**Geography 101: People and Their Environment**

Spring 2011

Wednesday: 10.10-13.00

Room: HN 1022

Website: <http://peopleandtheirenvironment.tumblr.com/>

Instructor: Stephen Boatright

sboatright@gc.cuny.edu

All Email Correspondence MUST include the Course Name in the Subject

Office Hours: Mondays 10.00-11.00 (HN 1032)

Subject to Change

**Overview:**

This course surveys the principal subdivisions and themes in the discipline of geography. It serves as a general introduction to key concepts in both physical and human geography. Geography is a diverse discipline addressing topics from climate change to gentrification; the aim of this course is to provide you with a basic understanding of geographic concepts and a framework for making sense out of the complexity of our physical and human environments.

**Objectives and Expectations:**

The main objectives of this course are to develop a solid grasp on the central concepts and subdivisions in geography and further to develop students’ critical thinking skills so that they are able to understand and discuss knowledgeably the diversity and dynamism of geographic phenomena. Specifically, we will try to make sense of the myriad aspects of physical and human geography by putting them into real world contexts. As critical and creative thought must be coherently argued in language, this course will involve vigorous class discussion and a number of writing assignments. Students will be expected to challenge and improve their communicate skills so as to successfully articulate their thoughts, questions, and arguments.

This course fulfills Stage 2 (Broad Exposure) Group B: Social Science but does not fulfill the ‘W’ requirement.

**Required Textbook:**

Dahlman, Bergman and Renwick, Introduction to Geography, 5th ed., Prentice Hall (Pearson) 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0321695314.

Recommended if you are going to stick with geography:

Goode's World Atlas. 2004. 21st edition. Rand McNally.

**Assessment:**

***10 Points*** Attendance and class participation

***30 Points*** Weekly Response Problem (x10, 1-3 pts): Each week students are required to post reading responses on the [Tumblr site](http://peopleandtheirenvironment.tumblr.com/) the day before class by 8 p.m. Responses are not chapter summaries; rather, students will select one concept or issue discussed in the chapter and develop a question regarding its real or potential effects on New York City. Reponses should be 300 words and include: an explanation of the problem; a statement regarding how it would affect New York (both the mechanism and the effects) and who would be affected (universal or specific populations); links to 2 or 3 relevant websites, articles or videos; and an argument about how the issue should be addressed. Problems should be potential real issues for New York; they do not have to be novel but may be ones that the city and its residents currently deal with.

All students will present their problem three times over the course of the semester. These presentations will guide our discussion during the second half of class. There will be six weeks with four student presentations and five weeks with three presenters.

**30 Points** Mid-term Exam

**30 Points** Final Exam

Exams will be comprised of short essay questions.

\_\_\_

**100 Total Points**

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. Each class missed over two will result in a deduction from the course grade. Exams will not be cumulative, which means that the final will only cover topics addressed in Section 3. There will be **no make-up** exams. The only exception is in the case of acute illness verified by a doctor’s note on official stationary.

**Tutoring:** Tutoring will be available throughout the semester in HN 1006, beginning in September. When available, I will post the schedule on Blackboard.

**Class Schedule:**

Week 1: Read the Preface and Chapter 1: Introduction/Weather and Climate

Wednesday, August 31

Week 2: Read Chapter 2: Weather and Climate

Wednesday, September 7

Week 3: Read Chapters 3 and 4: Landforms and Biosphere

Wednesday, September 14

Week 4: Read Chapter 9: Resources and Environmental Management Resources

Wednesday, September 21

Week 5: No Class

Wednesday, September 28

Week 6: Read Chapter 8

Wednesday, October 5

Read: [Food and “Spoiled: Organic and Local Is So 2008](http://motherjones.com/environment/2009/02/spoiled-organic-and-local-so-2008), *Mother Jones* March/April 2009.

Week 7: *Manufactured Landscapes*

Wednesday, October 12

Week 8: **Mid-term Exam**

Wednesday, October 19

Week 9: Read Chapters 5 and 7: Population and Religion/Languages

Wednesday, October 26

Week 10: Read Chapter 6: Cultural Geography (discuss anthropology and imperialism)

Wednesday, November 2

Week 11: Read Chapter 12: Economic Geography

Wednesday, November 9

Week 12: Read Chapter 10: Cities and Urbanization

Wednesday, November 16

Week 13: Read Chapter 11: Political and National Geographies

Wednesday, November 23

Week 14: Global Issues: The Geographies of World Conflicts

Wednesday, November 30

Read: Graham, Stephen. (2004). Postmortem city. *City*, 8(2), 165-196.

Week 15: Global Issues: Economic Crises: Scarcity, Prosperity, Austerity

Wednesday, December 7

Read: TBD

Week 16: Reading Week – No Class

Wednesday, December 14

**Week 17: Final Exam**

**Wednesday, December 21 – 9.00am – 11.00am**

**Statement on Academic Integrity:**

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.