

# Introduction to Geography

## GEH 101 / GEH 501

Department of Environmental, Geographic, and Geological Science

Lehman College, CUNY

Spring 2011

**Classroom:** Gillet Hall 311

**Section 001:** Mon. 2:00–4:40

**Section XM81:** Mon. 6:00–8:40

**Course Website:** <http://geh101.wordpress.com>

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## Instructor

**Keith Miyake**

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**Phone:** 646.484.9881

**Office Hours:** Mon 5–6, or by appointment (Gillet Hall 325)

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## Overview

Geography is...

“a synoptic discipline synthesizing findings of other sciences through the concept of Raum (area or space).”

*-Immanuel Kant, c. 1780*

“the study of Earth as the home of people.”

*-Yi-Fu Tuan, 1991*

As an introduction to geography, this course is designed to provide a survey of the different branches of geographic inquiry and thought to help students develop a critical awareness of the dynamic world in which we live, as well as to begin asking questions that seek to understand the spatial relationships between people, places, and the environment. It is designed for students who are new to geography and will attempt to engage students' broad interests through the lens of geographical thinking and analysis. Students in the course are expected to participate as active learners, responsible for guiding and contributing to the content of the course, drawing from their own backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences.

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## Course Objectives

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Identify broad themes within geography, the types of questions addressed by geographers, and the tools used to conduct geographic research
2. Read and evaluate maps
3. Apply the major theories of physical geography to understanding the natural landscape, including plate tectonics, erosional landforms, basic weather processes, the distribution of climates, and the distribution of biota and resources
4. Explain the distribution of people across the Earth on the basis of population, migration, and resources
5. Be familiar with the spatial factors that shape human socio-spatial diversity, distributions of populations, and human impacts on their environments
6. Understand the role of political systems in shaping local, regional, and global processes and interactions
7. Identify different forms of economic activity and explain the ways they are shaped by political systems and how they shape geopolitics
8. Describe the process of urbanization and globalization
9. Explain the processes by which humans modify the natural environment (particularly climate change and agriculture), and the ramifications of those changes for different populations
10. Apply concepts of space and place to understand and identify how regions are defined and the ramifications for local and global processes.

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## Website

**Course Website:** <http://geh101.wordpress.com>

In addition to updated information contained within this syllabus, the course website will be updated with lecture notes and materials, assignment information, links to useful resources, and other geography related postings.

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## Textbook

Getis, Arthur, Judith Getis, and Jerome D. Fellmann. *Introduction to Geography*. 12 ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-07352282-1.

Earlier editions are available, but I would recommend against anything earlier than the 9th edition. It (and earlier editions) are available at the bookstore or online...

★Borrow it from the library

★Buy new (<http://www.amazon.com>): \$116 (sign up for Amazon Student for free 2-day shipping)

- ★Buy used (check <http://www.bigwords.com> for prices; around \$45)
- ★Book rental (<http://www.chegg.com>): \$34.99 (check due date)

## Assessment

### 1. Attendance and Class Participation

Students are allowed a maximum of one excused absence (meaning you cleared it with me prior to class, e.g. for a family emergency). **Five or more absences will result in a student receiving a grade of "WU" (unofficial withdraw).**

Class participation means that students are involved in discussions, complete in-class assignments, and demonstrate that they have completed the assigned readings.

### 2. Quizzes and In-Class Assignments

Students should be prepared for a short quiz, reading reflection, or other in-class activities. These will need to be completed in class. If you have a verifiable emergency and cannot be in class, it is your responsibility to contact me regarding make-up assignments.

### 3. Term Paper

Students will complete a mid-semester paper or project that comprises a major portion of the final grade. Details and due-dates will be announced in class and posted to the course website.

### 4. Mid-term and Final Exam

There will be an in-class midterm before spring break and a final exam administered during finals week. They will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions. There will also be a take-home portion of the final exam requiring longer (1–2 pages) written responses. Further information on the final exam, study guides, and review sessions will be announced in class and posted to the course website.

### Final Grade Breakdown

Attendance & Class Participation	10%
Quizzes & Discussion Topics	25%
Term Paper	20%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

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## Policies

- ★If you have special needs that require additional accommodations, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible and I will do everything in my power to ensure your needs are being attended to.
- ★Class will begin promptly at the scheduled time. Please arrive on time and prepared to discuss the assigned readings, and remain until the class is dismissed. Because it is a long class, there will generally be a short break in the middle of class.
- ★Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of ideas, facts, opinions, graphics, data, or other materials produced by another student or professional, without giving proper credit. Plagiarism, including copying from the Internet, published works, purchased essays, etc. without proper attribution, is a serious breach of academic integrity and will result in disciplinary actions.
- ★Students are to complete individual assignments independently of one another. Copying, in whole or part, is considered plagiarism and will result in disciplinary actions for both the student who copied and for the student whose work was copied.
- ★Unless otherwise specified, written assignments must be submitted electronically via email as Rich text (.rtf), Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), Open Office (.odt), Apple Pages (.pages), or Adobe PDF (.pdf) files. Please **do not submit documents in the body of the email** since this may strip document formatting.
- ★All writing assignments must be typed on 8.5"x11" white paper in Times or Times New Roman, 12 point font, double line spaced, with 1" margins (0.5" header spacing is acceptable). Include your name and a page number on every page.
- ★Term papers must be formatted using the Annals of the American Association of Geographers style guidelines, which are a variant on the Chicago Manual of Style. The style sheet is available at <http://www.aag.org/galleries/default-file/ANNALSSTYLE SHEET.pdf>.
- ★You are strongly encouraged to exchange contact information with at least one other student in the class. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get any notes, new assignments, etc. I cannot promise that all of the information will be updated on the course website.
- ★Audio recording is generally OK, but please be courteous and ask permission first.
- ★If you are in doubt about something or have a problem with the course, please contact me as soon as possible—either by phone, email, or during my office hours—and I will do my best to accommodate you within reason.

## Course Schedule

<b>Week 1</b>	1/31	Chapter 1 – Intro to Geography
<b>Week 2</b>	2/7	Chapter 2 – Maps
<b>Week 3</b>	2/14	Chapter 3 – Landforms
<b>–</b>	2/21	<i>Presidents' Day – No Class</i>
<b>Week 4</b>	2/23	Chapter 4 – Weather and Climate
<b>Week 5</b>	2/28	Chapter 5 – Natural Resources
<b>Week 6</b>	3/7	Chapter 12 – Human Impact on the Environment Mid-term exam review
<b>Week 7</b>	3/14	<b>Mid-term Exam</b>
<b>Week 8</b>	3/21	Chapter 8 – Spatial Interaction <b>Term paper outline and bibliography due</b>
<b>Week 9</b>	3/28	Chapter 6 – Population Geography
<b>Week 10</b>	4/4	Chapter 7 – Cultural Geography
<b>Week 11</b>	4/11	Chapter 9 – Political Geography <b>Term Papers Due</b>
<b>–</b>	4/18–4/26	<i>Spring Recess – No Class</i>
<b>Week 12</b>	5/2	Chapter 10 – Economic Geography
<b>Week 13</b>	5/9	Chapter 11 – Urban Geography
<b>Week 14</b>	5/16	Chapter 13 – The Regional Concept Final exam review
<b>Final Exam</b>	5/23	<b>Tentative final exam date</b>