

## GEO 274: Environment and Culture

Spring 2017

Dr. Melissa Y. Rock

Department of Geography

SUNY New Paltz

---

<b>Class Meetings:</b>	MR 2:00-3:15pm (section 2); MR 3:30-4:45pm (section 1) HUM 317
<b>Email:</b>	myrock@newpaltz.edu
<b>Office:</b>	103 Science Hall
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Tuesday: 3:30-5:30pm, Friday: 12noon-2pm

---

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through readings, lectures, and discussions, the three-credit course *Environment and Culture* will expose you to fundamental issues and concepts relating to the discipline of Human Geography. Simultaneously, you will also investigate the concept of globalization, utilizing a range of disciplinary tools of inquiry to further understand the interdependent nature of the global system and the consequences this interdependence has for political, economic, and social problems.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course therefore has several goals, but the four principle ones relate to the study of Global Connections, in particular considering what a Human Geography disciplinary perspective reveals about globalization.

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Analyze, interpret and critique a map at a basic level.
2. Identify and explain the general spatial patterns and characteristics of political, cultural, social and economic phenomena on the Earth.
3. Interpret current world issues and events using human geographical perspectives and scholarly approaches.
4. Examine the manner and degree to which people and places are interconnected, the shifting character of those interconnections, and subsequent implications.

Additionally—since this is a geography course—you will not only come to understand that space constitutes a vital category for understanding society at different scales, but also the role played by individuals (such as yourself!) in human-environment relations, as part of a larger dynamic involving the interplay of social and environmental change. Academic geographical study can provide a whole host of different explanations of environmental and social problems, providing the ability to systematically synthesize theory and evidence—something that you'll become adept at as the semester progresses.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Knox, Paul L. & Marston, Sallie, A. (2016) *Human Geography: Places and Regions in Global Context*. Seventh Edition (Prentice Hall: New Jersey)

The textbook is available at the university bookstore, but can be purchased elsewhere (please make sure it is the 6<sup>th</sup> edition as content and case studies are regularly updated to reflect recent current events). Non-textbook reading assignments will be posted to Blackboard.

### FILMS

This class will also include films, which are intended to stimulate discussion and offer examples based on information discussed in class. Films (or portions of films) shown in/for class are important content that can and should be used

for analysis in all assignments and exams in the course. As such, there will be a ‘Film Connections’ assignment due—see section below.

## LECTURES/CLASS DISCUSSION

This class will include some lectures, although sizeable portions of class time will be dedicated to class discussion. Thus, it is imperative that you come to class prepared – having read the assigned reading for the day and having digested some of the key points so that you may contribute intelligent and insightful comments and analysis.

## ASSESSMENT:

### CELEBRATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE & SKILL! (CKS, also known as: Quizzams & Quizzlets)

There will be two Quizzams (hybrid quiz/exam) over the course of the semester and one mini-Quizzlet. Quizzams will be worth 10% of your grade and the quizzlet will be worth 5%. These *Celebrations of Skill* will be held in class.

**There are no make-up ‘celebrations.’** You **MUST** talk to me in advance if you anticipate a scheduling conflict (see schedule dates below).

## FILM CONNECTIONS

The films are an important component of the course that adds both new content and a different perspective and way of engaging with the topics covered. We will be watching 3-4 films over the course of the semester. After you watch each film you are to compose a 1-page (single spaced) reflection on the film and how it connects to the course. In order to excel in this assignment, you are expected to concisely highlight the main point(s) and argument(s) from the film and connect it to topics covered in the textbook, supplementary reading and to broader course themes where applicable. While I enjoy knowing that you liked (or didn’t like) a particular film, it is important that you let me know how viewing the film with an analytical and geographic lens provided deeper understanding or a different appreciation for the content covered in the film. The point of this assignment is for you to show me that you know why I am showing you this film in this course. It is your job to make the connection between the film and the course. Here’s your chance to show me “you get it”. This paper should be considered an academic style of paper (in discussion and writing style), so take time to edit, spell check and reference (APA formatting, citations not included in page length) overlapping course material. You will hand in three Film Connection papers over the course of the semester. You’ll submit each of these assignments as hard copies in class—dates are listed in the schedule portion of this syllabus. The header for your assignment should also be single-spaced and be formatted as follows:

GEO 274, Section # Professor Rock	<i>Short Title</i>	Your Name Date <b><u>Due</u></b>
--------------------------------------	--------------------	-------------------------------------

## ACTIVITIES

We will have three assigned in-class activities that will be graded. The dates for these activities are indicated in the course schedule and due dates chart below. While we will start these activities in class, you will be responsible for finishing them out of class and submitting them by the due date per activity instructions (to be handed out in class). For activity days you should bring your laptop to class (must be able to connect to the campus Wifi). If you do not own a laptop you can sign one out of the Sojourner Truth Library before class and bring it to class that day. If you do borrow one from the library, be sure to also bring your own USB flash drive to save all your own material from the activity.

## REFLECTIVE ESSAY

The reflective essay is a one-page single-spaced writing assignment that is due on the last day of class. The reflective essay should draw connections between course material, discussions, films, and readings from the semester. This is your time to reflect on what you learned throughout the semester and draw some preliminary conclusions on how you think this course provided a new perspective with which to understand our globalizing world. It should **not** be

just a summary of class content, but a personal reflection regarding how the content of the course has influenced your ability (set of tools with which) to analyze a variety of current events.

**Note:** In the writing assignments, you may build your position by extending, qualifying or agreeing with the claims in the readings. If you quote or paraphrase from an article or book, you must use in-text citation for those ideas (Smith, p. 21). If you are using ideas or language from the readings that is not common knowledge or if you are quoting directly, you must cite the source, both to be intellectually honest about where the idea came from and to direct your reader to the page/article so that s/he may delve into the idea more fully. I will be paying attention to uses of sources and possible plagiarism, and will be glad to help you learn both when and how to cite sources well.

**Late assignments will only be accepted for 24 hours past the due date and will be penalized 20%.** (For example, if an assignment is due on Tuesday, February 7 at 9PM, a late assignment will ONLY be accepted until Wednesday, February 8 at 9PM). Assignments will **NOT** be accepted after this time, which will result in zero points for that assignment.

### CAMPUS AND CLASS-SPECIFIC POLICIES:

#### PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is required. I will take attendance, but it is not counted in your grades because you are expected to come to class prepared and to participate with questions, comments and/or answers. You are responsible for all materials covered or announced in class, whether or not you are present. If you feel that you should drop this course, it is your responsibility to remember to do it before the deadline (March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017). *Please note: Regular attendance in class does not guarantee a good grade, but poor attendance almost always results in a poor grade.*

In case of inclement weather or possible campus closings, please check the college's website or call 257-INFO to find out whether or not classes are cancelled. If you fall ill or are called to deal with a family emergency (i.e., death in the family), you *must* contact Professor Rock in advance of missing a class.

#### COURSE WITHDRAW

The last day of the semester to withdraw from a course without receiving a penalty grade is March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. The last day of the semester to elect the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option is April 7<sup>th</sup> 2017.

### GRADING

Assessment	Percent of Grade	Points	Grade
CELEBRATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE & SKILL (CKS) (2.5)	25 %	94 – 100	A
FILM CONNECTIONS (3)	30 %	90 – 93	A –
ACTIVITIES (3)	30%	87 – 89	B +
REFLECTIVE ESSAY	5 %	83 – 86	B
PARTICIPATION		80 – 82	B –
& ATTENDANCE	10 %	77 – 79	C +
		73 – 76	C
		70 – 72	C –
Total	=100 percent	60 – 69	D
		0 – 59	F

## DUE DATES

Mapping Activity	Feb 16	Quizzam (CKS) #2:	April 20
Film Connection #1:	Feb 23	Culture Jamming	April 27
Quizzam (CKS) #1:	March 2	Activity	
Commodity Chain	March 13	Film Connection #3	May 4
Activity		Quizzlet (mini-CKS):	May 8
Film Connection #2	April 6	Reflective Essay	May 8

NOTE: THERE ARE NO EXTRA CREDIT OPTIONS IN THIS CLASS.

## WORKLOAD

Colleges consider a 15-credit course load to be a full-time load (40 hours of work during and outside class each week). For a 3-credit course like ours, this works out to 2.5 hours in class plus 5.5 hours outside of class each week (about an hour a day, five days a week). You should use that time reviewing and taking notes on the course materials, studying for quizzes and exams, organizing your class notes, memorizing terms and definitions, and finding examples to help you understand the models and theories presented in class.

This is a broad survey course and we have only a limited amount of class time to cover the material. If you are struggling to understand anything related to this course, you should make arrangements to see me either during office hours or at some other mutually agreeable time. Do not wait until a day or two before an exam to ask me questions! The sooner you come to me, the better.

I strongly encourage you to take your time in studying for exams. Cramming a day or two in advance is unlikely to improve your performance. It is to your benefit to go beyond memorization and actually understand the concepts you're learning. While quizzes may focus on factual information (e.g., definitions or identification of terms), on exams you will be expected to analyze and construct arguments and provide your own examples to illustrate concepts learned in the course.

## CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

I expect students to act with common courtesy—and you should expect the same of me! Many of the topics we will cover in this class are complex, and some of them carry the potential for heated debate. This makes it especially important to maintain a respectful classroom environment—and we are all responsible for this.

To that end, I expect you to:

1. frame your arguments and comments in ways that respect the differences between yourself and others in the room (i.e., be genuine in your curiosity about the world and other people; avoid using loaded, rude, or intentionally insulting language; be genuine in your concern for others; do your best to keep a cool head in moments of disagreement; be willing to hear others' opinions)
2. refrain from taking phone calls and using social media on cell phones, iPads, laptops, etc. (see above)
3. keep entrances and exits to a minimum and, if you must leave and reenter, do it quietly
4. avoid other minor distractions such as eating, coughing/blowing nose disruptively (please excuse yourself from the classroom to take care of yourself)
5. generally pay attention to what's happening in the classroom. Be fully present in mind and body.

In short, I'm asking you to treat me and your fellow students with the same respect you (hopefully) expect from me. For those (including myself) who are technology addicts, let me be absolutely clear: texting and cell phone use are not allowed in the classroom. If you have an emergency that you need to possibly attend to and therefore you must be available to respond to a cell phone call, please let me know in advance of class. I understand that we

all have people we care about who may rely upon us (i.e./ children, ill parents, a friend in need) and that life doesn't stop while we're in class. So I respect the need to be available to a family or friend in emergency situations. However, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and so forth can wait. Thank you for being fully present and part of our classroom community.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: COPYING, CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

Please consult the regulations in the SUNY New Paltz Student Handbook at

<http://www.newpaltz.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook09.pdf>

Also, the Academic Integrity statement: See [www.newpaltz.edu/advising/policies\\_integrity.html](http://www.newpaltz.edu/advising/policies_integrity.html).

In this class, your work must be written in your own words! Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their academic work. Cheating, forgery, and plagiarism are serious offenses and students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Faculty are required to report such incidents to the Dean. There are no excuses for this type of action/behavior—if you are struggling in this class, come discuss your performance and concerns with me. Additionally, if you have special needs because of a learning disability or other kinds of disabilities, feel free to come and discuss this with me.

You are responsible for being informed about these matters. For more details, see the college's policy on academic integrity at [www.newpaltz.edu/advising/policies\\_integrity.html](http://www.newpaltz.edu/advising/policies_integrity.html).

### **STUDENT RESOURCES**

If you need assistance or advisement beyond what I can do for you, the following resources are available:

#### Center for Student Resources and Academic Support

Provides tutoring and writing assistance.

Web page:

[http://www.newpaltz.edu/tutoring\\_center/](http://www.newpaltz.edu/tutoring_center/)

Location: Old Main Building Basement, B106

Phone: 845.257.3580

#### Academic Advising Office

Location: Old Main Building, Room 127

Web: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/advising/>

Phone: 845.257.3015

#### Psychological Counseling Center

Location: Student Health and Counseling Ctr

Web: <http://www.newpaltz.edu/counseling/>

Phone: 845.257.2920

**Reasonable accommodation of individuals with disabilities statement.** Students with documented physical, learning, psychological and other disabilities are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations. Any student who will need classroom and/or testing accommodations based on the impact of a disability should contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Student Union Building, Room 210, 845-257-3020. The DRC will provide an Accommodation Memo verifying the need for accommodation. As soon as the instructor receives the form, you will be provided with the appropriate accommodations. Students are encouraged to request accommodations as close to the beginning of the semester as possible.

**Veteran and Military Services statement.** New Paltz's Office of Veteran and Military Services (OVMS) is committed to serving the needs of veterans, service members and their dependents during their transition from military life to student life. Student veterans, service members or their dependents who need assistance while attending SUNY New Paltz may refer to [www.newpaltz.edu/veterans](http://www.newpaltz.edu/veterans); call 845-257-3120, -3124 or -3074; or stop by the Student Union, Room 100 South.

**Computer and network policies statement.** Users of New Paltz's computer resources and network facilities are required to comply with the institutional policies outlined in the Acceptable Uses and Privacy Policy (<https://sites.newpaltz.edu/csc/policies/acceptable-uses-and-privacy-policy/>).

### **Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI):**

You are responsible for completing the Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) for this course. Your feedback is valuable. Please complete the form during the open period on-line: April 26<sup>th</sup> - May 10<sup>th</sup> 2017.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**\*subject to change with notice\***

(all non-textbook readings available on Blackboard)

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Activities &amp; Due Dates</i>
INTRODUCTION			
<b>week one</b>			
January 23:	Introduction to the course		
January 26:	What is Human Geography?	Chapter 1	
THINKING SPATIALLY (MAPS)			
<b>week two</b>			
January 30:	<i>Watch: Africa: The Magnificent African Cake (not FC)</i>		
February 2:	Discussion: Colonialism, Africa & Maps (film connection 'practice')	Chapter 2. The Changing Global Context	
<b>week three</b>			
February 6:	Why Geography Matters		
February 9:	Mapping Activity		<i>Mapping Activity: bring laptops</i>
ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION (COMMODITY CHAINS)			
<b>week four</b>			
February 13:	<i>Watch: China Blue (FC#1)</i>		
February 16:	Globalization & Development		Mapping Activity due
<b>week five</b>			
February 20:	<i>President's Day – No class</i>		
February 23:	Commodity Chains	Chapter 8	FC#1 due
<b>week six</b>			
February 27:	Commodity Chain Activity		<i>Commodity Chain Activity: bring laptops</i>
March 2:	<b><u>Celebration of Knowledge &amp; Skill!</u></b>		(aka: quizzam)
POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY/ GEOPOLITICS (WORLD SYSTEMS ANALYSIS/ COLONIALISM/NEW WORLD ORDER?)			
<b>week seven</b>			
March 6:	Geopolitics	Chapter 10	
March 9:	Political Geography (National & Local) Gerrymandering & Redistricting		

**POPULATION & ENVIRONMENT**  
(POPULATION GROWTH, RESOURCES/ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE)

<b>week eight</b> March 13:	Population Geography	Chapter 3	Commodity Chain Activity due
March 16:	People and Nature	Chapter 4, Smith, N. (2006). There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster	
<b>week nine</b> March 20 & 23	<i>SPRING BREAK – No classes</i>		
<b>week ten</b> March 27:	<i>Watch: A Fierce Green Fire (FC#2)</i>		
March 30:	People and Nature		

**FOOD & AGRICULTURE**  
(FOOD SYSTEMS/AGRIBUSINESS)

<b>week eleven</b> April 3:	Food & Agriculture	Chapter 9, Murdoch, Jon. (2006)	FC#2 due
April 6:	<i>Watch: Food, Inc. (not FC)</i>	Dis/ordering Space III: The case of food.	

**CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY**  
(CULTURE WARS/PLACE & BELONGING)

<b>week twelve</b> April 10:	<i>Passover – No classes</i> <i>Watch: Milk (not FC)</i>		Bring laptops for <i>Culture Jamming Activity</i>  (aka: quizzam 2)
April 13:	Cultural Geography	Chapter 5	
<b>week thirteen</b> April 17:	Culture Jamming Activity		
April 20:	<u><b>Celebration of Knowledge &amp; Skill!</b></u>		
<b>week fourteen</b> April 24:	<i>Watch: Dogtown &amp; Z-boyz (FC#3)</i>		

**URBANIZATION/POST-INDUSTRIAL URBAN SPACES**  
(GLOBAL TRENDS, US TRENDS, WORLD CITIES)

<b>week fourteen (cont.)</b> April 27:	Interpreting Places and Landscapes	Chapter 7	Culture Jamming Activity due
<b>week fifteen</b> May 1:	Urbanization	Chapter 11	
May 4:	City Spaces/Urban Structure	Chapter 12	FC#3 due

<b>week sixteen</b> May 8:	<b>Mini-Celebration of Knowledge &amp; Skill!</b> Course Finale, Evaluations		(aka: quizzlet)