



Learning Enabler: Ismaila Odogba, Ph.D. **Office:** Science D337

Phone: (715) 346-4451

Office Hours: Wed. 11:00-13:00 or by appointment

Email: iodogba@uwsp.edu

Class Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday; 11:00-12:15

Venue: SCI B328

Course Description:

This course examines the components and spatial aspects of contemporary culture including the patterns and problems of population, migration, language, religion, settlements, and political and economic development. It introduces students to several traditional subfields of human geography as well as fundamental geographic concepts. This course focuses on concepts, *not* facts about places, which are traditionally associated with *regional geography*.

U.S. National Geography Standards emphasized in the course:

- The physical and human characteristics of places.
- The changes that occur in meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources
- The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlements
- The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

Enduring Understandings of the Course:

- A spatial perspective of the social world is of crucial importance in the generation of a broad and informed understanding of the world
- The world is an interdependent system of settlements within which people live their lives as part of a continual process of struggle and transformation.

Course Attributes:

- Critical Thinking, Non-Western Culture (GDR), Social Sciences Category 1 (GDR), Global Awareness (GEP), and Social Sciences (GEP).

Course Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, successful students will possess the knowledge necessary:

1. To describe the major concepts in human geography (including place, space, scale, and landscape)
2. To recognize and assess the diversity of cultural backgrounds and personal experiences that influence people and how they perceive places
3. To demonstrate a geography perspective in understanding and solving problems
4. To illustrate the interrelationships between people and places in the developed and less developed world

General Education Program (GEP):

This course fulfills the Cultural and Environmental Awareness, and Investigation requirement of the GEP. Geography tends to examine, from a spatial perspective the diversity and range of the physical and human systems across the planet. Consequently, it complements and aligns with the learning outcomes in these categories.

Investigation- Social Sciences

- *Explain or apply major concepts, methods, or theories used in the social sciences to investigate, analyze, or to predict human behavior. (Course Learning Outcomes 1 and 3).*
- *Examine and explain how social, cultural, or political institutions influence individuals or groups. (Course Learning Outcome 4).*

Using the concept of place and scale, students will examine population growth as well as the socio-economic problems associated with this growth in various societies. From a spatial perspective, the investigation will range from the global world to the local community.

Cultural and Environmental Awareness - Global Awareness

- *Identify the components found within one or more cultures that are distinct from those found in predominantly English-speaking cultures. (Course Learning Outcome 2).*
- *Analyze key forces or processes that contribute to global interconnectedness and their implications. (Course Learning Outcome 4).*
- *Demonstrate curiosity and empathetic insight about diverse cultural perspectives. (Course Learning Outcome 2).*

Students will identify and discuss diverse cultures, what constitutes culture, understand how cultures shape and influence settlements across time and space in the global village.

Critical Thinking:

This course also seeks to begin the *development of the potential capacities* which you all have for critical thinking. The course focuses on problem-based learning that entails the deliberate and reflective reasoning about human geography.

Format:

Designed for classroom delivery, the course shall involve lectures, map exercises, class discussions, assignments, movies, online quizzes, and exams.

A core set of beliefs about teaching and learning influence my teaching; one of which is that *learning is an active student-centered activity and teaching is simply not the transmission of knowledge from the instructor to the students*. The process of instruction involves both the learning enabler (i.e., the instructor) and students (learners) engaging in an interactive environment to discover, understand, and apply knowledge to practical issues.

Readings. Complete the assigned readings prior to class. Be prepared to discuss the assigned readings in class. Being up to date on current events enhances one's geographical knowledge. Students should follow current world events by consulting a variety of sources. For example, www.bbc.com. You are responsible for all material presented in class and the assigned readings.

Participation. Participation in discussions is very desirable. You are strongly encouraged to participate during class. Do share your ideas, thoughts, and ask questions. If this is difficult for you due to language, shyness, or a disability, *please see me*. The purpose of the class discussion is to enhance understanding; *so, do respect the ideas, thoughts, and opinions of others*. Do note that each member of the class deserves to learn in an environment where they are all treated with the

highest levels of dignity and respect. Abusive, offensive, discriminatory, or otherwise harassing behavior is not permitted.

Attendance and Gadgets. I will take attendance regularly. Arriving late and leaving early disrupts class and shall result in a reduction in your total course score by **2 points for each occurrence**. Everyone is permitted **only one unexcused absence**. Thereafter, every unexcused absence will cost you **2 points**. If you are unable to attend class, please inform me ahead of time (except in case of an emergency or illness). All electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, and similar devices are prohibited during class. Cellphones are to be turned off (or on vibrate) during class, and do not answer phone calls or text messages during class unless there is an emergency. Laptops and tablets may be used in class for note-taking purposes and for the in-class group activities. Please refrain from checking email, web browsing or other activities that are not related to the class as these activities are distracting to other members of the class and are also disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor. If you are using a laptop, sit in the front row and expect to be consulted during lectures to provide ancillary information. Note that you are responsible for all material presented in class and the assigned readings. Thus, if you miss a class, do not email me asking, “What did I miss?”

Exams, Map Exercises, and Assignments. You must submit all assignments and take quizzes at the scheduled time. The instructor will not accept late submissions without a verified excuse; **late submissions will receive zero credit**. Likewise, make-up quizzes will require a verifiable excuse.

- Exams: (Collaborative Testing)
- Quizzes: (Collaborative in class quizzes).
- Assignments: Two core performance tasks.

Why let students take exams and quizzes collaboratively? There are several reasons, most of which have been *explored empirically*. When students discuss questions and possible answers, they intensely engage with the content, which increases the learning potential of an exam/quiz experience. The activity develops cooperation and communication skills. But the reason most often given is that working with other students decreases exam anxiety, particularly for those students whose levels of anxiety compromise their ability to perform on exams.

Grading

This course is worth “300” points.

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| 1. Attendance | 20 pts. |
| 2. Group Participation | 30 pts. |
| 3. Quizzes (3; 10 pts. each) | 30 pts. |
| 4. Online: Film Connection Assignment | 25 pts. |
| 5. Online: Critical Thinking Quizzes (2; 10 points each) | 20 pts. |
| 6. Online: Critical Thinking Assignment | 25 pts. |
| 7. Online: Topic Activity (3; 10 points each) | 30 pts. |
| 8. Exams (3; 40 pts. each) | 120 pts. |



Percentage ranges for letter grades

93-100% = **A**; 90-92% = **A-**; 87-89% = **B+**; 83-86% = **B**; 80-82% = **B-**; 77-79% = **C+**;
73-76% = **C**; 70-72% = **C-**; 67-69% = **D+**; 60-66% = **D**; Below 60% = **F**

University policy does not recognize grades for A+ or D-. An incomplete is not an option in this course. I will only honor a request for an incomplete under the most extraordinary and documented circumstance (such as an illness documented with a doctor's written excuse) which hinders the completion of course requirements.

Requirements for an Excellent Grade: 1) attend class regularly, 2) participate in discussions and class activities, 3) peruse the readings for each chapter, 4) complete and submit all assigned work on time and, 5) prepare adequately for quizzes. Do feel free to email me or drop by my office if you have any difficulties regarding this course; emails should contain ***your name, class, and section number.***

Informed Contribution

Students will get points for contributing to the class when they participate in class dialogues. A quality contribution to class discussions has any or all of these attributes:

1. It contributes new information to the dialogue. For instance, if a student agrees with a colleague's statement, the student must present reasons that were not cited by the initial speaker.
2. It raises a question that generates reflection on the subject.

The informed contribution points earned will be added to the overall course points before the course grade is determined. **Note:** this is subject to a student having attended at least 24 classes.

Special Accommodations. UWSP is committed to providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities and temporary impairments. If you have a disability or acquire a condition during the semester where you need assistance, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center on the 6th floor of Albertson Hall (library) as soon as possible. DATC can be reached at 715-346-3365 or DATC@uwsp.edu. In addition, I will accommodate religious belief according to UWSP 22.03.

Academic Dishonesty UWSP prohibits academic dishonesty. It is your responsibility to understand the issues concerning academic standards, disciplinary procedures, and students' rights and responsibilities at <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx>

Emergency Response Guidance In the event of a medical emergency call 9-1-1 or use nearest Red Emergency Phone. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim. In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room in the building without window exposure See www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans.aspx for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span structures (gyms, pools or large classrooms). In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner and

meet at a safe location more than 200 yards away from the building. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals. Active Shooter/Code React – Run/Escape, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Call 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so. Follow instructions of emergency responders. See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Procedures at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures for details on all emergency responses.

Email. I strongly advise that you check your email regularly. If an unanticipated emergency necessitates a class cancellation or other last-minute change, you will be notified via email. Part of being professional is learning to communicate professionally with your professors and colleagues. The following are some etiquette for sending good Email messages. I will not respond to unprofessional Emails.

1. Begin with a salutation (for example, “Hello, Professor SpongeBob”)
2. Always include a subject heading so that your email does not get put into the spam folder and deleted.
3. Be concise and brief. Lengthy discussions should be done in person.
4. Pay attention to grammar and spelling. Emails are professional communication and should not read like text messages.
5. Be professional and polite. Ask for help rather than make demands or lodge complaints. Negatively-tinged emails usually go over poorly with the recipient. It is almost always better to talk to your instructor in person.

DO NOT send an email about information you can easily find on your own (e.g., something on the syllabus, UWSP home page or the like) or that reads like a text message.

Student Policies:

Materials:

Rubenstein, James. 2013. *Contemporary Human Geography*, (2th Edition). New York: Pearson.

Other materials for the course (syllabus, world outline maps, assignments, etc.) will be made available on D2L.

Tentative Schedule:

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus and schedule when necessary to meet the learning needs of the students, compensate for canceled classes or other unforeseen circumstances.

January 21: Course Overview – *Introductions, Course Policies and, Expectations*

January 23: What is Critical Thinking and How to Improve it
Critical Thinking Quiz I (Jan 23-29)



January 28, 30: The Foundational Concepts of Geographic Thinking (Chapter 1)

February 4, 6: Population Geography (Chapter 2)

Types of Rationale - Explanation and Argument

Quiz 1 (Feb. 6)

February 11, 13: Migration (Chapter 3)

CT, The Very Basics - Argument Recognition and Analysis

Clip: Migration Activity (Due Feb. 14)

February 18, 20: Folk and Popular Culture (Chapter 4)

Critical Thinking Assignment (Due Mar. 5)

February 25, 27: First Exam (Collaborative Testing) and Debrief

March 3, 5: Cultural Geography (Chapters 6 & 7)

Quiz 2 (Mar. 5)

March 10, 12: Political Geography (Chapter 8)

Clip: Political Geography Activity (Due Mar. 13)

March 13-20: Spring Break

March 24 & 26: Documentary "Human Flow".

Film Connections Assignment (Due Apr. 14)

March 31, April 2: Economic Geography/Development (Chapter 9)

April 7, 9: Midterm Exam (Collaborative Testing) and Debrief

Critical Thinking Quiz II (Apr. 9-16)

April 14, 16: Food and Agriculture (Chapter 10)

April 21, 23: Location Matters: Industry (Chapter 11)

Quiz 3 (April 23)

April 28, 30: Urban Geography/Urban Patterns (Chapters 12 & 13)

Group Evaluation Survey (Due April 30)

May 5, 7: Human Environment Interaction (Chapter 14)

Clip: Resources Activity (Due May 8)

Final Exam: Open Class

Wednesday, May 11 from 12:30-14:30.

Important Dates:

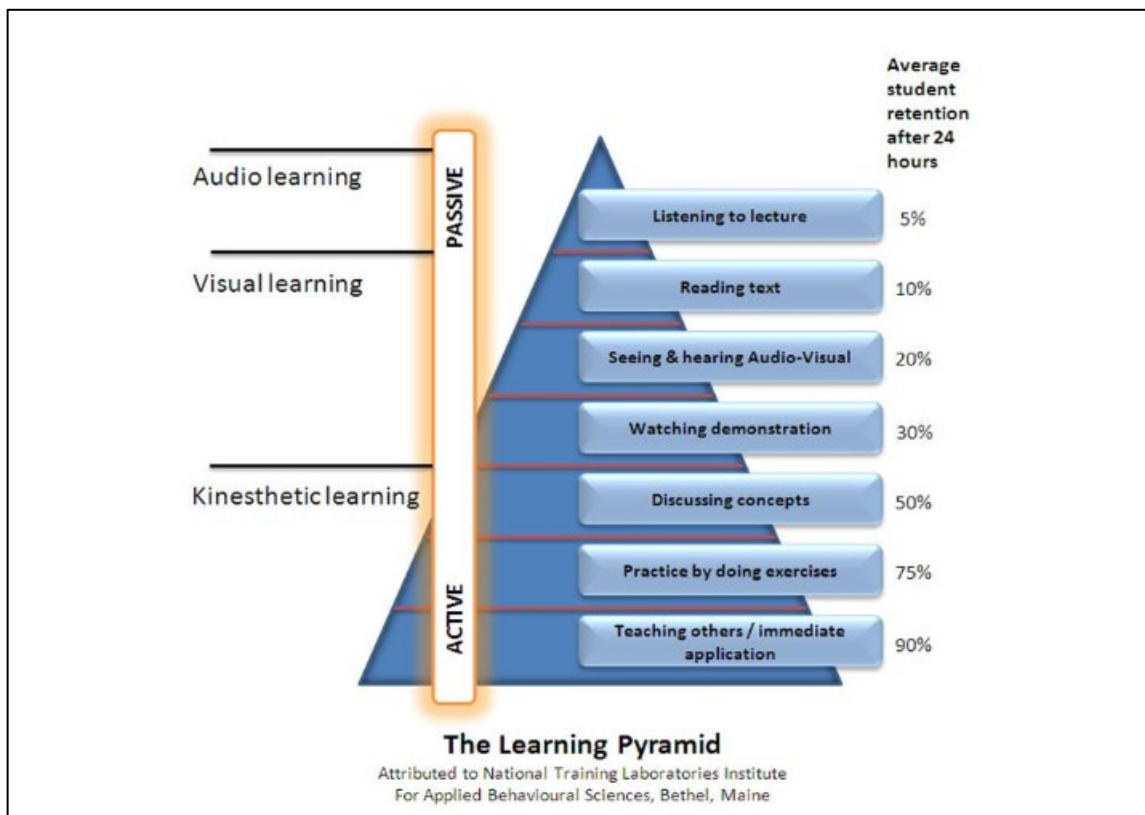
April 3: Last day to drop a 16-week course.

March 13-20: Spring Break.

May 8: Last day of classes.

May 16: Commencement.

Students are strongly encouraged to check their UWSP email and Canvas regularly for information pertaining to the course.



Bligh (1998) gives some evidence for the effectiveness of different teaching methods. In 1954, a similar pyramid with slightly different numbers had appeared in a book, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*, published by the Edgar Dale Dryden Press, New York.