

GEO150-1_F Geography (Physical and Human)

Sig LANGEgger

Year: 2017
Semester: Fall
Faculty: International Liberal Arts
Department:
Field: Social Sciences
Credit: 3.00
Class time/day: Mon : 15:30 - 16:45 D201
Wed : 15:30 - 16:45 D201
E-mail: slangegger@aiu.ac.jp
Office: C 1-8
Office hours: By Appointment
Notes:

Course description:

Translated from Greek, geography means writing about the Earth, or simply earth writing. In simple terms, geography is an academic field that includes both the study of the spatial patterns of human and physical phenomena. By foregrounding human geography, this course provides a general introduction to the field of geography. Human geographers have many topical interests and employ varied approaches to investigate geographic phenomena. For example, economic geographers investigate the spatial flow of capital and the location of particular industries and firms. Political geographers seek to understand the creation of boundaries, territorial conflicts, and the intersection of power, place, and identity. Urban geographers are interested in spatial patterns of culture, development, and decline in cities, and therefore study the planning and design, urban livelihoods, and the flow of people, goods, and ideas within and between urban areas. Cultural geographers are interested in the pathways of everyday life, social formations, as well as the history and meaning of landscape. Cultural, political, and historical ecologists are interested in nature-society relationships. Cartographers are interested in making graphic arguments concerning real and imagined worlds. They also seek to understand how maps both shape and reflect the societies that use them. Human geographers use a vast array of quantitative and qualitative methods when they investigate local and global phenomena. They also embrace a wide range of theoretical perspectives, ranging from spatial science to humanism, Marxism, feminism, and various forms of post-structuralism.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will:

- Have a working knowledge of geography as an academic discipline.
Be able to think spatially about world history, current events, cultural complexes and environmental issues.
Be able to identify where geography intersects with other fields such as economics, cultural studies, political science, and development studies.
Be comfortable using geographical terminology in written communication.
Have gained a geographic perspective on globalization, migration, international conflict & cooperation, and climate change.
Have developed a skill-set enabling them to critically think about how human and physical geographies interact with political systems, religious systems, and systems of commonsense.

Textbook(s):

Author: Eds. Paul Cloke, Philip Crang, and Mark Goodwin
Title: Introducing Human Geographies
Publisher: -
ISBN: -

Reference/Other study materials:

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Assessment:

Table with 2 columns: Assessment Item, Points. Rows: Quizzes (30), Reading Responses (26), Midterm Exam (20), Final Exam (24), Total Possible (100).

Reading Responses

Each week I will assign a question or discussion topic relevant to the assigned reading. Response questions assess your ability to synthesize material presented in class and in the textbook with history, current events and possible human futures; in other words, they allow me to see you think. Responses should not exceed 250 words. There are a total of fifteen (14) questions throughout the semester. Questions will be assessed as very good (2 points), adequate (1.25 points), and insufficient (.5 points). Questions must be posted on AIMS by 12:00 each Monday, unless otherwise noted.

Quizzes

There will be a total of fifteen (15) quizzes, each worth two (2) points. The quizzes cover lecture and reading material. They will comprise multiple-choice, short answer and true/false questions.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments. It will cover terms, concepts and theories as well as regional specifics presented during the first part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions.

Final Exam

The final will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments during the entire semester. It will cover terms, concepts and theories covered during the entire semester and regional specifics presented during the second part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer, true/false and essay questions.

Expected academic background:

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URL of other information:

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Policies & remarks:

ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Format Requirements

All written assignments must include the following in the upper left corner of the first page: Student's name, student ID number, assignment name, and due date. All assignments must be formatted in the following manner: double spaced, font size of 11 or 12 point, standard margins, and an indented first line for each paragraph.

Submission Requirements

Unless otherwise instructed, students are expected to submit written assignments on the AIMS platform. I will only accept Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF (.pdf) formats. All files submitted must be saved in the following manner: Student Name_Assignment Name.docx. I expect assignments to be submitted via AIMS on time. Assignments due in class must be turned in at the beginning of class. I reserve the right to deduct points for late submissions and I reserve the right to determine the percentage to be deducted.

Makeup Work

Aside from exceptional situations, there will be no chance to make up missed exams or quizzes or turn assignments in past their due day/time. Proof of an exceptional situation must be submitted to me in writing and signed by the appropriate authority within 24 hours of the beginning of the missed exam. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, failing the class, and possibly dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty consists of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submission of the same work, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for being observant of and attentive to Akita International University's policies about academic honesty.

Attendance

This course is not an online or distance course—being in class matters! Learning is an ongoing process; one that builds upon previously acquired insights and skills. Consistent and engaged attendance is vital for success in this and all college courses. I will sanction attendance by tracking assignments and random roll calls. I reserve the right to deal with or exceptional or extended absences, on a case-by-case basis.

Special Needs

If you require accommodations, please alert me of your needs on the first day of class so that I can work within Akita International University policies to adequately provide them.

Civility & Classroom Decorum

Silence all cell phones, beepers, etc. during class. Speaking on cell phones, texting, or using electronic equipment in any way that is not directly related to class (i.e. taking notes, using a translation program during lectures, etc.) is strictly prohibited.

Student Participation

Learning is a participatory process; therefore student contribution to class is important. This course is based in large measure on critical thinking and class discussion. Disagreement is part of these processes. Colleagues can disagree and maintain respect for each other and one another's views. I insist that we strive to learn from the differences that manifest while debating the merit of theoretical and empirical evidence by maintaining an atmosphere of civility during discussion. I will sanction participation by tracking of individual student contribution to the in-class learning environment.

Notes:

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Class schedule:

Week One

Foundations

Week Two

Foundations

Week Three

Foundations

Week Four

Biogeographies

Week Five

Cartographies

Week Six

Cultural Geographies

Week Seven

Cultural Geographies

Week Eight

Development Geographies

Week Nine

Development Geographies

Week Ten

Environmental Geographies

Week Eleven

Historical Geographies

Week Twelve

Population Geographies

Week Thirteen

Social Geographies

Week Fourteen

Urban & Rural Geographies

Week Fifteen

Publics

Week Sixteen

Final Exam

AIU Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Acts of Academic Dishonesty: In accordance with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment) will result in the failure of the course at a minimum.

An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term.

Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.

Marcin SCHROEDER

Year: 2017
 Semester: Fall
 Faculty: International Liberal Arts
 Department:
 Field: Interdisciplinary Studies
 Credit: 3.00
 Class time/day: Tue : 15:30 - 16:45 B102
 Thu : 15:30 - 16:45 B102
 E-mail: mjs@aiu.ac.jp
 Office: A3-7
 Office hours: MW: 14:00-15:30
 Notes: Not open to students who have taken INF240.

Course description:

The course introduces students into the concepts and methods of information study analysis and management and acquaints them with a wide range of information related issues in a variety of contexts including the cultural and social role of information. The introduction into the concepts and methods of information science will provide a solid foundation for the more advanced future study in many possible areas of applications. The skills developed in the course together with the acquired conceptual framework will allow students to comprehend the literature of the disciplines in which information plays the central role (e.g. artificial intelligence complexity neuro-psychology genetics etc.) Classroom activities and discussions will give students an opportunity to test their competency in information analysis and to deepen their understanding of the subject. The course emphasizes an integrative role of information science in the study of various manifestations of information across a wide range of disciplines. The selection of specific topics related to information science which will be studied in the course will be discussed at the beginning of the course. Instructor expects students' involvement in the selection to make the course more interesting for everyone.

Objectives:

The objectives of this course can be viewed from the two perspectives. Since it is a course about information one of its objectives is to introduce students into the new discipline of information science. This means upon successful completion of the course students will acquire the conceptual framework of information studies including the concept of information with its diverse meanings the concepts of information processing communication computation measures of information etc. They will learn the rudiments of the methods used in studying phenomena and processes involving information in the disciplines such as theoretical computer science artificial intelligence psychology or cognitive science sociology of information economics of information etc. The course has also objectives going beyond the subject matter. Since information has multiple manifestations in practically all domains of human intellectual or practical activities the course presents the unified view of the central concept of information in the multiple contexts of its applications. Thus in the second perspective crucial for the Liberal Arts education the course is intended as a demonstration of the unity of intellectual inquiry across the physical sciences social sciences psychology and humanities. Students should acquire this view of intellectual inquiry and should be able to search for this unified perspective in their studies of other themes.

Textbook(s):

Author: -
 Title: -
 Publisher: -
 ISBN: -

Reference/Other study materials:

Information Science is a new discipline in the process of consolidation from the interdisciplinary studies with diverse methods and interests. There is no textbook which could meet the demands of the course. Instructor will prepare materials for classes either in the form of handouts, or in the form of information regarding appropriate sites on the internet.

For each topic studied in this course there are extensive literature resources with different levels of difficulty and different levels of necessary preparation. In the following there is a short list of readings which are easily comprehensible without any specific prior preparation and which are related to the content of classes. The mandatory readings will be announced and/or distributed in the classroom. Please ask the instructor about more advanced texts regarding topics of special interest for you if you want to expand your knowledge beyond the requirements of the course. The following is a sample of books which develop the themes of the course but which are optional. Tom Siegfried "The Bit and the Pendulum." Wiley New York 2000. John R. Pierce "An Introduction to Information Theory: Symbols Signals and Noise." 2nd rev. ed. Dover New York 1980. Simon Singh "The Cracking Codebook." Harper Collins London 2004. Arne Dietrich "Introduction to Consciousness." Pallgrave Macmillan New York 2007. Gary Marcus "The Birth of the Mind." Basic Books New York 2004. Roger Penrose "The Emperor's New Mind." Penguin New York 1991. Roger Penrose "Shadows of the Mind." Oxford University Press Oxford 1994. Wolfgang Hofkirchner (Ed.) "The Quest for a Unified Theory of Information." Gordon and Breach Amsterdam 1999. Roger R. Flynn "An Introduction to Information Science." Marcel Dekker New York 2000.

Assessment:

Student achievement of the course objectives is being measured in terms of student performance on the midterm test (40%) through the evaluation of contributions to class discussions and activities (20%) a major written assignment (20%) and its presentation in the class (20%). The actual percentages may be modified at the discussion of the course design on the first day of instruction.

Expected academic background:

There is no expected academic work at the college level preparing for the course. Although there will be frequent reference to the basic knowledge of several disciplines such as biology history psychology computer science physics each time instructor will make an introduction reviewing the high school knowledge necessary for understanding. Genuine interest in the matters related to information and willingness to participate in the discussion of these matters will be of higher importance than the prior academic preparation.

URL of other information:

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Policies & remarks:

Acts of cheating or other forms academic dishonesty will be dealt with harshly. Students may work together on their assignments or preparation for classes but every student must prepare individually and without help of others his/her assignments. Attendance in all classes is mandatory whether it is being checked by instructor or not. It is student's responsibility to submit all assignments by the announced deadlines.

Notes:

Generally, class sessions have format of lectures with frequent interactions between the instructor and students in form of questions and answers, with some regularly scheduled time for discussion in which all students are expected to participate. Students will have an opportunity to influence the proportion of time allocated for the topics considered in the course by asking questions regarding the issues of special interest for them. In the second part of the course, each student will select a topic for his or her own study going beyond what was done in the class (with approval and advice of the instructor). Based on this study, he or she will write a paper and will make a short presentation of this paper in the class. Instructor will explain his expectations regarding the size, format, and style of the paper. The general rule is that the volume of the paper is of secondary importance. Even short, but informative and interestingly written paper can get high evaluation, while a long paper inflated by multiple quotations, but without student's own analysis or other significant contributions may get lower grade. After each class, students are recommended to write a conspectus summarizing the content of the class with the focus on the definitions or descriptions of the concepts introduced, main questions asked and answers given to these questions. Although these entries to the journal will not be evaluated by the instructor, they will be of great value for students in their preparation for the next class.

Class schedule:

Week 1

Introduction - Explanation of the expectations from the side of the instructor and from the side of students. - Review and modification of the course plan based on the interests of students. - What is information Why is it so difficult to answer this question - Search for diverse manifestations of information across the academic disciplines and in everyday experience. - The relationship of the concept of information to other concepts such as knowledge communication etc.

Week 2

- The beginnings of information/communication studies: From Morse to Shannon. - How to measure transfer of information - From the telegraph to the limits of human perception. - The Magical Number Seven (Plus Minus Two).

Week 3

Other Origins: Cryptography - Codes and ciphers. - Deciphering forgotten scripts. - How to hide a message - How to send a message - The telegraphic message which involved the US in a world war. - Enigma - The case of Phil Zimmermann. What is more important: privacy of citizens or effective control of criminal activities

Week 4

Computers and Computer Information Processing - What is actually computer doing - History of computation from the abacus to Microsoft. - Analog and digital information. - Turing machines. - Computer architecture and design.

Week 5

Information is physical - The Second Law of Thermodynamics - Entropy - Maxwell's Demon. - Humans as "informavores." - Solar battery for the eco-system. - Can computer work without a source of energy - Quantum computer.

Week 6

Biological Information Systems – Genetics - DNA double helix and the inherited information - Evolution - From "monkey trial" to "Kitzmiller vs. Dover" - Emergence

Week 7

Biological Information Systems – Information networks in a living organism - Neural and hormonal transmission of information - Neurons synapses microtubules - Human brain - The mechanisms of sensory perception

Week 8

Consciousness and AI - What does it mean "thinking" - Can machine think - What does brain do? Models of cognitive processes. - Artificial neural networks

Week 9

AI and technological singularity, the future of AI

Week 10

Review and Midterm test

Week 11

Discussions on the subjects from the material covered in class

Week 12

Discussions of subjects selected by students

Week 13

Discussion: Search for connections between different forms of information

Week 14

Presentations of papers by students

Week 15

Revisions of the final version of the paper

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