Human Geography

Fall 2021, Units: 3  
Prerequisites: none  
Fulfills Social & Behavioral Science Exploration (BF) requirement

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Office: Rm 4730, Gardner Commons (GC)  
Phone: 581-7930  
Office Hrs: Tue 1:30-3:00 pm, Wed 11:00-12:30 (or by appointment)

Lectures: M/W 1:25 pm – 2:45 pm LNCO 1100


Course scope and objectives

Human Geography is the study of the spatial variation in people and their characteristics, the way humans interact over space, and the way humans utilize and alter the landscapes they occupy. As the name implies, this discipline emphasizes the geographic distribution and dynamics of human themes such as population growth and spread, economic activity and land cover change. This involves studying topics such as migration, resource use, urban systems and many other processes that generate the patterns we observe in the world. To gain an understanding of how we arrived at the current state of highly complex affairs, human geography encourages students to ask difficult, often historical, questions about why cities and economic activities are located where they are, how geography has affected the evolution of civilization, how world resources can be better managed, and the effects (positive and negative) that humans have on the environment and each other.

The primary goal of this course is to provide students with the necessary background to understand many contemporary problems facing society. These include, but are not limited to, resource depletion, population density, ethnic and national conflict, urban sprawl, traffic congestion, pollution, species decline, and climate change. Clearly all is not well on planet Earth, and this course seeks to empower students to view these problems analytically through a geographic lens. The means for achieving these goals include lecture, discussion, readings, and assignments. The assignments are based on basic principles, theories, and methods used in geographic inquiry combined with detailed case studies of particular places and how demographic, environmental, cultural, political and economic processes shape them.
Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Understand and apply the major concepts and theories in human geography including place, space, scale, landscape, pattern, process, etc.
- Interpret everyday landscapes and the spatial distributions and processes that shape them including population, environment, culture, resources, economics, politics, among others.
- Understand that human landscapes and places are not simply an inevitable product of nature but are planned, constructed and utilized by people working within historically and geographically specific social, cultural, political, and economic situations.
- Participate in discussions about world events and the importance of geography in shaping these events and a greater awareness of how their lives are interrelated with the lives of people in other places.

**Grading:** 3 Midterms (45%), 5 Assignments (25%), 5 Quizzes (15%), Participation (15%)

**Course policies and information:**

Exams must be taken during the specified time unless a valid, documented excuse is provided before the exam. Late assignments will be reduced 10% for each additional day following the due date. Participation will be assessed using on-line quizzes in conjunction with in-class discussions.

The U’s policy on academic misconduct is covered in the Student Code here:  
[http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php](http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php)

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

**Course outline**

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings (Bjelland et al.)</th>
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<td>Course overview and introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction: Some background basics</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td>Roots and meaning of culture</td>
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<td>Spatial interaction and spatial behavior</td>
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<td>Population: world patterns, regional trends</td>
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<td>Language and religion: mosaics of culture</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td><strong>Midterm 1 Review: Wednesday, September 22</strong></td>
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Ethnic geography: threads of diversity  Chapter 6
Folk and popular culture: diversity and uniformity  Chapter 7
Livelihood and economy: primary activities  Chapter 8
Livelihood and economy: from blue to gold collar  Chapter 9

Midterm 2 Review: Wednesday, October 27

Patterns of development and change  Chapter 10
Urban systems and urban structure  Chapter 11
The political ordering of space  Chapter 12
Human impacts on natural systems  Chapter 13

Midterm 3 Review: Wednesday, December 8

Assignments:
There will be five assignments in this class. They will develop your skills in writing, mapping, interpretation and geographic analysis. Topics include cognitive mapping, spatial activity diaries, demographic analysis, among others. More information on the assignments will be presented in the coming weeks.

Accommodation Policy:
Some of the writings, lectures, films or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please raise it at your earliest convenience.

Important dates

August 27  Last day to add classes (without permission code)
September 3  Last day to add, drop, CR/NC or audit classes
September 6  Labor Day
October 10-17  Fall Break
October 22  Last day to withdraw from classes
December 3  Last day to reverse CR/NC option
December 8  Last day of class for us (and Midterm Review 3)
COVID-19 Guidelines

University leadership has urged all faculty, students, and staff to model the vaccination, testing, and masking behaviors we want to see in our campus community.

These include:
- Vaccination
- Masking indoors
- If unvaccinated, getting weekly asymptomatic coronavirus testing

**Vaccination**
Get a COVID-19 vaccination if you have not already done so. Vaccination is proving highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization and death from coronavirus. Vaccination is the single best way to stop this COVID resurgence in its tracks. Visit MyChart, Campus Alert-Vaccine, or Vaccines.gov to schedule your vaccination.

**Masking**
While masks are no longer required outside of Health Sciences facilities, UTA buses and campus shuttles, CDC guidelines now call for everyone to wear face masks indoors.
- Check the CDC website periodically for masking updates
- Treat masks like seasonal clothing (i.e. during community surges in COVID transmission, masks are strongly encouraged indoors and in close groups outside).

**Testing**
If you are not yet vaccinated, get weekly asymptomatic coronavirus tests. This is a helpful way to protect yourself and those around you because asymptomatic individuals can unknowingly spread the coronavirus to others.
- Asymptomatic testing centers are open and convenient:
  - Online scheduling Saliva test (no nasal swabs)
  - Free to all students returning to campus (required for students in University housing)
- Results often within 24 hours
- Visit Campus Alert-Testing
- Remember: Students must self-report if they test positive for COVID-19 via COVID-19 CENTRAL @THEU.