

**HUNTER COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY**

**GEOGRAPHY of the UNITED STATES and CANADA
Spring 2013 GEOG 251-Section 51 Code 1316**

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Mailbox: Geography Dept., Room 1006 North Bldg.
Office Hours: Before and after class on Tuesdays and Thursdays; also by appointment.
Classroom: Room 1022 North Bldg.

Purpose: To learn about the geography of US and Canada – its physical environment, the distribution of its people and their activities, and the interrelationships between the people and the environment in the North America - and to apply geographic principles and reasoning to real world situations.

Books/Map: 1. **Birdsall, Stephen, et al. *Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada*, 7th ed. (2009), John Wiley & Sons. ISBN 13:978-0-470-09826-4**
2. ***Atlas of American History, Revised (2011)*, Rand McNally. ISBN: 0528004875 (paperback)**
3. **Any folded road map of the United States**, as the *Rand McNally Road Map* or *AAA Road Map*.

Strongly recommended:

Any LARGE, up-to-date atlas of the US and Canada, such as:

Michelin North America Road Atlas 2012

- ISBN-13: 9782067159402

- ISBN: 2067159402

AAA North American Road Atlas 2012

- ISBN-13: 9781595084408

- ISBN: 1595084401

Rand McNally Road Atlas 2012

- ISBN- 13: 9780528003431

- ISBN: 0528003437

Course Objectives:

The goals of the course are: (1) to learn about the geography of the United States and Canada – its physical environment, the distribution of its people and their activities, and the interrelationships between the people and the environment - and to apply geographic principles and reasoning to real world situations where areas of the United States and Canada are used as examples of regional analysis; (2) to explore, navigate through, and use the geographic information available on the Internet; (3) to learn how to interpret this information geographically; and (4) to make regional comparisons based on mapped and statistical information. For those in the education sequence, in addi-

tion to **1-4** above, **(5)** to gather and use information within the guidelines of the *National Geography Standards* for presentation at a grade-specific level.

Outcomes:

Upon the successful completion of this course, you will be able to: **(1)** relate cultural landscapes of the United States and Canada to the physical characteristics of its numerous regions, **(2)** navigate the Internet to find geographic information and maps, **(3)** interpret maps and statistics geographically, and **(4)** make regional comparisons leading to informed decisions using geographic principles and spatial concepts. For those in the education sequence, in addition to 1-4 above, **(5)** meld this knowledge with the *National Geography Standards* for presentation to students at specific grade levels.

Grading:

1. Exams (75%). There will be three exams worth 25 points each.

2. Landscape Exercise (25%). There will be a required Internet-based exercise worth 25 points that will explore the human and physical landscapes features that characterize various regions of the United States and Canada.

3. Extra Credit. (*You may attempt all for extra credit.*)

(a) For up to 5 extra credit points on each exam, describe and illustrate a topic relevant to that portion of the semester. The topic will be distributed in class prior to the exam.

(b) A short research paper consisting of a 4-page narrative **plus** a bibliography **and** maps and illustrations on a pre-approved topic. The paper must be concise, focused on the approved topic and show the geography behind the theme by incorporating at least one of the five themes of geography as presented in class. There has to be at least two maps showing the location of the topic within the US or Canada and a detail of the area or event being discussed. This will add a maximum of 5 points to your final term average.

(c) **Geography in the News.** For up to 10 points added to your final term average (thus having the potential of raising your final grade by a full letter grade (*a C- becomes a B-; a B- becomes an A-*), collect and annotate news articles dealing with all 50 states and 13 provinces/territories showing the geography embedded in the article (*Ask the question: Where's the geography?*) Details will be distributed in class during the second week of the semester.

4. Class participation will help to determine borderline grades.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. You are responsible for the content of all the lectures, reading assignments and class handouts. Assignments and handouts are distributed via the course home page on the Geography Department web site (<http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/cwpages.html>), and in class.

2. Attendance is important. Historically, there has been a direct correlation between poor attendance and poor grades. The readings from the textbook, web sites and handouts supplement the lecture.

3. All exams must be taken and required assignments submitted. Failure to do so by the end of the semester will result in a reduced grade unless arrangements are made with me in advance. Then an IN (incomplete) grade may be given. Late written presentations will be penalized. Do not schedule your travel plans to begin before the date of the final exam! See calendar below.

4. Approval is required prior to beginning any research project. The topic of your extra credit research paper or project must be approved in advance to make sure the topic is manageable. *Any student contemplating doing the research paper extra credit option must submit in writing two different proposals and I will select one topic* based on your written justification showing your interest in the topics proposed and an outline of major points to be covered. It is important that your proposal be narrow in scope and focused on a topic.

5. Neatness counts. On exams if I cannot read it, it is wrong. All exercises, research papers, and projects must be typed and presented neatly. Consult the Hunter College Reading and Writing Center for citation and bibliographic formats (<http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu>).

6. Hunter College rules and regulations are strictly enforced including those governing the grades CR/NC and IN.

7. Academic Dishonesty. Cheating and plagiarism are grounds for failure and disciplinary action by the College. Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures. The Internet is a resource for information, NOT a source of verbatim script. Every person has a unique writing style and use of grammar. Do not cut and paste text found at an Internet web site into your write-ups, research paper or project. Any assignment may be randomly scanned by a search engine seeking key words.

8. Office of AccessABILITY. In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (emotional, medical, physical and/ or learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212- 772-4857)/TTY (212- 650- 3230). **You must be registered with the Office of AccessABILITY to qualify for the accommodations.**

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CALENDAR for Spring 2013

This class meets on Mondays and Thursdays from 11:10 AM – 12:25 PM in Room 1022HN. Exam dates and work submission deadlines subject to change.

Tue., Jan. 29	First US&C class meeting. Review chapters 1-3.
Tues., Feb. 12	Lincoln's Birthday (NO classes at Hunter).
THUR., Feb. 14	Classes follow TUESDAY schedule at Hunter. We meet as usual.
Thu., Feb. 28	Tentative date of EXAM I on Chapters 1-3 <u>Last day</u> to hand in Exam I extra credit exercise
Tues., Mar. 05	Review chapters 4-11.
Tues., Mar. 26	Spring Recess. NO classes at Hunter.
Thur., Mar. 28	Spring Recess. NO classes at Hunter.
Tues., Apr. 02	Spring Recess. NO classes at Hunter.
Thur., Apr. 11	Tentative date of EXAM II on Chapters 4-11 <u>Last day</u> to hand in Exam II extra credit exercise
Tue., Apr. 16	Review chapters 12-18.
Tue., May 07	Last day to hand in Extra Credit Research Paper on pre-approved topic for extra credit.
Thurs., May 16	Last US&C class lecture. <u>Last day</u> to hand in the required <i>Landscape Exercise</i> assignment.
Tue., May 21	EXAM III on Chapters 13-18 from <u>11:30 AM - 1:30 PM</u> in Rm 1022HN
Do Not Make Travel Plans for this day!	<u>Last day</u> to hand in Exam III extra credit exercise. <u>Last day</u> to hand in <i>Geography in the News</i> extra credit exercise.