

# Discover Geography – Fall 2015

**32-100-01: 3:30-4:45 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, Advanced Tech. and Sci Hall 142**

## **Prof. Stentor Danielson**

**Office:** Advanced Technology and Science Hall, Room 327 (enter through the Geography main office, Room 319, and go straight back then take a right)

**Phone:** x2564

**Email:** stentor.danielson@sru.edu

**Office hours:** Official office hours are 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday and Wednesday, and 10 a.m.-noon Tuesday and Thursday. My door is generally always open when I am in the office, and I welcome students anytime I'm in.

## **Classmate to contact for missed classes:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## **About this class**

This class will introduce you to the discipline of geography. It is intended as an overview of geography's diverse interests and an exploration of some interesting problems being investigated by geographers today for freshman and sophomore students who have had little exposure to the field beyond memorizing state capitals and *National Geographic* magazine.

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Identify what geographers do, what the major problems investigated by geographers are, and what tools geographers use to find answers
- Read and evaluate maps of the Earth with respect to scale, projection, content, and symbology
- Identify basic GIS functions and their social relevance
- Apply the major theories of physical geography to understanding the natural landscape, including plate tectonics, erosional landforms, the distribution of climates, major bio-geo-chemical cycles, and succession and resilience of ecosystems
- Explain the distribution of people across the Earth on the basis of population and migration factors
- Analyze the way cultural, political, and economic processes have shaped differences between parts of the world
- Understand the role of human diversity with respect to gender, disability, race, and ethnicity in shaping places and people's experiences
- Explain the processes by which humans modify the natural environment (particularly climate change and agriculture), and the ramifications of those changes for human societies
- Identify inequalities among human groups in access to and impacts from their environments

This course addresses the following departmental outcomes:

- Each graduate shall develop the ability to respect and integrate diverse worldviews in problem-solving frameworks. (1.5)
- Each graduate will deliver oral presentations, demonstrating the ability to effectively communicate discipline-specific concepts. (1.1)

- Each graduate will write scholarly papers using acceptable format and organization with proper citations to appropriate literature. (1.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate professionalism and integrity in his/her academic conduct. (1.4)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to develop valid research questions and hypotheses. (2.1)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to apply proper techniques for data acquisition and interpretation in a problem-solving context. (2.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to solve open-ended problems using scientific methodology. (2.3)
- Each graduate will develop the ability to make informed, scientifically-based decisions regarding environmental issues. (2.4)
- Each graduate will learn to read, construct, and comprehend thematic maps and derive perspective output from a map. (3.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge, concepts and techniques from complementary disciplines to solve problems (3.3)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of physical features and patterns of the physical environment (4.1)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of features and patterns of the human environment. (4.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of concepts such as absolute and relative location, proximity, separation, direction, region, hierarchy, density, and dispersion, and methods that are used to describe and analyze spatial patterns. (4.3)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of absolute location systems such as latitude-longitude and alpha-numeric grids. (4.4)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of major spatial features and patterns in the natural environment such as those relating to climate, oceans, soils, landforms, and vegetation. (4.5)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of the major processes, such as evolution, atmospheric circulation, weathering and erosion, ocean currents, plate tectonics, and volcanism that shape patterns in the natural environment. (4.6)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of the major spatial features and patterns in the cultural environment such as language, religion, and agriculture and economic, political, and demographic regions. (4.7)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of the major processes such as settlement, migration, trade, technological development, diffusion, and landscape transformation that shape cultural patterns. (4.8)

And the following university-wide outcomes:

- Communication: Communicate effectively in speech and in writing, using appropriate information sources, presentation formats, and technologies. (1)
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving: Locate, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and ideas from multiple perspectives--mathematical, scientific, and humanistic. Apply this information literacy to contemporary challenges. (2)
- Values and Ethics: Demonstrate an understanding of how the values of personal integrity, cooperative action, and respect for diversity influence one's own behavior and the individual and group behavior of others. (3)

- Social Awareness and Civic Responsibility: Use knowledge of evolving human institutions and of diverse cultural and historical perspectives to interact effectively in a variety of social and political contexts. (4)
- Global Interdependence: Act with an understanding of the cultural, socio-economic, and biological interdependence of planetary life. (5)
- Personal Development: Demonstrate intellectual curiosity, as well as a commitment to wellness, and to emotional and spiritual growth. (6)
- Professional Proficiency: Apply knowledge and skills to meet professional competencies within a specific discipline. (8)

## Assignments

The bulk of this class is divided into six units covering six big issues or problems in geography: Maps, Landscapes, Demography, Environmental Justice, Development, and Climate. Each of the six units will have a reading quiz and a homework exercise. Every two units, you will be given a participation grade and take a test. There will also be a cumulative final exam.

### 1. Reading quizzes

Each unit will have a reading quiz, based on a series of readings posted online. You will need to log on to D2L and complete the quiz there before the beginning of the first class for that unit. This is to ensure that everyone has done the reading. Quizzes are open-book – in fact, you are encouraged to consult the reading as you take the quiz to ensure you have the correct answers. There is no time limit on the quizzes, so you may work on it piecemeal over multiple days, as long as it is completed by the deadline. There will be no make-ups or extensions on quizzes.

### 2. Homeworks

At the beginning of each unit, I will post a homework exercise on D2L. This exercise will typically require using websites or library materials beyond what we use in class to find more information. Homeworks must be submitted by the beginning of the class day **one week after the end of the unit**. That is, once we finish a unit, you have one additional week to finish the corresponding homework. (When a unit is immediately followed by a test, the test day counts as the end of the unit.) Homeworks may be submitted late, but your grade will be reduced by 2 points out of 50 for each 24 hour period or part thereof a homework is late.

There are six homework assignments. Your final grade will be based on your **best five** homework scores – that is, I will drop your lowest homework grade.

### 3. Participation

There are two ways to earn a participation grade: in-class exercises, or writing the alternative essay. Class periods in this course will consist of some mix of lecture and group work. Whenever there is group work in class, I will ask you to hand in what you came up with. Your participation grade will be an average of your scores on all of the group work for two units (the exact number of things you hand in will vary from unit to unit). Every two units, you get one free absence that will not take points off your score. In most cases, simply making an honest effort will be sufficient to get full credit for classwork. If you miss a class period in which classwork was collected, you will receive a zero for that item. Classwork cannot be made up, nor can you receive credit for a day you missed – no matter how good your excuse is or how far in advance you informed me.

If you miss more than one class, you may choose to write the alternative essay for your participation grade instead. The topic for the alternative essay will be posted to D2L by the beginning of the two units it covers. If you write the alternative essay, your essay grade will replace whatever grade you would otherwise have from classwork. The essay completely replaces *all* classwork for those two units, not just the individual class session you may have missed. Alternative essays must be at least 700 words long, with proper APA citations for all sources used. The alternative essay is due in class the day after the test. Your grade will be reduced by 2 points out of 50 for each 24 hour period or part thereof it is late.

#### 4. Tests

Every two units, there will be a test covering the key facts and theories of the units. Material for the test will be mostly based on the things we go over in class. Tests will be multiple-choice, with no penalty for a wrong guess. Make-up tests will generally only be given for documented, unforeseeable emergencies.

Tests will be done in a “pyramid” style. This means that during the first 30 minutes of the test day, you will take the test by yourself without your notes (the traditional test-taking style). During the remaining 20 minutes of the class, you will re-take the same test, but with open notes, and the opportunity to confer with any of your classmates. The first (individual, closed-notes) portion of the test will count for twice as much as the second (group, open-notes) portion.

#### 5. Final exam

The final exam will cover material from the entire semester. The format will be similar to the regular tests.

### Grading

The final grade for this class will consist of:

Reading quizzes	150 pts (25 pts each)	15% (2.5% each)
Homeworks	250 pts (50 pts each)	25% (5% each)
Participation	150 pts (50 pts each)	15% (5% each)
Regular tests	270 pts (90 pts each)	27% (9% each)
Final exam	180 pts	18%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1000 pts</i>	<i>100%</i>

In addition to the normal assignments, you have the opportunity to hand in **one** extra credit assignment, worth up to 25 additional points (2.5% of your final grade). To do an extra credit assignment, you must attend a campus event that connects in some way to what we have studied in class. The event may be a speaker, or a film showing, or a panel discussion, or a workshop, or any other special event occurring outside normal class time or normal club/organization meetings. You will then write an essay of approximately 750 words connecting the event to an important concept or theory that we learned in class. Did the event deepen your understanding of the concept? Did understanding the concept give you an added perspective on the event? Did the event present material that contradicts what we learned in class – and if so, who do you think is correct? Your essay must clearly state the title, location, and date/time of the event you attended. Extra credit essays are due anytime before the final exam.

Your grade in this class is meant to be a measurement of how well you understand the course material. It is not a measure of your effort, or your worth as a person, or what grade you “need.” I encourage you to share concerns about your grades with me. However, any arguments about changing a grade must show why your original grade poorly reflects your actual understanding of the material. I do not use curves when grading, though I do round grades to the nearest whole percent. I would be thrilled if everyone earned an A in the class, but I do intend to make the work challenging. Remember that a “C” is intended to be an “average” grade, representing a medium level of understanding of all of the material that we will cover.

The final grade for the class will use the traditional grading scale:

100%-90%	A
89%-80%	B
79%-70%	C
69%-55%	D
54% and less	F

### **Attendance and Preparation**

Instead of asking you to buy an expensive textbook, I have elected to give you a selection of readings from the Internet. These readings are meant to prime you for our work in class, not to comprehensively cover everything that I will want you to learn. I expect every student to have read the readings listed for a given unit before coming to class.

Discussions, small group work, and Socratic (question and answer) methods will be used in this class. Participation in these activities is necessary for learning, and I believe that every student who is genuinely engaged with the material will have something to contribute. At the same time, the class must be a safe place for everyone to speak out. Comments or behavior that devalue or disparage your classmates or other members of society will absolutely not be tolerated, but every substantive geographical idea will be open to evaluation and critique.

You are expected to take effective notes during all class activities. Because of the dynamic nature of the class, I cannot provide notes to students who miss class, so as soon as possible you should find a friend or two in the class to share notes with. I will place all of my PowerPoint presentations (which consist mostly of images and maps) on D2L for your reference.

I assume that all members of this class are adults who have chosen to take this class because you are interested in learning about geography. Therefore, behavior that is disruptive to your own learning or that of others will not be tolerated, and you will be asked to leave. Such behavior includes: eating, smoking, sleeping, working on work for other classes or personal business, talking about topics other than geography, and the use of non-approved electronic devices (iPods, laptops, video games, cell phones, etc.).

### **Special Needs**

Your ability to master the class material should not be hindered by anything other than your own effort. If you have a disability, health issue, outside responsibility, or other concern that may affect your ability to succeed in this class, do not hesitate to contact me or the university’s Office for Students with Disabilities (738-4877, linda.quidone@sru.edu, 122 Bailey Library), and we will work together to find

an accommodation for you.

Slippery Rock University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: <http://www.sru.edu/offices/diversity-and-equal-opportunity/sexual-misconduct-and-victim-resources>.

### **E-Reserves and D2L**

I will use the library's Electronic Reserve system (<http://doculib.sru.edu/eres/default.aspx>) to distribute readings, and the Desire2Learn site (<http://sru.desire2learn.com>) to post assignments, administer quizzes, and send messages about the class. You should make sure that you are able to access the Electronic Reserves and to log in to the class's D2L site. It is your responsibility to contact the IT office (1-866-766-5962) or library (724-738-2641) if you have a problem. You are also responsible for checking your sru.edu email account daily, as I will be sending class emails through D2L to those addresses.

### **Academic Honesty**

Cheating (any method for getting the correct answers other than knowing the material yourself) and plagiarism (representing others' work as your own) will not be tolerated, and I will be alert for signs of both. In your homework and alternative essays, any idea that you take from any person other than yourself must be properly cited, and any words or phrases that you take from others must be clearly marked as quotations. You may discuss ideas with your classmates, or get help proofreading, but all of the writing must be your own. On the first instance of cheating or plagiarism, you will receive a zero for that assignment. On the second instance, you will receive a zero for the course. All instances of cheating or plagiarism will also be reported to Judicial Programs. Review the section in your Student Handbook on Academic Honesty for a more detailed explanation of the university's procedures for handling cheating and plagiarism.

### **Changes**

While I do not expect much to change about this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes and will notify students of them in class, through D2L, and/or by email.

## **Schedule of Topics and Readings**

### **Unit 0: What is Geography?**

*Readings:*

1. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, What is Geography?  
<http://tinyurl.com/285znvr>

Quiz due: None

Homework due: None

### Unit 1: Maps

Readings:

1. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 2 parts a-e. <http://tinyurl.com/2ejlro7>
2. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 6 parts h and i. <http://tinyurl.com/4xuxufn>
3. Carlos A. Furuti, Cartographical map projections, Introduction, Fitting Map to Purpose, and Projections at Work sections. <http://tinyurl.com/kopj6o>
4. Sutton, Dassau, and Sutton, *A Gentle Introduction to GIS*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5. <http://tinyurl.com/y8fzrnt>

Quiz due: September 1

Homework due: September 17

### Unit 2: Landscapes

Readings:

1. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 10 parts h, i, k, and l. <http://tinyurl.com/nfobpv>
2. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 10 parts ad, ae, and af. <http://tinyurl.com/nfobpv>
3. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 9 parts j, o, p, q, r, and s. <http://tinyurl.com/l84gxt>
4. Garry Peterson, The adaptive cycle <http://tinyurl.com/3bbyxcf>
5. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Cultural Landscapes. <http://tinyurl.com/2d8gb9n>
6. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Adaptation. <http://tinyurl.com/23eath7>

Quiz due: September 15

Homework due: October 8

### Unit 3: Demography

Readings:

1. United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision*. <http://tinyurl.com/owo2gbj>
2. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Population. <http://tinyurl.com/2cfeycq>
3. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Migration. <http://tinyurl.com/236pysk>
4. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Agriculture. <http://tinyurl.com/2fqfbpk>

Quiz due: October 1

Homework due: October 20

### Unit 4: Environmental Justice

Readings:

1. Bullard et al, *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty*, executive summary only <http://tinyurl.com/qfyje5w>
2. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Disability. <http://tinyurl.com/2anyr9a>
3. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Race and Ethnicity. <http://tinyurl.com/2ez567u>
4. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Gender and Sexuality. <http://tinyurl.com/2culuxj>
5. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Risks and Vulnerability. <http://tinyurl.com/4xn5xmv>
6. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Environmental Justice.

<http://tinyurl.com/25hjr48>

Quiz due: October 15

Homework due: November 5

### Unit 5: Economic Development

Readings:

1. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Colonialism. <http://tinyurl.com/2aj65mz>
2. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Development. <http://tinyurl.com/22s38ta>
3. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Resources. <http://tinyurl.com/24r5jqv>
4. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Sustainability. <http://tinyurl.com/3jxsxkf>

Quiz due: November 3

Homework due: November 19

### Unit 6: Climate and Climate Change

Readings:

1. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 7 parts m, n, p, and x. <http://tinyurl.com/lhdaj6>
2. Michael Pidwirny, *Fundamentals*, Chapter 8, parts c, e, g, and q. <http://tinyurl.com/3ly7687>
3. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Fifth Assessment Report, Summary for Policymakers*. <http://tinyurl.com/q37hnxo>
4. Stentor Danielson, *Overview of Human Geography*, Environmental Perception. <http://tinyurl.com/24uukyr>
5. National Research Council, *America's Climate Choices*, Chapter 5. <http://tinyurl.com/m2xwm7j>

Quiz due: November 17

Homework due: December 8

	Date	Topic	Assignments Due
T	Aug 25	<b>First day</b>	
R	Aug 27	<b>Geographical questions</b>	
T	Sep 1	<b>Maps: Maps</b>	Quiz 1 - Maps
R	Sep 3	<b>Maps: Projections</b>	
T	Sep 8	<b>Maps: Symbology</b>	
R	Sep 10	<b>Maps: GIS</b>	
T	Sep 15	<b>Landscapes: Plate Tectonics</b>	Quiz 2 - Landscapes
R	Sep 17	<b>Landscapes: Glacial Landscapes</b>	Homework 1 - Maps
T	Sep 22	<b>Landscapes: Biogeography</b>	
R	Sep 24	<b>Landscapes: Cultural Landscapes</b>	
T	Sep 29	<b>Test 1</b>	TEST 1
R	Oct 1	<b>Demography: Population</b>	Quiz 3 - Demography
T	Oct 6	No Class – Fall Break	--
R	Oct 8	<b>Demography: Migration</b>	Homework 2 - Landscapes



T	Oct 13	<b>Demography: Agriculture</b>	
R	Oct 15	<b>Env Justice: What is Env Justice?</b>	Quiz 4 – Env Justice
T	Oct 20	<b>Env Justice: Axes of Inequality I</b>	Homework 3 - Demography
R	Oct 22	<b>Env Justice: Axes of Inequality II</b>	
T	Oct 27	<b>Env Justice: Theories of Justice</b>	
R	Oct 29	<b>TEST 2</b>	TEST 2
T	Nov 3	<b>Development: The World Economy</b>	Quiz 5 - Development
R	Nov 5	<b>Development: Colonialism</b>	Homework 4 – Env Justice
T	Nov 10	<b>Development: Solutions</b>	
R	Nov 12	<b>Development: Sustainability</b>	
T	Nov 17	<b>Climate: Climatology</b>	Quiz 6 - Climate
R	Nov 19	<b>Climate: Climate Change</b>	Homework 5 - Development
T	Nov 24	<b>Climate: Environmental Perception</b>	
R	Nov 26	No Class – Thanksgiving Break	--
T	Dec 1	<b>Climate: Climate Policy</b>	
R	Dec 3	<b>TEST 3</b>	TEST 3
T	Dec 8	<b>FINAL EXAM, 1:00-3:00 p.m.</b>	FINAL EXAM, Homework 6 - Climate