1 focuses are Europe and Africa, Exam 2 focuses on the Americas and Antarctica, and Exam 3 focuses on Asia, Australia and Oceania. Both the names of major physical features and countries will be included on the exams. You will get a list prior to each exam. The names will be tested in a multiple-choice format aimed at appropriate maps. You will be provided with maps to use as study aids.***

- **Slides 20-25** focus on the development of the cultural landscape and the changes made by people (which is the focus of Part III of this course) over time as people interact with their natural setting. Pay attention to the 4-part sequence (Slides 20-22) that shows how a physical landscape changes into a cultural landscape when people get involved.
- **Slide 26.** Here we view Tucson, Arizona over time. As the town grew and the area urbanized, major changes took place (visible in the images) but also invisible as the great demand for water in a desert area and worsening air quality. How do we know all the images are of Tucson? The unifying factor is the shape of the mountains in the background. Geographers use clues like this to locate undocumented images especially those from hundreds, if not thousands of years ago.

- **Slides 27/28: The Five Fundamental Themes of Geography Flow Diagram.** Be sure to go to the Handout section and print yourself a copy of this diagram. This is the essence of the course and summarizes all the concepts and themes we will address. Slide 27 highlights the component parts of the diagram. **The parts of the diagram will be explained in Slides 29-33 and Slide 34 brings in the earth science tradition.**
- **Slide 29: Location.** Theme 1 Location addresses the question WHERE? Know the difference between SITE and SITUATION. Site or absolute location is the exact spot on the earth's surface. Situation or relative location is the relationship of site to other sites. This brings in so many variables as shown on the slide and has many consequences in Human Geography. ANALOGY: Site is your home address while situation is its location in the neighborhood or the city in relation to all sites. For example, your address in relation to your best friend's address or that of your favorite aunt, wherever she may live.
- **Slide 30: Place.** Theme 2 Place addresses the question WHAT IS THERE? We look for the special features that distinguish one area from another. What makes it unique? The illustration of postcards from the US Virgin Islands and the island of Newfoundland, Canada shows the differences. Once we begin to associate characteristics with an area of the earth, we can more easily begin our analysis.
- **Slide 31: Movement.** Theme 3 Movement addresses the idea of MOBILITY to, from and within an area: interchange. It studies the flow, repositioning and spread of living things, objects and ideas. **Diffusion** is a key term to remember.
- **Slide 32: Region.** Theme 4 Region addresses the concept of UNIFYING FACTORS that make areas of the earth cohesive. Unifying characteristics of location form and change over time, just as a neighborhood changes over time as people move out and others move in. Regions take on many characteristics and overlap each other. We will spend one lecture unit on Regions.
- **Slide 33: Human-Environment Interaction.** Theme 5 Human-Environment Interaction is the core of geographic study and looks at the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLE AND THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. It is the basis of establishing a cultural landscape where the imprint of the works of people is evident. In the photographs on the top right, we see before and after images of Glen Canyon on the Colorado Plateau. The need for water storage and the technology to dam a river allowed people to create a reservoir. In the bottom photograph, we can recognize different land uses. The question is why people chose to transform the physical landscape into what we see there. Perception, technological ability, historical land use and the peoples' attitude toward environmental impact all play roles.
- **Slide 34. Earth Science Tradition.** To the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography, we add the tradition of studying the earth's NATURAL PROCESSES, NATURAL CYCLES and LIFE COMPONENTS: **The Earth Sciences.** The processes, cycles and systems have influenced people's perception and use of the land since the beginning of time. Part II of the course focuses on these.
- **Slide 35 repeats the Slide 27.**
- **Slide 36: Next Lecture Topic: History of Geography.**