

GEOG 101: People and their Environment

**Tue/Fri. 11:30 AM - 12:45 PM
Hunter West 415**

Fall 2023: 08/25/2023 - 12/20/2023



Instructor: Dr. Alex A. Moulton

Office: Hunter North 1025A/CARSI Lab

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30 PM, Wednesdays by appointment for in-person and via zoom), Friday 1:30-2:30PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

At the core of the discipline of geography is an interest in understanding the relationships between human societies and the environments in which they live. But humans do not simply inhabit environments, they adapt them and transform them in physical ways and in symbolic ways. This makes the relationships between societies and the environment dynamic. This course introduces students to various people-environment or society-nature relationships. We will explore geographical methods of analyzing the interrelations of people and their environments and will examine what the outcomes of society-nature interactions. Our analyses will consider the meanings and motivations behind human views on how the environment should be managed and its resources distributed. The course will take up questions such as:

- What are the diverse earth systems and processes shaping the environments we live in?
- How do environments shape societies and how do societies transform environments?
- How can we make sense of the ongoing historic epoch of human-driven global environmental change?
- What has been the role of industrialization, capitalism, and globalization in the transformation of human-environmental relations?
- What role can sustainability, social justice, and ecological justice play in solving environmental problems?

These questions will be explored across different spatial and time scales, and across a diverse range of geographies from urban to suburban to rural ones. We will draw insights

from cases and experiences that span the globe, but will foreground examples relevant to the Americas, and the U.S.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Use a geographical perspective to explain human-environmental relationships.
- Describe the geographical and earth system dynamics that shape global landscapes.
- Explain how historical and contemporary, socio-economic, cultural, political, social and ecological forces interact to influence the nature and location of human activity.
- Describe the spatial patterns of intersecting crises affecting human society, and articulate solutions orientated towards more sustainable and just futures.
- Use maps and related spatial graphics for basic information and to make inferences and connections.

COURSE TEXT

Dahlman, C. T., Renwick, W. H., & Bergman, E. F. (2014). Introduction to Geography: People, places and environment. Pearson.

COURSE ETIQUETTE, EXPECTATIONS, AND SUPPORT RESOURCES

Please don't hesitate to email me with updates, questions, or concerns. I will typically respond within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. To the extent that I can, I will notify you if I will not be regularly monitoring emails due to travel or emergencies. In your emails, please use an informative subject line that includes your course name. This will allow me to best manage communication from different students across multiple courses. Please use common courtesy during lectures and discussion sections. Arrive on time, and, if late, enter the room quietly. Personal electronics may be only used for academic work connected to the lecture, such as referring to readings and taking notes.

I encourage you to visit me during office hours throughout the term to discuss any concerns you might have, to get clarification on assignments or course material, and for general academic advising. Using office hours does not mean that you are not smart nor that you are being a bother. It is part of my job and I am happy to try and answer questions and resolve issues through office hour meetings.

All submitted work must be your own. You can find more information about what constitutes academic dishonesty, and the resulting disciplinary procedures at:

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/>

Please use the resources below. They will be helpful in realizing the course objectives and your overall wellbeing and success. Go here for full list of Student Health and Support resources: <https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/health-wellness/>

Student Counseling Center: <https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/health-wellness/counseling-and-wellness-services/>

Office of Accessibility: <https://hunter.cuny.edu/students/health-wellness/accessibility/>
Office of Diversity and Compliance, for resources, support, and services related to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking: <https://www.hunter.cuny.edu/diversityandcompliance/title-ix>

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Activity	Percentage of Final Grade
Exam	60% (2 each 30%)
Attendance and Class Activities	15%
Group Final Project	25%
Extra Credit Bonus	5% (maximum)

Exams: There will be two exams. These will feature a combination of short answers and multiple-choice questions. The tests will cover material from the lectures, readings and discussions. Each test is worth 30%. Check the Course Schedule below for exact dates. Make-up tests will only be given if the absence is prearranged with and approved by me or the result of a documented emergency. Any other cases for missing a test will result in a zero.

Make-up exams: No make-up exams will be given unless the absence is (1) prearranged with and approved by me or (2) the result of a documented emergency (such as a serious injury). Documentation is necessary in any case. The exam will be a zero unless these conditions are met. Any other excuses, such as oversleeping, getting the exam date wrong, having other tests or papers on the same day, or choosing to be out of town for personal reasons, will not be accepted. Any make up exam will be either an essay or a verbal exam with the instructor, at my discretion.

Attendance and Class Activities: Class sessions are a combination of lectures, discussions, and an opportunity to ask questions. It is necessary to attend lectures regularly, prepared to participate in class having read, and reflected upon, the assigned material. Over the course of the semester, you will be placed in think-pair-share teams or small groups to complete various in-class activities. In your teams or groups, you will respond to prompts and discuss course material, themes emerging from the lecture, or explore the connection between course materials and current affairs. The outcome of these discussions and in-class activities will be shared verbally, on poster paper, or through live virtual visualization technology.

Group Final Project: The final project will be a group assignment that will serve as a capstone for the course. The project is expected to be creative and can take almost any form from a mini-podcast series to short documentary; from a photo essay to research poster or zine. We will form groups a few weeks after the start of the semester and groups will submit final plans/proposals for their projects by the middle of the semester. You should start brainstorming ideas as soon as you form your groups. I will set guidelines for each group project individually once groups have decided on the form, they want their projects to take. Whatever form your projects take, they should incorporate but not simply repeat materials from the course. Instead, you should incorporate course material to provide deep explanations, analysis, discussions of the topic of your group project.

Extra Credit: You can earn up to five (5) points on your final grade by submitting brief response papers or commentaries in which you reflect on the connections between something you experienced, an article you read outside of the assigned material, or a current affairs event or issue and the course material. Your reflection papers can also take the form of a response to a colloquium or other research talk that takes place across the CUNY system. If you participate in a volunteer activity related to the human-environment dynamics, environmental justice, or sustainability you can submit a reflection on that

activity for extra credit. Your reaction papers should be two paragraphs, and clearly state what kind of activity, the title of the colloquium or talk, or current affairs issue you are responding to.

COURSE SCHEDULE

*****Subject to modification****
All modifications will be announced ahead of time*

August 25:

- Introductions and Course Overview

August 29: The Nature of Geography

- Chapter 1-- Introduction to Geography

August 31: The Nature of Geography

- Chapter 1-- Introduction to Geography

September 1: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 3-- Landforms

September 5: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 3-- Weather, Climate & Climate Change

September 8: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 3-- Weather, Climate & Climate Change

September 12: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 4-- Biosphere

September 15: No Class

September 19: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 5-- Earth's Resources and Environmental Protection

September 22: The Earth, Environment, and Resources

- Chapter 5-- Earth's Resources and Environmental Protection
- West, P., Igoe, J., & Brockington, D. (2006). Parks and peoples: the social impact of protected areas. *Annu. Rev. Anthropol.*, 35, 251-277.

September 26: EXAM 1

September 29: Human Geographies and Cultural Landscapes

- Chapter 6-- Population and Migration

October 3: Human Geographies and Cultural Landscapes

- Chapter 6-- Population and Migration
- Ehrkamp, P. (2019). Geographies of migration II: The racial-spatial politics of immigration. *Progress in Human Geography*, 43(2), 363-375.

October 6: Human Geographies and Cultural Landscapes

- Chapter 7-- Cultural Geography

October 10: No Class// Classes follow a Monday schedule

October 13: Human Geographies and Cultural Landscapes

- Chapter 8-- Languages and Religions

October 17: Human Geographies and Cultural Landscapes

- Chapter 9-- Food and Agriculture
- Black, S. T. (2022). Abolitionist food justice: Theories of change rooted in place-and life-making. *Food and Foodways*, 30(1-2), 123-141.

October 20: Modern Society and Political Economy

- Chapter 10-- Cities and Urbanization; Chapter 11-- A World of States

October 24: Modern Society and Political Economy

- Chapter 10-- Cities and Urbanization; Chapter 11-- A World of States

October 27: EXAM 2

October 31: Modern Society and Political Economy

- Chapter 12: Economy and Development

November 3: Mental Health Break/No Class

- Moulton will be away for "The Zone of Special Operation: Sovereignty, Security, & Social Transformation in Contemporary Jamaica"—a colloquium at Texas A&M University.

November 7: Uneven Development and Racial Inequity

- Geographies of Racial Capitalism with Ruth Wilson Gilmore – An Antipode Foundation film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CS627aKrJI&ab_channel=antipodeonline
- Pulido, L. (2016). Flint, environmental racism, and racial capitalism. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 27(3), 1-16.

November 14: Uneven Development and Environmental Inequality

- Mascarenhas, M., Grattet, R., & Mege, K. (2021). Toxic waste and race in twenty-first century America: neighborhood poverty and racial composition in the siting of hazardous waste facilities. *Environment and Society*, 12(1), 108-126.

November 17: Gender and the Environment

- Ojeda, D., Nirmal, P., Rocheleau, D., & Emel, J. (2022). Feminist Ecologies. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 47, 149-171.

November 21: Settler-Colonialism

- Whyte, K. (2018). Settler colonialism, ecology, and environmental injustice. *Environment and Society*, 9(1), 125-144.

November 24: No Class—Thanksgiving Break

November 28: Environmental Social Movements and Environmental Defenders

- Scheidel, A., Del Bene, D., Liu, J., Navas, G., Mingorría, S., Demaria, F., ... & Martínez-Alier, J. (2020). Environmental conflicts and defenders: A global overview. *Global Environmental Change*, 63, 102104.

December 1: The Anthropocene? The Climate Crisis and the Politics of Resilience

- Davis, J., Moulton, A. A., Van Sant, L., & Williams, B. (2019). Anthropocene, capitalocene,... plantationocene?: A manifesto for ecological justice in an age of global crises. *Geography Compass*, 13(5), e12438.
- Antadze, N. (2020). Moral outrage as the emotional response to climate injustice. *Environmental Justice*, 13(1), 21-26.

December 5: Environmental Justice and Politics of a Sustainable Future

- Vasudevan, P., Ramírez, M. M., Mendoza, Y. G., & Daigle, M. (2022). Storytelling Earth and Body. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 1-17.

December 8: Group Presentation Meeting Day/ Meet During Class Time

- Moulton will be away at 'Neoliberal Natures: Market Environmentalism & Abolition Ecologies in the Anthropocene"—a symposium at Princeton University

December 12: No Class; Reading Day

December 15: Group Presentations

December 19: Group Presentations