Geography 405: Human-Environment Geography
Updated January 24, 2017 (any changes will be announced in class and posted online)
Dr. Jennifer Brewer -- Spring 2017
MWF 10:10-11:00 am -- 103 Morrill

-Course Objectives-
This course introduces human-environment relations as a central topic of geographic study. Readings, lecture, discussion, films, and other assignments familiarize students with complementarity between human-environment and spatial relations definitions of our discipline, social and biophysical sciences, and theory and application. We will consider human populations, markets, institutions, ethics, hazards, political economy, the social construction of nature, and a series of case studies linking core concepts with observations from local to international scales.

Upon completion of this course, students should:
- Understand how the discipline of geography links social and biophysical sciences
- Demonstrate familiarity with key concepts and processes relating to population dynamics, environmental markets, institutions and commons, environmental hazards, political economy of human-environment relations, and social construction of nature.
- Analyze human-environment problems from an epistemologically integrated and cross-scalar perspective
- Relate particular cases to generalizable theory.

-Readings-
Main text (required!): 
Additional readings will be provided.

- General Course Topics –

Unit I – Key Concepts & Core Approaches
✓ Introductions & origins
✓ Human population
✓ Markets
✓ Institutions
✓ Ethics
✓ Hazards
✓ Political economy
✓ Social construction

Test 1

Unit II – Case Studies
Test 2

Unit III – Individual Projects

-Student projects & presentations-

-Class Policies-

My office hours and contacts:

I am often available to meet with students after our class, if that happens to fit your schedule. Or you can come to my office at 102B Huddleston Hall. Enter through the Geography suite on the east end of the building. I am often (but not always!) available there between 11:15 and 12:30 MWF, and I can also meet other times. I am also generally available to meet by phone. It is always best to schedule an appointment, especially if your issue is time-sensitive.

My e-mail is jennifer.brewer@unh.edu. Like many people, my inbox is often very full. If you want me to notice your message promptly, you might begin your message subject line with “GEOG 405.” I often answer within a few hours, but if you don’t hear back within 48 hours, feel free to re-send.

Attendance:

In this class, as in most others, there is a clear correlation between attendance and grades. I may occasionally take attendance, conduct in-class assignments or pop quizzes, or verbally announce changes to the course schedule, assignments, or tests. If you miss any part of class, it is your responsibility to check with other students to find out what you missed, and ask to borrow notes. If you do not attend class, you should not expect a good grade, or expect me to make you aware of any changes in content or scheduling.

I rarely allow make-ups of missed tests, exams, or missed in-class or homework assignments, unless you have a letter from a UNH Dean, DSS, or SHARP. UNH club activities, conferences, job interviews, or field trips for other classes do not necessarily qualify for an excused absence, and I also cannot guarantee make-ups for brief illnesses. On the other hand, if you have a serious family or health emergency, especially one that extends over some period of time, I would hope to accommodate, because I realize that such issues are sometimes more important than school, so feel free to let me know of such issues as far in advance as possible, and I will probably suggest you get a letter from the Dean.

Religious holidays are an exception. If I inadvertently schedule a test, in-class assignment, or due date on a holiday, or a test or due date on the day immediately following a
holiday, please don’t hesitate to point it out immediately so I can reschedule or make alternate arrangements.

I strongly recommend that in the first few days of class, you get to know a few people in class, and exchange contact information, in case you need to borrow notes, ask for missed information, or help each other to study. This may require talking to people you don’t know, which may feel intimidating, but is among the skill set of most successful working professionals. On the other hand, if someone asks you for more than a couple days of notes, particularly if there seem to be no extenuating circumstances, you can certainly refuse.

**Courtesy:**

If you do not intend to participate fully and actively in your own learning, and help create a supportive learning atmosphere for other students, you do not belong in this class. To ensure a climate of learning for all, disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in exclusion (removal) from this class. Arriving late or leaving early without suitable explanation and/or apology are rude and are unacceptable; such behavior can be distracting to the instructor and students. Congruent with campus policy, the following distracting activities are not appropriate during in this class and will not be tolerated: sleeping, inappropriate talking/socializing, reading non-class materials, voice or text use of digital devices such as cell phones, music players, laptops, or other distractions.

It is my job to provide you with college level educational content, not to talk aloud to myself while you check messages or surf the internet. Old fashioned pen or pencil and paper are less distracting to yourself, to me, and to others. For these reasons, I do not allow use of laptops or other electronic devices during class, not even silently for note taking -- unless you sign a release that commits to sitting in the front row and using it only for taking notes. That release is available online if you wish to sign it and e-mail it to me.

**I do not allow audio or video recording or taking pictures of class without my permission.** In the rare event that you need to keep your cell on for some emergency purpose (such as a family health matter), let me know and put it in silent mode.

**Grading:**

We will have at least two quizzes, at least two tests, several exercises, ongoing lectures and discussion, and individual projects. Your final grade is calculated as follows:

- Quizzes: 10%
- Tests: 25%
- Exercises and other assignments (in or out of class): 35%
- Participation: 20%
- Individual project: 10%
Note that some assignments within each category may be weighted more or less heavily than others, and I reserve the right to schedule unannounced in-class exercises. Tests and quizzes may cover any and all class materials – readings, lecture, films, exercises, or discussion. The participation grade considers attendance, respectful and thoughtful participation in discussion, and relevance of contributions to course material.

Per the following schedule, our final exam date is **Wednesday May 17 at 10:30-12:30**
http://www.unh.edu/registrar/general-information/final-exams/spring-2017/pdfs/spring-2017-final-exams.pdf . We will likely meet on this date, either for a test or individual presentations.

I reserve the right to curve grading scales up, but not down. **If there is no curve, the standard grade distribution is as follows.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 and up</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Investing in your own learning:**

If you aren’t quite getting the grades you’d like, you are not alone! Many of us struggle at some point with test anxiety, note taking, organizing our time/thoughts/priorities, or just feeling overwhelmed. Do NOT hesitate to ask for help at the UNH Center for Academic Resources www.cfar.unh.edu. They offer free academic support via one-on-one mentoring, small group workshops and resources for subject area tutoring.

If you encounter words in lecture or reading that you don’t understand, I strongly suggest that you jot them down to look up in a dictionary. Building your vocabulary is a lifelong skill and asset that will serve you well as a student, on the job market, and in the workplace.

**Note taking:**

Taking notes is a basic skill for life and learning. Research shows that taking notes by hand instead of electronically improves learning outcomes. In this course, I find that many students find it helpful to draw diagrams. The following website has some tips for notetaking, but most people find they have to develop their own individualized approach and style:

http://education.exeter.ac.uk/dll/studyskills/note_taking_skills.htm

**Course website:**

I use Canvas MyCourses to post additional readings, assignments, and grades, and to collect out-of-class assignments. If you encounter difficulties with the website, it is best to contact IT help https://itsupport.unh.edu/ (though they are not necessarily available evenings or weekends). There are also online website help resources at https://www.unh.edu/it/kb/. These folks are more familiar than I with the intricacies and glitches of the software, and may be more immediately available.
**Academic integrity:**

Students in this class are bound to the university policy on academic honesty linked here: [http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/academic-honesty](http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/academic-honesty). Violation of this policy may result in course failure. The policy applies to all assignments, including any extra credit options. I take these issues seriously and will take action when warranted. Students who have cheated, plagiarized, lied, or misrepresented the truth in my classes later wished they hadn’t.

You may find this college tutorial on plagiarism to be helpful: [http://Cola.unh.edu/plagiarism-tutorial-0](http://Cola.unh.edu/plagiarism-tutorial-0). If you have ANY questions about whether something constitutes an academic integrity violation, ASK. I view such issues through the lens of fairness and respect, considering the considerable effort put forth by most students and instructors. If you violate this policy, you lower the value of all our academic diplomas, of this university as a commons for social learning, and the larger civic merit of higher education. That is a long term social cost, not just an individual ethical breach.

**Equity and accessibility:**

If you have a special need or disability, even a minor one, and if you desire appropriate accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services to provide me with the necessary documentation in advance of any anticipated need [http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/).

Students in this class are expected to conform with university policies on discrimination and harassment [http://unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/affirmative-action-and-equity-policies](http://unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/affirmative-action-and-equity-policies).

**Personal issues:**

Most people encounter some kind of mental health issue over the course of our lives, particularly during college or other periods of transition. Your tuition and fees already pay for campus counseling resources, so please don’t hesitate to contact them for any reason, even just for help managing your time or the inevitable stress of school [https://www.unh.edu/counseling-center/homepage](https://www.unh.edu/counseling-center/homepage). You can also contact them if you are concerned about another student.

Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) provides free and confidential advocacy and direct services to survivors [https://www.unh.edu/sharpp](https://www.unh.edu/sharpp).

**Unforeseen emergencies:**

If some unforeseen emergency conflicts with our class meeting or exams, such as a weather event or public health or safety issue, you can expect general information to be provided by the university. In such an event, you may also receive an e-mail from me with follow-up information about any necessary rescheduling, so you’ll want to be attentive for any such e-mail communications.