**GEOG 310: Thinking Geographically**

Monday, Wednesday 4:00-5:15

Chichester G02

**Instructor**: Dr. David S. Hardin, Ph.D.

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**Student Hours:** MW 2:00-4:00, or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course seeks to impart a geographic perspective on the world, including the examination of global patterns and networks of economic interdependence. The essential elements of location, site and situation, movement and connections, regional organization, and human-environmental interaction will be discussed to gain an understanding of geographic inquiry. Students will learn aspects of spatial thinking, particularly how people perceive, organize, and remember geographic information. Students will develop and apply a set of geographic skills, with a significant portion of examples being Virginia and economic focused. How geography links with economics, history, natural sciences, and the humanities will also be explored. Co-requisite: HIST 370 (Virginia Studies) or permission of instructor. 3 credits.

**Required Texts**

**Barnes & Noble Bookstore:**

* DeBlij, Harm. Why Geography Matters More Than Ever. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN 978-0-19-991374-9
* *The Nystrom Junior Geographer Atlas*. Indianapolis, IN: Herff Jones, Inc. 2003. ISBN 978-0-7825-0885-7

**Online:**

* Carstensen, Morrill, and Enedy. *An Atlas of Virginia*. Virginia Geographic Alliance, ISBN 0-9722303-0-0 (I should have enough hard copies for everyone, though!)

**To be obtained by student:**

* Virginia State Highway Map (from any tourism office (Farmville’s might have some) or rest stop or ordered online from VDOT (<http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/maporder.asp>)

**Other Materials:**

* You should obtain a three-ring binder to hold all of the material I will hand out during the course and to bring that binder to each class. It also is advisable to make at least draft color copies of the maps used in lectures for you to refer to during lectures.
* Colored pens or pencils are strongly advised for making notes on maps and for drawing diagrams

Geography is known as the *spatial* science, or more simply, a discipline concerned with the use of the earth’s surface. As such, we start by noting an obvious fact – the earth is a big topic of study. From the warm equatorial tropics to the frigid polar ice caps, the earth has considerable environmental diversity. Likewise, how people interact with, organize, govern, move around in, and exploit the environment differs considerably from place to place and culture to culture. This course will focus on the foundations of geography and in turn explore a wide range of topics.

Just walking through the streets of Farmville one can quickly observe geographic details and cultural diversity. There is an Islamic center along with a host of churches representing a variety of Christian groups. Buildings reveal architectural styles and technologies that were popular at different periods of time. Restaurants show Italian, Chinese, Mexican, and popular American culture in McDonalds and Burger King. The storefront of Amish Originals displays a number of folk cultural artifacts. The impress of central authority is evident in the courthouse, federal building, post office and almost ubiquitous presence of the American flag. Challenges to that authority can be seen at the Confederate Monument, signs marking Lee’s retreat, and the Moton Museum.

The physical landscape is also important to understanding human settlement of the area. The mild humid subtropical climate and weathered soils provided the conditions conducive for the production of tobacco, corn, sorghum, and soybeans. Because of the climate, the Appomattox River had enough water flow for small boats to carry tobacco to Petersburg, where the cash crop could then be shipped via the James River and the Chesapeake Bay to markets in Europe. The coming of the railroad provided a transportation link that was so important that the county seat eventually moved north from Worsham to Farmville. Early residents divided the land based on the natural features in the area like hills, rock outcroppings, streams, and large trees. The rolling hills also influenced the path of roads, following routes along ridges when possible to ease the burden of walking for animals and humans. After a few classes, you will discover how much geographical knowledge you already possess. This course will get you to draw upon that knowledge, combine it with new ideas and tools, and structure it in such a way that you may further develop coherent perspectives on the contemporary world.

**Course Objectives**

* Students will be able to define geography and explain geo-literacy.
* Students will be able to identify, explain, demonstrate, and differentiate the geographic foundational ideas of **space/place**, **site/situation**, **movement/connections**, **regions**, and **human-environment interactions**.
* Students will be able to summarize how Virginia’s economy is connected to both national and global economies and they will be able to analyze local Virginia consequences of global economic changes.

1. Students will develop a set of geographic skills that will enable them to observe patterns, associations, and spatial order. Specifically, students will be able to:
2. ask geographic questions,
3. acquire geographic information,
4. organize geographic information (including making maps)
5. analyze geographic information,
6. and answer geographic questions.
7. Students will learn how people perceive, organize, and remember facts about geographic conditions and connections by using different modes of spatial thinking. Specifically, students will be able to:
   1. compare locations *(How places are similar or different?);*
   2. assess the influence on neighboring places *(How far from a feature is its influence significant?)*;
   3. delimit a region of similar places *(What nearby places are similar to one another?);*
   4. describe the area between places *(What is the nature of the transition between places?);*
   5. examine the hierarchy of features *(Where does this place fit in a spatial hierarchy?);*
   6. identify similarities for a given place *(What distant places are positioned like this place is?);*
   7. describe spatial patterns *(Are there clusters, strings, rings, waves, or other distinctive patterns?)*;
   8. and assess the differences and similarities from a given place *(Are their spatial patterns similar or dissimilar?).*
8. Students will learn how people learn to understand the interplay of time and space. Specifically, students will be able to:
   1. analyze how features of a place change over time?;
   2. analyze changes in **location** through time *(How do things move from one location to another?);*
   3. and analyze changes in distribution through time (How do things spread through space?).
9. Students will comprehend, analyze, and evaluate the Virginia Standards of Learning and national standards for geography as tools to synthesize and apply to Virginia standards in teaching geography, social studies, economics, and aspects of earth science.

**Attendance**

A roll will be circulated each non-exam class day and attendance will be recorded in Canvas. Percentages will be based on the total number of non-test class days (usually 22). Excused absences are counted as 99% of an attended day for tabulation purposes. If I fail to circulate the roll, that day is counted as attended for everyone. Students who end the semester with 98-100% attendance will receive five extra credit points. I withhold the right to deduct a half letter grade for ten to twenty-five percent absences and a whole letter grade for absences in excess of twenty-five percent (it’s a whole for ten percent and failure for twenty-five percent in university policy). Regarding test dates, make-up exams will not be given unless the absence is excused. Excused absences are those resulting from the student’s participation in a college-sponsored activity, from recognizable emergencies, or from serious illness and will require written documentation.

**Exams**

Exams will be ≈60% image identification, multiple choice, true/false (answered on scantron) and ≈40% definitions and maps (hand written and drawn) – **100 points each; 300 points total.**

**Projects – 5-40 points each; 115 points total**

Projects will entail gathering information, graphing and mapping it, and interpreting the results (points vary depending on the level of difficulty). They include the following:

* **So…Where Have you been**? – A Virginia, US, and world map familiarization exercise in which you’ll identify the localities, states, and countries you’ve been in - worth **15 points**)
* **VDOT Virginia State Map** – a project in obtaining a document from the Virginia Department of Transportation (map; worth **5 points**), learning the basic elements of maps, and a contest to see who can re-fold an open map the fastest (5 extra points to the winner) – ***This is contingent on whether maps can be procured from VDOT/Department of Tourism.***
* **Where is Home?** – a project using maps and Google Earth to identify the qualities of where you live in Virginia, including the locality (county/city), longitude/latitude, the physiographic province in which it is found, and providing both an overhead and street view (if possible) of your home from Google Earth - **15 points.**
* **Geographic Quilting Bee** – a project creating hand-labeled choropleth maps using data concerning geography, SOL pass rates, school district rankings, and events in the news – **20 points.**
* **Graphing Climate** – learning to use Microsoft Excel for creating *climagraphs* and interpreting the graphs in the context of global biomes – **20 points.**
* **You Wanna Teach WHERE?!?** – a project learning to use Microsoft Excel for creating population pyramids and interpreting the graphs in the context of a profile of the Virginia locality in which you most want to teach for your first teaching gig – **40 points.**

**5-40 points each; 115 points total**

*All assignments will be penalized 10% for each day late.*

**Map Quizzes**

Three map quizzes involving the identification of the location of significant countries of the world on a world map (10 countries each; 30 countries total) – **10 points each/30 points total.**

**Summary of Course Requirements and Point Values**

Exams 100 points each; 300 points total 22.5% each; 67.4% total

Projects 5-40 points each; 115 points total varies; 25.8% total

Map & Current Event Quizzes 10 points each; 30 points total 2.2% each; 6.7% total

Total 445 points

**Grading System:**

Grade Percentage Points: A 94%-100%; A- 90%-93.9%; B+ 87%-89.9%; B 84%-86.9%; B- 80%-83.9%; C+ 77%-79.9%; C 74%-76.9%; C- 70%-73.9%; D+ 67%- 69.9%; D 64%-66.9%; D- 60%-63.9%; F < 60%

**No Academic Penalty Withdrawal Period (Free “W”)**

Students may withdraw from individual classes with a grade of “W” (not computed in the GPA) through 5:00 p.m. on the 35th day of regularly scheduled classes.

**Technology Policy**

Cell phones, smart phones, laptops, and computer tablets (IPads) are not allowed in class unless individually approved by the instructor. All technological devises are to be turned off and not on the desk unless the instructor says it is OK to use them for an assignment.

**Honor Code**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor. **Divulging the nature of in-class quizzes and exams to later sections is a violation of the Honor Code. Working together on *individual* assignments is a violation of the Honor Code.** *All students are expected to abide by the Honor Code at all times*

**Accommodations**

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please meet with me early in the semester to discuss your learning needs. If you wish to request reasonable accommodations (note taking support, extended time for tests, etc.), you will need to register with the Office of Disability Resources (Graham Hall, 395-2391). The office will require appropriate documentation of disability. All information is kept confidential

**Schedule**

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|  | **Subject Matter** | **Readings from de Blij** |
| Week 1: Jan. 20 | Course Introduction |  |
| Week 2: Jan. 25  Jan. 27 | Defining Geography  Geographers’ Tools – Globes, Maps, Map Use & Misuse | Ch. 1  Ch. 2 |
| Week 3: Feb. 1. 3 | Five Physiographic Provinces – Piedmont | Ch. 4 |
| Week 4: Feb 8, 10  **Feb. 8**  **Feb. 8** | Five Physiographic Provinces – Blue Ridge, Valley & Ridge  **So…Where Have You Been?**  **VDOT State Map due\*** |  |
| Week 5: Feb 15, 17  **Feb.15** | Five Physiographic Provinces – Valley & Ridge, Appalachian Plateau |  |
| Week 6: Feb 22, 24  **Feb. 24** | Five Physiographic Provinces – Coastal Plain  **World Map Quiz #1** |  |
| Week 7: **Feb. 29**  **Feb. 29**  **Feb. 29**  Mar. 2 | **Exam 1**  **Where is Home? due\***  **Geographic Quilting Bee due\***  Key Climatic Concepts | Ch. 5 |
| Week 8: **Mar 7, 9** | **No class (Spring Break)** |  |
| Week 9: Mar 14, 16 | Biomes & Human Use Issues – Tropical Biomes |  |
| Week 10: **Mar 21**  Mar 21, 23 | **World Map Quiz #2**  Biomes & Human Use Issues – Temperate & Arctic Biomes |  |
| Week 11: Mar 28, 30 | Native Groups, Civilizations, Westward Migration and Biomes | Ch. 3 |
| Week 12: **Apr 4**  **Apr 4**  Apr 6 | **Exam 2**  **Graphing Climate due** Organization of Space – Virginia’s Agricultural Regions |  |
| Week 13: Apr 11, 13 | Organization of Space – Virginia’s Agricultural Regions |  |
| Week 14: **Apr. 18**  Apr 18, 20  **Apr 20** | **World Map Quiz #3**  Organization of Space – Virginia’s Urban Geography  **County Profile w/Population Pyramids due** |  |
| Week 15: Apr. 25, 27 | Organization of Space – Virginia’s Resource Use |  |
| **Final Exam: Monday, May 2, 3:00-5:30** |  |  |

**THIS SCHEDULE IS *VERY* SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS**

**WEATHER, HEALTH, INTEREST, EFFICIENCY, ETC. WARRANT,**

**INCLUDING THE ADDITION OF POP QUIZZES AND SMALL ASSIGNMENTS**

**\*being rescheduled**

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