Application for Course Inclusion as a General Education Course (not including FYS)

Course number: GEG 1101    Title: World Regional Geography

Catalog description:
Regional study of the world with special emphasis on the diversity of human existence and the world-scale problems currently faced.

Instructor name(s): (if more than one instructor teaches)
1. Dr. Andrew Shears
2.
3.
4.
5.

For which area are you requesting your course approval?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written Communication</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Global Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>Ethics and Civic Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Behavioral Sciences</td>
<td>Arts &amp; the Human Experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please include course syllabi and relevant related course documents to support your request for inclusion. See attached syllabus

(1) Describe how your course will advance the overall mission of the GE Program.
World Regional Geography provides a comprehensive overview of the spatial arrangement and relationships of both physical and cultural landscapes throughout the world. As an introductory course in geography, it requires that students understand and use a variety of methods for acquiring knowledge and developing understanding, including the scientific method, social statistics, economic indicators, and broader cultural and philosophical inquiry. The course stresses the student’s connection to the larger world and how the world is increasingly connected due to forces of globalization. By exploring these connections, the student also achieves a basic exposure to the many diverse world cultures and perspectives and a basic understanding of contemporary global issues. This is useful to both continued study at the university level and to engaging the world after the university as a global citizen and lifelong learner.

(2) Describe (when appropriate) how the course will include any or all of the following: a) substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication, b) encourage active and participatory learning, or c) promote application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside of and beyond the university experience.

- **Substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication.** The syllabus as attached includes a number of assignments used to encourage both oral and written communication. Each student is required to complete and map their personal histories and genealogies as part of the “Place Yourself” assignment, a key component to the course. In addition, students are required to complete several other reports and reaction papers, several of which have group discussion components that encourage analysis of data and communication of findings.

- **Encourage active and participatory learning.** The assignments required in the course are all activity-based, guiding students toward a deeper understanding of the subject matter presented. The mapping assignment puts students in the driver’s seat, giving them a powerful interface with which to engage larger global datasets, from which they are asked to describe patterns, dig deeper into potential causes of these patterns, and to report findings. The film and cuisine assignments ask students to “jump in” to cultural expressions and to draw connections between what they have experienced with what they are learning elsewhere in the course.
• Promote application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside of and beyond the university experience. The assignments are almost solely focused on developing skills that are useful outside of this course. Students learn how to process data and deal with online mapping interfaces, and how to analyze and understand cuisine in terms of ingredients, nutrition and source regions. These are exceptionally useful skills for guiding future learning, both within the university’s curriculum and later as lifelong learners and citizens of the earth. The “Place Yourself” assignment further develops student skills by requiring a variety of research methods plus an application of organizing the information into a presentable format.

(3) There are a number of goals of the GE Program (see instructions). Which will your course will promote?
Responses selected are italicized below.

  o Acquire knowledge of...
    - western culture and its relationship to non-western cultures
    - the foundations and characteristics of educated discourse
    - the unity and diversity of humanity
    - fine arts and aesthetics*
    - the intricate complexities of life on the planet
    - scientific information as it is applied to personal and social decisions
    - the approaches of the liberal arts disciplines*

  o Exhibit skills in...
    - critical and analytical thinking
    - effective written and oral communication
    - the use of more than one language
    - inquiry and research, including
      - posing thoughtful questions
      - gathering relevant information
      - evaluating multiple viewpoints
      - constructing cogent arguments
      - weighing evidence
    - quantitative reasoning*
    - problem-solving*

  o Develop dispositions to...
    - form a coherent, independent philosophy of life
    - make socially responsible and personally fulfilling life choices*
    - live sustainably*
    - value knowledge and continuing growth
    - form opinions and modify positions based on evidence
    - reason ethically and act with integrity*
    - promote social justice and peace*

*- Topics are mentioned at least briefly, but not enough to justify inclusion as a major goal of the course.

(4) Describe how your course meets the relevant course objectives for the chosen area (these can be found in the middle column of the General Education Plan on pages 6 – 21).

All courses in Global Perspectives will:
• explain and analyze various components of culture and show how these components interact. A significant portion of coverage for each region of the world is dedicated to examining cultural attributes, including language, religion, art and architecture, urban design, and the media. The very essence of using a spatial perspective to examine these attributes is not only to compare but to understand the linkages and relationships over space. Those linkages are perhaps the dominant theme of the course.
• examine American culture in relationship to other countries’ similar and dissimilar systems. Through the exploration of regions, the course uses North America (generally, the students’ home region) as the basis for comparison to other places. To ensure this comparison takes place, North America is treated just like any
other region with the same coverage of topics. The course also stresses that comparison is not placing the regions in a competitive framework against the others.

- **require students to read texts and engage in writing that totals at least 1500 words.** The textbook provides a basis for understanding through the course and resources for digging deeper into content. Students are encouraged, though not required, to read other news stories provided by the instructor as the semester progresses. The “Place Yourself” assignment alone is more than 1500 words, while the other three assignments are approximately 500 words each.

**Ideally, courses in the Global Perspective will also:**

- **enhance knowledge of arts, religions, cultural traditions, and ideas of world societies, both historical and contemporary.** All major world religions are covered from a comparative framework with some detail as the course progresses through regions dominated by those perspectives. Language, its dynamic nature and its influence on other cultural topics is covered throughout the semester. Other cultural traditions, including holidays, cuisine, film, art and architecture, are covered as time allows.

- **Refer to other disciplinary perspectives besides the course’s dominant discipline.** This is perhaps one of geography’s greatest strengths—the ability to refer to countless other disciplines outside of geography. In this course, to provide the basis necessary for a comparative analysis of regions of the earth, students will have some exposure to aspects of the following fields: geology, climatology, environmental studies, demography, economics, political science, anthropology, linguistics, religious studies and philosophy, music, film studies, and urban studies.

(5) Describe the types of activities and assignments students will complete to demonstrate the relevant desired student learning outcomes (e.g. in-class discussion, reflection paper, homework assignments, exam, etc). In other words, how will you be assessing students’ competencies in the relevant learning outcomes?

- **Examinations:** These are used to assess student understanding of and engagement with baseline course topics and the distribution of various attributes within these topics. These are based strongly on course lectures and assigned readings. This is crucial to ensuring that every student gets a similar experience and baseline knowledge for continued studies.

- **Map Quizzes:** These are used to assess student knowledge of place names. It is important that students have a requirement to develop familiarity with place names throughout the globe because it helps to move along the conversation in this course (e.g. topics can be covered more quickly if the instructor can refer to a phenomenon as being “near Krakow” and not have to explain where Krakow is located.)

- **“Place Yourself” Assignment:** Requires that students consult a variety of sources to gather information, to develop and organize this information into a presentable format, and to tie the project to the larger course topics. The project includes several benchmarks (check points) through the semester so students are receiving feedback on their progress and can then incorporate that information to further work. This project is crucial because it not only ensures that students are progressing on the important skills of data collection, organization, analysis and presentation, but also serves to show students their very connection both to the larger course topics and the world as a whole.

- **Mapping Assignment:** Helps students become familiar with many tools available for inquiry. Assesses whether students are capable of doing basic visual analysis of maps and how capable students are of communicating that information to an audience.

---

**Recommendation Dates and Signatures:**

- **Signature**

  - Dr. Russell L. Dodson

  - March 18, 2013

---

- **Approved by GES**

- **Approved by GES, pending minor change**

- **Not Approved by GES**
Welcome to the World Regional Geography! For some of you, this may be your first ever geography class or the first since grade school. The goal of this class is to use geography to conduct a brief overview of the world we live in. Covering something as diverse as our planet in so few meetings is impossible, but hopefully this class will enhance your knowledge of your world.

**Required Text:**
Title: *The Plaid Avenger’s World: Nuclear Insecurity Edition*
Author: Boyer
Publisher: Kendall Hunt
ISBN: 978-1-4652-0780-7

**Student Evaluation:**
Averages will be available for review on D2L. Check grades often for possible recording errors, as it is the student’s responsibility to bring it to the instructor’s attention.

- **Exams**
- **Map Quizzes**
- **Placing Yourself Assignment**
- **Other Assignments**

**Total**
50%
25%
10%
15%
100%

**Exams (4 @ 12.5% each, totaling 50% of final grade)**
The class will complete four exams, each with a variety of multiple-choice, matching and short answer questions. The fourth examination is the final, which covers material since the previous exam.

**Map Quizzes (4 @ 6.25% each, totaling 25% of final grade)**
Held on the same day as the exams, students will complete four map quizzes of the regions we study.

**Placing Yourself Assignment (10% of final grade)**
We’re each citizens of the earth, and we each came from ancestors spanning the globe. Each student will be exploring this aspect of themselves by completing and mapping their family tree.

**Other Assignments (3 @ 5% each, totaling 15% of final grade)**
We’ll be getting outside of the classroom to explore other aspects of the world. Students will be completing three additional assignments on other topics.

**Final Letter Grade Scale**
No A+
B+ 86.67-89.49%
C+ 76.67-79.4%
D+ 66.67-69.4%
A 93.33-100%
Submission of Assignments and Exams
Unless otherwise stated, all assignments must be submitted digitally using the D2L interface. No printed assignments will be accepted, nor will assignments be accepted as e-mailed attachments. Assignments placed in the box outside my office risk being ignored or lost.
Written assignments and exams must be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Adobe (.pdf), Rich Text Format (.rtf) or OpenDocument (.odt) format for student to receive credit. The instructor does not guarantee that other formats can be opened for evaluation. If you do not have Microsoft Word, you should probably purchase Microsoft Office through the Wisconsin Integrated Software Catalog (http://www.wisc.edu/wisc) at a discounted rate. If you cannot afford Microsoft Office, you can download the free OpenOffice (http://www.openoffice.org) for your personal machine. If none of the above will work for you, I recommend becoming acquainted with the many excellent public computer labs on campus.

Grading of Assignments and Exams
All assignments and exams will be graded digitally and returned to students via D2L. While the instructor strives to complete grading in a prompt fashion, please be aware that assignment formats in this require significant time investment to grade properly. If a student’s late assignment is not submitted before the instructor completes the class’s grades, the student will be marked with a zero grade on D2L, pending revision if a late assignment is submitted. While assignments submitted on time will receive the most immediate attention, late assignments will be graded at the instructor’s convenience.

Acceptance of Late Assignments
Each student is expected to submit all work promptly before assigned deadlines, because these will be your expectations in the workforce upon the completion of your education. Late work is accepted in the case of exams and papers, but substantial discounts are applied to the graded mark on this timeline:
• Submitted up until the assigned deadline: No deduction
• Submitted after the deadline until 48 hours following deadline: 50% deduction
• Submitted after 48 hours following the deadline: No credit
Because there will be ample time allowed to complete each assignment and exam, there are no exceptions to these guidelines and therefore there is no reason to ever ask for an extension on work. No work will be accepted after Thursday, May 9 at 11:59 pm.
In order for a late submission to be considered for credit, the student must submit late work to the “Late Submissions” Dropbox on D2L. The student must include a note that acknowledges the date that the submission was originally due, that the submission is being turned in late, the percentage deduction that is specified above for submitting it that late, and an agreement that you accept the deduction outlined. Late work submitted without this note attached will be ignored.

Course Policies:
Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty is simply not tolerated. The University of Wisconsin System policy for Academic Misconduct, as stated in Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter UWS 14, will be followed in this course. If there is evidence that a student knowingly plagiarized or cheated with premeditation, that student can be expelled from the college! If you have any concerns whatsoever about plagiarism in your work, contact the UWFox Writing Pad (http://bit.ly/UWFoxPad) or UWC Online Writing Lab (http://bit.ly/UWC_OWL) to be safe. These are excellent resources provided to students as part of their tuition. Don’t even put yourself into a situation where your work could be considered dishonest. It’s not worth the risk!
Students enrolled in any courses offered and taught by instructors in the University of Wisconsin Colleges
are to perform their academic work according to standards set by the UW System; cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. Detailed definitions, rules and remedial procedures for academic dishonesty are available from the legislature's website (http://bit.ly/UWS_Ch14).

**Attendance**

UW Colleges (UWC Institutional Curricular Policy #104) requires that all students maintain regular attendance in each course, and it is prerogative of instructors to create a course policy for managing student attendance.

In this course, attendance is counted separately from participation and discussion. Roll will be taken during only five meetings, with dates chosen at random by the instructor. Students are allowed two absences on attendance days for any reason. Any unexcused absences beyond those two results in a significant deduction to the student’s grade, explained as follows:

- Three total unexcused absences on attendance days result in a 10% deduction in final grade.
- Four total unexcused absences on attendance days result in a 20% deduction in final grade.
- Five total unexcused absences on attendance days result in an automatic failure of the course.

Arriving to class late will not be penalized as absent, but may result in a deduction in participation points. If you should arrive late, please quietly enter the classroom and sit in the first available seat. Students who disrupt class while entering late will be asked to leave and counted absent.

Absences are excused for certain circumstances:

- A student needs to miss class to accommodate for practice of a religious belief. Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter UWS 22 (http://bit.ly/UWS22) states that students have a right to miss class time to practice religious beliefs. The code requires that students submit dates where absences are needed to instructor in writing before the third week of class. In this course, these must be submitted in advance, before the end of class on September 26.
- A student needs to miss class to rehabilitate a specific limiting disability. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 state that students have a right to miss class time in order to rehabilitate substantially limited physical or mental disabilities. The student is required to submit documentation of these rehabilitative needs from a licensed physician as soon as the needed absence is known.
- In addition, a student may be excused for certain issues that cause them to miss class, which are not the student’s fault and can be documented.
  - Excused absences include, but are not limited to: contagious personal illness, automobile accidents, official university field trips in other courses, jury duty, being subject to court subpoena or a dire family emergency.
  - Inexcusable absences include, but are not limited to: oversleeping or being “hung over,” working at off-campus employment, non-emergency doctor appointments, sporting events and their aftermath, the beginning of hunting or spearing season, vacation, planned family visits, or any other un-documentable absence that could be scheduled for a different time.

  In almost any case, there is a way to get documentation for an excused absence, **but you must submit a copy of it to the instructor immediately when you return from the absence – in person – for your absence to be excused.** No e-mailed excuses will be accepted.
- **Help Me Know You!**

Your instructor is really terrible at placing names with faces, and that’s been a life-long curse. In order to accommodate this, students are asked to comply with a few requests to make things go more smoothly:

1. Create a nametag and display at every meeting, for the first couple of months.
2. Update your D2L account profile to have a photograph of your face.
3. Sit in approximately the same seat during every meeting.
These three steps will help tremendously.

**E-Mail Communication**

E-mail, via andrew.shears@uwc.edu is the preferred method for communication in this course. Because our relationship is a professional one, your e-mails are professional communication and should follow certain protocol. Each e-mail conversation you initiate should therefore include:

- A subject that summarizes your message – course name and the message purpose
- Content, including the following information, written with proper grammar, spelling and punctuation:
  - The course you are enrolled in – course title and meeting time suffices.
  - Purpose of the e-mail – is it a question, comment or concern?
  - A thorough description of the issue at hand.
  - Any resolution, response or action on my part that you are requesting.
- A signature that includes your full first and last name (tip: you can set up most email accounts to do this automatically for every message you write)

Initiating e-mails that do not meet these basic requirements will be ignored. Replying e-mails do not require each of these components, but should include the complete conversation thread left below the message.

Do not send e-mails asking for grades (these are posted on D2L), asking questions that can be answered by the syllabus, asking for extra credit or to excuse absences. E-mails or that are impolite, demanding, insulting or otherwise disrespectful will be ignored. E-mails that can be construed as aggressive, harassing or threatening will result in disciplinary action through the university.

The andrew.shears@uwc.edu e-mail account will be checked once per business day. If you send e-mail to that account, you should expect to receive a reply by the end of the next business day, and no sooner. I will not be answering e-mails on Saturday, Sunday, any holiday that brings the cancelation of university classes, or during breaks. If you send e-mail during those times, you can expect a response by the end of the next business day. Do not send multiple e-mails within 24 hours demanding immediate response; that will be considered harassment!

Typically, I recommend using e-mail for longer questions that need more thought or require discretion, and Twitter for quicker questions or comments that are okay for all to read, more like raising your hand.

**Cell Phones, Laptop Computers, Netbooks, iPads, iPods, Tablets, etc.**

When you’re in class, these are turned off and put away, unless specifically instructed otherwise. Students ignoring this rule will be asked to leave. It’s that simple. Exceptions will be made for students with documented need for which computer access provides equal opportunity in the course.

**Schedule:**

**Content/Schedule Change**

The instructional schedule reflects expected class progress in the course subject matter and is considered tentative. The schedule is subject to change in content and scope at the instructor’s discretion. If changes are necessary, I will announce them during class meetings in writing, via e-mail and on Twitter. It is your responsibility to regularly check your uwc.edu e-mail account, as this is the official means of electronic communication as outlined by college policy.

**Course Progression (subject to change)**

**Wk Tuesday Thursday**

1 January 29
- Introduction to Course
- Basics of Geography
- About the Earth

January 31
- Latitude and Longitude
- Seasons & Time Zones

2 February 5
Physical Geography basics

**February 7**
Human Geography Basics

**3 February 12**
Human Geography Basics

**February 14**
North America

**4 February 19**
Exam One

**Map Quiz One**

**February 21**
Western Europe

**5 February 26**
Eastern Europe

**Mapping Assignment Due**

**February 28**
Russia

**6 March 5**
Latin America

**March 7**
Mexico

**7 March 12**
International Food Festival

**March 14**
Exam Two

**Map Quiz Two**

**8 March 19**
NO CLASS

**March 21**
NO CLASS

**9 March 26**
South America

**March 28**
Middle East and North Africa

**International Food Assignment Due**

**10 April 2**
Turkey

Islam, Oil, Water

**April 4**
Flex Day

Topics TBA

**11 April 9**
NO CLASS

**April 11**
NO CLASS

**12 April 16**
Sub-Saharan Africa
April 18
Sub-Saharan Africa
International Film Assignment Due
13 April 23
Exam Three
Map Quiz Three
April 25
South Asia
14 April 30
Central Asia
May 2
East Asia
Meiji: The Original Transformer
15 May 7
China and Mao
North Korea: Beyond Insanity
May 9
Southeast Asia
Placing Yourself Assignment Due
16 May 14
Antarctica
Closing Thoughts
May 16
NO CLASS (finals)
17 May 21
Exam Four
Map Quiz Four