

# GEOGRAPHY of the U.S. and Canada

## GPY 353, Sec. 01

### Fall 2012

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**Instructor:** *Kin M. Ma*

**Office Hours:** Wed. 10:30am-12:00pm, Tue./Thu. 10:00am-11:00am, **OR** by appt

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Days	Meeting Times	Classroom
Mon/Wed	1:30-2:45pm	Field House -11 (FH-11)

**Required COURSE MATERIALS:** 1) **Birdsall, Stephen, Palka, Eugene, et al.** (2009). *Regional landscapes of the United States and Canada, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.*, John Wiley & Sons: New York, NY (ISBN: 978-0470098264);

2) **COLLEGE Atlas of the World**, 2nd Edition (Washington, D.C: National Geographic, 2010) or 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. (ISBN: 978-0470888872). **REQUIRED**

3) Additional Readings, if any, will be on Course E-Reserve

### General Education, U.S. Diversity

#### **Content Goals**

All courses in the **U.S. Diversity** category help students learn the following content about one's own culture and the culture of others:

- 1) Feature an examination of the various cultures that make up the United States, highlighting both the variability and similarity in human behavior, beliefs, customs, and values;
- 2) Examine how identity can be affected by ethnicity/race and at least one of the following social attributes: gender, class, abilities, age, sexual orientation, religion, or common history;
- 3) Examine the historical and social consequences of United States diversity; and
- 4) Consider whether there is a United States culture – a common culture that unites and subsumes all groups in the United States.

#### **Skills Goals**

All courses in the U.S. Diversity Culture category use teaching methods that help students become more proficient in the following skills:

- 1) To engage in articulate expression through effective speaking or writing;
- 2) To think critically and creatively; and
- 3) To locate, evaluate, and use information effectively.

### **COURSE CONTENT & OBJECTIVES**

What is the significance of the United States and Canada? These are two of the largest countries in the world with tremendous physical and cultural diversity. We will study this region by its sub-regions by analyzing the themes of Cultural Diversity, Industrialization, Mobility, and Resource Abundance.

The overall objective of the course is to provide you a geographic perspective in analyzing and understanding the past, present and future of the environment, people, and cultures of this vast region. The course will utilize a multi-disciplinary framework and integrates systematic (theme) and

regional study approaches. In the second half of the semester, we will investigate several broad themes that are vital in understanding North America as a world region.

**Active** learning will be key to your success in this class. Hands-on activities, not just lectures, will be the hallmark of the pedagogical approach used in this course. You are expected to read and write extensively and to actively participate in all class activities. Besides brief introductory lectures, the bulk of class time will be devoted to **in-class** discussion, small group work, exercises, and a group presentation.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Overall you are expected to 1) read the assigned chapter(s) before class, 2) attend every class, pay attention in class, take notes, and 3) actively participate in all class activities. If you are absent you may miss important course material or announcements. All students are responsible for all course information and announcements whether or not they were present. Please *bring your atlas, and textbook to class*. In this course you will be assessed via class participation, in-class discussion, a research project, one mapping exercise, one take-home exam, and several map/image quizzes, and a final exam.

### Course Grade Format

Course component	Pts.	Percent	Deadlines
1) Class participation	50	11.1%	Continuous
2) Research project	80	17.8%	Presentation: Interspersed and
Proposal due <b>9/24/12</b>			Last 3 sessions
			<b>Report due Wed. Dec 5</b>
3) Cultural Event Paper	10	2.2%	<b>ONE week after Event</b>
4) Mapping exercises	40	8.9%	Week 11, classtime
5) Take-home midterm	80	17.8%	Week Six, 10/1, <b>10/8 DUE</b>
6) Map/image quizzes	90	20.0%	Various Dates
7) Final Exam	100	22.2%	<b>12/11/2012, 2:00-3:50PM</b>
Total points possible	<b>450</b>	100.0%	

#### 1) Class Participation (50 points) (Skill Goals #1, 2)

- Active participation will be key to your learning experience in this class. You will be evaluated on your overall level of participation in class activities. This includes demonstrating preparedness for class, willingness to contribute to discussions as well as class attendance. You can draw from personal travels and experiences.
- Please keep in mind: *this component is NOT just about attendance*. In other words, even if you attend all class sessions, you may not receive all the points if you do not actively participate in class discussion. Of course, you need to be there to participate. As such, attendance will be taken daily. One and half (1.5) points will be deducted for every class you miss. You will be allowed **TWO absences** without penalty.

#### 2) Research project (80 points), (Content Goals #1-3, Skill Goals #1, 2, 3)

This is a group research assignment with 2 students. The *objective* of this project is that you and fellow student learn to research, write and present a paper on a topic of significant importance to the U.S. and Canadian region. You can pick a **topic** listed on page 6. You and one partner may choose to work on another topic though you must receive instructor approval. Please do a little research and email me your intentions. First come, first serve. I will determine if there is an overlap in topics.

This assignment consists of two parts: 1) in-class presentation (40 points) and 2) a project report (40 points). Your project must be *sharply focused*. For both the project report and, especially, the powerpoint presentation, you are *required to utilize a variety of geovisualization tools* (digital maps, imagery, etc.) to communicate your thoughts, ideas as well as facts and significance about the region & topic you have chosen. **Sept. 24:** You must write a **1 page** proposal indicating your 1) Name of research topic, 2) Student Names, 3) Reason(s) for the choice, 4) short literature review of topic, and

provide at least **THREE (3)** citations of information sources that includes a **minimum of TWO (2) scholarly** journal sources (Proposal worth **4 pts.** and is a portion of 40 pts. written report).

Potential helpful links: <http://scholar.google.com> or GVSU Library Resource, <http://vq9xh3gm7u.search.serialssolutions.com/>

*Project timeline:*

☞ *Oral presentation* in the week as indicated in the course schedule (see below). Must be presented in Powerpoint. 10 minute time limit. Powerpoint files due to the instructor by 10:00AM the day of your scheduled presentation saved to your R: Drive directory. You can access this drive from home. [http://www.gvsu.edu/cms3/assets/428A2C9A-0FB7-5B0C-BBFCF723C12E59E3/mystudentdata\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.gvsu.edu/cms3/assets/428A2C9A-0FB7-5B0C-BBFCF723C12E59E3/mystudentdata_instructions.pdf)

You should be prepared to defend your project in subsequent Q & A session.

☞ **Dec. 5, 2012** – *Project written report* of 6-8 pages due. You need to have **minimum of four (4)** scholarly journal citation sources. More details will be given. Electronic submission of your project report is strongly encouraged through the R: Drive. Digital files should always include your name(s) and paper Topic, e.g., **Ma\_US\_EnergyPolicy.doc** .

### **3) Cultural Event Attendance/Paper** (Content Goals #1-4, Skill Goals #1-3)

You will need to attend a cultural event that will be highlighted by the instructor regarding the cultural diversity of the United States. You **must** attend at least **ONE** of events designated by the instructor. See BB |Course Info | Links. Students must write a 2 page paper summarizing the main points of the presentation and also its **connection** to our class (Paper DUE, ONE week after Event in class). You may need to read ahead in the textbook to connect to the class. You can attend additional events and write papers in order to receive extra credit. See BB |Course Info | Links

### **4) Computer Mapping exercise (40 points)** (Content Goals #1-4, Skill Goals #1-3)

There will be a Computer mapping assignment regarding demographic change in Michigan and Arizona that is worth 40 points. If condition permits, you will have an opportunity to learn how to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to make maps. Instructions for the mapping exercises will be given out in class.

### **5) Midterm (80 points)** (Content Goals #1-3, Skill Goals #1-3)

This is a take-home exam. The exam will be in essay question format. The essay questions will test your ability to synthesize the key concepts discussed in class and to apply them to real-world issues. Exam questions will be given out in *Week Six*. You will have one week to complete the exam.

### **6) Map/image quizzes (90 points)** (Content Goals #3, Skill Goals #2, 3)

There will be several map/image quizzes. These quizzes test your knowledge of important place names, unique geographic features, etc. covered in class. Test dates on course schedule.

#### **Map Quizzes** (30 points each)

There will be three (3) quizzes with matching, and some multiple-choice questions. Review Guides will be provided. There will be **NO** make-up quizzes.

*Requests for exams or quizzes at times **other** than regularly scheduled are **strongly discouraged** and will be granted only for extreme emergencies (with proof required).* Please contact me **EARLY** before a potential time conflict so that we can make the proper arrangements.

#### **My teaching philosophy:**

I see my role as a facilitator of your learning and performance in this course. Availability, patience, and fairness are the principal guidelines used in this course. Please note that the instructor cannot deliver all of the information and knowledge that is needed. This course is a medium for learning North American geography. This course is a partnership between the instructor and students--both have the responsibility for your success.

Each student has the major responsibility for his/her education. Courses are delivered by instructors and the university; education is developed by the **STUDENTS**. It is the student's role to have personal responsibility for learning and performance--learning the course material and achieving

the course objectives. Please note that lack of preparation on your part does not constitute an emergency on the instructor's part.

**General Requirements of All Written Assignments** (Exercise reports, midterm, etc.)

- It is your decision as to how long your paper should be. The ability to organize and communicate your thoughts and arguments in *well-structured* and *concise* writing is a crucial skill that will be assessed in this class, among other things.
- Your paper should be *original and analytical*. Informed, coherent, and **logical** argumentation is what is required, NOT just description or opinion,.
- *Professional writing* (good structure, appropriate referencing, proofreading, etc.) is expected.
- You are responsible for maintaining *academic integrity* (Section 223.00 and 223.01 GVSU Student Code, 2009-2010, p. 19, see below).
- All writing work must be *type written, Double-spaced, and using 11 point font size*.

**Late Papers Policy**

The price of a late assignment is **20% per day late, and AFTER 2 days late, the paper will NOT be accepted**. If you have an extenuating circumstance, please come and discuss it with me or e-mail me at [makin@gvsu.edu](mailto:makin@gvsu.edu) **BEFORE** the deadline; the earlier the better.

**Technology Use**

Laptop Computers can be utilized for notetaking **ONLY**. If I find that you are using it for other purposes, laptop computers will be banned from classroom use.

**Cell Phones:** Please turn **OFF** cell phones during class! During classtime, we will focus on the course content without interruptions.

**Email**

E-mail will be sent regarding items or the posting of class Powerpoint presentations to the Blackboard website. Check your GVSU Google e-mail address **REGULARLY**. E-mail messages are sent to the **CLASS** and **NOT** to individuals. I am **NOT** responsible if your e-mail account reaches the disk space limit and the messages I send bounces. I **CANNOT** keep up with over 150 students and the potential bounce back of messages. It is **YOUR** responsibility to manage your email account!

**\*\*Sending Email\*\***

When writing email to the instructor, use proper etiquette, and identify **your name and class section**, in the Subject Line of the messages, include the Class and Section Number. e.g., "**Gpy353\_01, 'Your topic.'**" Always sign your **FULL** name at the end of your e-mail, since I do **NOT** know who "CuteLittleMissMuffet" or "HeMan#1" people are.

\*\* Emails **without FULL Name NOR subject line** will **NOT** be responded to.\*\*

**Course Grade Distribution**, Note: There are NO '**A+**' NOR '**D-**' grades.

<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
95-100	90-94.9	87-89.9	84-86.9	80-83.9	77-79.9	74-76.9	70-73.9	66-69.9	60-65.9	<60

**Special Learning Challenges:** Each student learns in his or her own way. If you have a disability that will require special accommodations, please contact the **Disability Support Office (DSS) in 200 Student Services (STU), 616-331-2490**. The DSS will assist me in providing the necessary accommodations to enhance your learning environment. If you have already done so, DSS will provide you with a letter that describes your specific needs and the necessary accommodations. Please bring that letter to me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, and **PRIOR** to the due date of the first course requirement, e.g., the quiz.

## Tentative Schedule

Instructor has the right to **adjust with due notice** to enhance learning

<b>Wk</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Other/Assignment due</b>
1	8/27	Introduction to U.S. and Canada	Chap. 1	
1	8/29	Physical Environment	Chap. 2	<b>8/31,5pm,Add/Drop Deadline</b>
2	9/3	<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>NO Classes</b>	
2	9/5	Physical Environment	Chap. 2	
3	9/10	Foundations of Human Activity	Chap. 3	
3	9/12	Foundations of Human Activity	Chap. 3	U.S. Religion Article (BB)
4	9/17	Megalopolis	Chap. 4	
4	9/19	North American manuf. Core	Chap. 5	
5	9/24	Canadian 's National Core	Ch. 6	Video: Power of Place
5	9/26	Appalachia and Ozarks	Ch. 7	
<b>6</b>	<b>10/1</b>	The changing South	Chap. 9	<b>10/1, Take-home Midterm Given</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>10/3</b>	The changing South	Chap. 9	<b>10/3, Map Q#1: Eastern U.S.</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>10/8</b>	Southern Coastlands	Chap. 10	<b>10/8, Midterm Exam DUE</b>
7	10/10	Agricultural Core	Chap. 11	
8	10/15	Great Plains/Prairies	Chap. 12	
8	10/17	Empty Interior	Chap. 13	
9	10/22	Southwest Border Area	Chap. 14	
9	10/24	California	Chap. 15	
10	10/29	Migration		
10	<b>10/31</b>	Migration	Reading TBA	<b>10/31, Map Q#2: Western U.S.</b>
11	11/5	Migration Lab	Reading TBA	<b>11/5, 117 HRY Lab</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>11/7</b>	North Pacific Coast	Chap. 16	
12	11/12	North Pacific Coast	Chap. 16	<b>11/12, Migration Lab Due</b>
12	11/14	Energy Use and Mobility	Reading TBA	
13	11/19	Energy Use/Mobility/Northlands	Read.. TBA, Ch17	
<b>13</b>	<b>11/21</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	<b>NO Classes</b>	
14	11/26	Hawaii	Chap. 18	<b>Map Q3: Canada/Hawaii/Alaska</b>
14	11/28	<b>Research Presentations</b>		
15	12/3	Research Presentations		
15	12/5	Research Presentations		<b>12/5, Research Papers DUE</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Dec. 11</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM, FH-11</b>	<b>2:00-3:50PM</b>	

Student Code and Plagiarism: According to GVSU's General Academic Policies, here are the stated policies:

- 1) No student shall knowingly, without authorization, procure, provide, or accept any materials which contain questions or answers to any examination or assignment; 2) No student shall, without authorization, complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person; 3) No student shall, without authorization, allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, by another person;
- 4) No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his or her own; 5) No student shall submit work that has been **previously graded** or is being submitted **concurrently** to more than one course without **authorization** from the instructor(s) of the class(es) to which the student wishes to submit it.

<b>Gpy 353 Project Topics and Assignments</b>		Students	Week
	<b>United States</b>		
1	Battle for Water along the Colorado River		
2	Religious Diversity in the United States		
3	Lingual Diversity in the United States		
4	U.S. Energy Use and Policy/ Renewable Energy		
5	Prospects and Challenges of Coal in Appalachia		
6	Diversity of food across America		
7	Climate Change and effects on the Midwestern States		
8	Climate Change and effects on the Pacific Northwest		
9	Prospects and Challenges of California's Diversity		
10	Native Americans and their influence in the Southwest		
11	Prospects and challenges of Hawaiian diversity		
12	U.S. Demographic Change in 2000-2010		
	<b>Canada</b>		
13	Climate Change and effects on the Atlantic Provinces		
14	Canadian Energy Use and Policy/ Renewable Energy		
15	Ethnic Conflict in Quebec		
16	Ethnic Diversity in Ontario		
17	Lingual Diversity in Eastern Canada		
18	Religious Diversity in Canada		
19	Climate Change and effects on Nunavut, Canada		
	<b>North America</b>		
20	Compare and Contrast U.S. and Canadian immigration policy		
21	Natural Resource Differences between U.S. and Canada		
22	Challenges and Impacts of the Great Lakes Water Compact		
	Other topics must be approved by instructor		