GEOG 581O.1BB: Human Geography (Fall 2017)

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Darjeeling, India, Picture by Alasdair Drysdale

Alasdair Drysdale
Professor Emeritus
Department of Geography
drysdale@icloud.com
drysdale@unh.edu

Course description

This is a DISCOVERY (Social Science) course.

Human Geography focuses on human-environment interactions, the meaning of place, the significance of location, processes of regionalization, the movement of people, goods and ideas in geographic space, the interactions
and connections between places, and variations in the spatial distribution of humans and their cultural, economic and other activities.

Above all, this course will encourage you to pose one central, open-ended question: why are things where they are in geographic space? That, in turn, leads us to ask corollary questions: what forces shape the cultural landscape and produce the complex geographic mosaic of languages, religions, and other cultural identifiers? To what degree are human activities constrained by the physical environment in which they occur? What is the role of technology in overcoming these constraints and in overcoming the frictional effects of distance? Do place, location and distance matter any more?

**Textbook**


**Online specifics**

Unlike a traditional face-to-face course, this course will be taught exclusively online, with no scheduled classroom or face-to-face meetings. Thus, you have the flexibility of accessing course materials 24 hours a day and can complete the course on your own time. However, it is your responsibility to cover specific coursework and complete assignments before each scheduled exam. Please be diligent about coursework because you will quickly be overwhelmed if you procrastinate. I will be monitoring how much time each person spends online so will have a pretty good idea of what you are doing.

All lectures will be recorded and made available incrementally through the course home page. Although I have the option to record lectures in front of a webcam, I prefer to record only my voice, along with the presentation slides.

Whereas a traditional classroom lecture might last 50 minutes (MWF) or 1
hour and 20 minutes (TR), the material here is divided into many much smaller units because research shows that this enhances absorption. Some units may be as brief as 10 minutes, others are longer, depending on the topic. You can simply go through the units (in sequence) at your own pace, although I recommend taking frequent breaks. You can, of course, go back over a unit, or even a specific section of one, if you don’t understand something or need to review material. The only requirement is that you finish listening to all of the lectures for each unit before the test date.

Altogether, you will have to listen to approximately 35 hours of lecture material over the course of the semester—roughly equivalent to lecture time if the class met in a traditional in-person setting. Although you have a lot of flexibility, a good rule of thumb would be to listen to 2-3 hours of lectures every week to keep on track.

**Technical support**

Please understand that I am unable to provide technical support. If you have problems, call 603.862.4242 Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 4:30 pm or by getting help through these links:

http://www.unh.edu/it/service/get-help

**Office Hours**

Because this is an online course, I do not hold physical office hours on campus. In fact, I am not even in New Hampshire—I will be teaching from Santa Cruz, CA! However, I can be accessed by email, preferably though my private email address (drysdale@icloud.com) although I do have a UNH email account (drysdale@unh.edu). If you have a question or would like to discuss something, don’t hesitate to contact me. If you email me, please remember to include GEOG 581 in the header so that your message isn’t treated as junk mail. I will generally answer emails between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm PST, Monday-Friday, and will try to get back to you promptly,
except at the weekend.

**Center for Academic Resources (CFAR)**

UNH’s Center for Academic Resources (Smith Hall, Second Floor, 3 Garrison Avenue, (603) 862-3698, cfar.sss@unh.edu) provides numerous resources to help you meet your academic goals, including drop-in tutoring and help with time management, note taking, studying, and test taking. I particularly recommend you consult the Study Tips and Tools that CFAR provides online. You will find these resources extremely helpful.

**Office of Disability Services**

The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you have questions about the process, please contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 or disability.office@unh.edu. If you are registered with DSS, and eligible for accommodations that you would like to utilize in this course, please forward that information to me in a timely manner so that we can meet privately in my office to review those accommodations.

**Emotional or Mental Health Distress**

Your academic success in this course is very important to me. If, during the semester, you find emotional or mental health issues are affecting that success, please contact the University’s Counseling Center (3rd fl, Smith Hall; 603 862-2090/TTY: 7-1-1) which provides counseling appointments and other mental health services.

**Academic misconduct**

Please note that the University has no tolerance for students who break the University Academic Honesty Policy. Please see the 2016-17 Students Rights,
All students are expected to abide by these rules.

**Plagiarism**, misrepresentation, and cheating are academic crimes. Never:

- Turn in an assignment that you did not write or complete yourself
- Turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class
- Cheat on an exam.

If you do so, any of these actions may result in a failing grade for the class, and further ramifications at the University level. Please ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes academic honesty and cheating.

**Course requirements:**

**A. Three exams (combined 60% of your grade):**

There will be three, non-cumulative, timed online tests. Tests will vary in nature, depending on the nature of the material covered in the previous unit. The first one, for example, will consist primarily of written short answer questions, while the second will have mostly MC and TF questions. The tests will consist of two distinct parts. Part A requires you to sign an honor statement that you will complete the test on your own and without any assistance of any kind. Part B will have the actual questions. The test will be made available ONLY between 1:00 pm and 11:59 pm on the day of the test. You may do the test any time during that window, but once you start you must complete it within the allowed time. Please note: recorded lectures will ONLY be available until midnight on the day before the test, so you must finish listening to them before the day of the test. The test dates are as follows:
Make-up tests can only be given for extraordinary reasons (for example, documented illness) and only if that has been agreed before the test.

**B. Three papers (combined 40 percent of your grade).**

These are designed to promote the goals of Discovery: inspire curiosity, develop understanding and perspective taking, clarify standards of thinking, and communicate the result of your investigation effectively. In every instance, you MUST incorporate the concepts and vocabulary of human geography.

Topics

You must chose one topic from each of the three topic categories, A-C. You MUST submit your papers in that order, so all of the category A papers will be submitted at the same time, etc:

Category A

1. Where does the food I eat originally come from?
   Select five raw or minimally processed foods or beverages from your typical daily diet (for example, coffee, wheat, bananas, potatoes, chili peppers) and describe where these items originated in the world or were domesticated geographically and how they spread to North America. The concepts of spatial diffusion discussed in class should provide the theoretical framework for your paper.

   **OR**

2. The geographical spread of a disease
   Select a disease that has emerged relatively recently and has or is
beginning to spread regionally or globally and describe its geographic origin and spatial diffusion, using the spatial diffusion concepts discussed in class. Examples include HIV-AIDS, Ebola, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), or the latest strain of bird flu (H7N9).

Category B

3. Profile the demography of one country of your choice, assessing where you believe it falls on the demographic transition continuum. Your paper should incorporate such measures as crude birth and death rates, infant mortality rate, fertility rate, age and sex composition, and contraceptive prevalence rate. It should include charts and graphs showing change through time and age-sex pyramids.

OR

4. Migration as a spatial process: a case study.
This paper should focus on the migration of a particular ethnic group or community from one place to another (for example, Somalis to Lewiston-Auburn, Ethiopians to Washington DC, Cambodians to Lowell, Algerians to France, Pakistanis to the United Kingdom). Your paper must incorporate and evaluate migration concepts and theories discussed in class.

Category C

5. Landscapes of the dead.
Every culture inscribes the landscape it inhabits with its values, beliefs, preferences, and ideals. This extends even to burial customs: in some cultures, the dead are buried, in others they are cremated; in some corpses are left for vultures, in others graves are ornately decorated. Please select three very different cultures (for example, Tibetan Buddhists, Indian Parsees, New Orleans Catholics, Saudi Arabian...
Muslims) and describe how the way they dispose of the dead is visible in the cultural landscape.

OR

6. Profile the electoral geography of one state in the US. Electoral behavior has a strong spatial component, evident in maps showing voting preferences by town, county, and even census tract. These patterns are fairly predictable and consistent over time. In your paper, you should describe and analyze these patterns in one state. Your task will be easier if you select a large and diverse state, such as California, New York, Texas, or Florida. You should incorporate statistical data and include relevant maps.

Evaluation

Your paper will be graded according to a rubric, which you should download from the course homepage before you begin writing your paper. I strongly suggest you plan to have a rough draft of your paper ready before the deadline in order to have ample time for polishing and rewriting.

Plagiarism

Please familiarize yourself with the UNH policy on plagiarism. This is defined on page 23-24 of University of New Hampshire Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities:

http://unh.edu/vpsas/sites/unh.edu.vpsas/files/media/srrr1516.pdf

09.3 Plagiarism

The unattributed use of the ideas, evidence, or words of another person, or the conveying of the false impression that the arguments and writing in a paper are the student’s own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the
1. The acquisition by purchase or otherwise of a part or the whole of a piece of work which is represented as the student’s own;

2. The representation of the ideas, data, or writing of another person as the student’s own work, even though some wording, methods of citation, or arrangement of evidence, ideas, or arguments have been altered;

3. Concealment of the true sources of information, ideas, or argument in any piece of work

Even if you think you understand what constitutes plagiarism, I recommend you consult this web page for excellent examples of what is and isn’t acceptable:

http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

Requirements

Please note that you must submit your paper electronically. It will be checked by VeriCite plagiarism detection software. You have been warned: don’t plagiarize, both because it’s wrong and because you will be caught. Please check this link for a student guide to submitting papers through VeriCite:


Please make sure your paper conforms with ALL of these requirements:

- Each paper should be approximately 1,250 words of text (roughly 5 pages), excluding maps, charts, illustrations, and bibliography
- Double-spaced, with 1” margins
- 12 pt font
- Pages must be numbered
• MLA style citations and bibliography
• Appropriate illustrations/maps/figures
• Your bibliography should include a separate list of the specific resources you have used in your research. I want to see both the sources and separately where those sources were generated (for example, which indexes, search engines, or online databases you used).
• Papers turned in late will be reduced in grade by two letters after initial evaluation (i.e. a B would become a D).

Deadlines

September 15th: Sign up for all THREE topics

October 13th: Category A paper due

November 17th: Category B paper due

December 8th: Category C paper due

Resources for your research

Compiling a list of possible sources may be the most important aspect of your research and will to a considerable extent determine the quality your paper. Investing time at this stage is critical. These resources may be helpful to you:

Before you compile your bibliography, I highly recommend you consult this website:

http://www.library.unh.edu/reference/citation.shtml

One fail-safe way of ensuring that your bibliography is properly formatted is to enter your sources online at:

http://www.easybib.com/
UNH library site:
http://www.library.unh.edu/

Library catalog
http://library.unh.edu/

Recommended databases for identifying articles relating to course content. See the UNH Library Databases page at:
http://www.library.unh.edu/find/databases

Information on how to get materials the library does not own:
http://www.library.unh.edu/services/borrow-renew/other-libraries

Guide to evaluating web sites and information for academic quality:
http://olinuris.library.cornell.edu/ref/research/webeval.html

Plagiarism: what it is and how to avoid it. Take the quiz:
http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml

Information on how to contact a librarian for assistance:
http://www.library.unh.edu/research-support/ask-a-librarian

Outline:

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