

# GEO 150 World Regional Geography



## DETAILS

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Spring 2015  
Mondays & Wednesdays 15:30 - 16:45  
Building D Room 206

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## DESCRIPTION

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Taking a global perspective, this course provides students with the tools to explore the geography's overarching question: the why of where. Why is the Sahara Desert expanding? Why are some regions developed economically while others are not? Why is Earth's climate changing? Why is religion important politically and culturally in some regions and not in others? Geography offers five interrelated lenses to bring questions such as these into focus: location, region, place, migration, and human environment interaction. Through grappling with specialized terminologies of both physical and human geography, students will gain a deeper insight into the planet they inhabit. By approaching the globe regionally, students will acquire specific geographic knowledge, and more importantly, they will begin to understand how physical and human geographies interrelate and shape the possibilities of future cultural and economic development on our shared planet.

## OBJECTIVES

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Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Have a working knowledge of the five themes of geography.
2. Be able to think spatially about world history and environmental issues.
3. Be able to identify where geography intersects with other fields such as economics, cultural studies, political science, and development studies.
4. Be comfortable using geographical terminology in written communication.

5. Have gained a geographic perspective on globalization, migration, international conflict & cooperation, and climate change.
6. Have developed a skill-set enabling them to critically think about how regional human and physical geographies mold political systems, religious systems, and systems of *commonsense*.

## READING

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### Required

Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind. Yuval Noah Harari (2014)

### Recommended

Fundamentals of World Regional Geography (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Joseph J. Hobbs (2013)—*available for use at the library*

## ASSESSMENT

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Pop Quizzes	15 points
Reading Responses	30 points
Midterm Exam	25
Final Exam	30

Total Possible	100 points
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### Reading Responses

Each week students must craft a compelling response to the assigned reading. I mindfully chose a global history of humanity (spanning 70,000 years) as the required text for this class because it sets the groundwork for asking fundamental geographic questions, for exploring the why of where. I expect students to read and engage with this text. Response questions assess your ability to synthesize material presented in class with history, current events and possible human futures; in other words, they allow me to see you think. Responses should not exceed 250 words. There are a total of fifteen (15) questions throughout the semester. Questions will be assessed as very good (2 points), adequate (1.25 points), and insufficient (.5 points). Questions must be posted on AIMS by 12:00 each Monday.

### Pop Quizzes

There will be a total of five (5) unannounced quizzes, each worth three (3) points. The quizzes will cover lecture and reading material from the previous week. They will comprise multiple-choice, short answer and true/false questions. There will be no chance to make up any quiz, aside from an exceptional situation. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

### Midterm Exam

The midterm will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments. It will cover *terms, concepts and theories* as well as *regional specifics* presented during the first part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer and true/false questions. There will be no chance to

make up the midterm, aside from an aside from an exceptional situation. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

### **Final Exam**

The final will cover material presented in lectures and in the reading assignments during the entire semester. It will cover *terms, concepts and theories* covered during the entire semester and *regional specifics* presented during the second part of the semester. It will comprise multiple-choice, short answer and true/false answer questions. There will be no chance to make up the final exam, aside from an aside from an exceptional situation. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

## **ASSESSMENT POLICIES**

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### **Format Requirements**

All written assignments must include the following in the upper left corner of the first page: Student's name, student ID number, assignment name, and due date. All assignments must be formatted in the following manner: double spaced, font size of 11 or 12 point, standard margins, and an indented first line for each paragraph.

### **Submission Requirements**

Unless otherwise instructed, students are expected to submit written assignments on the AIMS platform. I will only accept Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF (.pdf) formats. All files submitted must be saved in the following manner: Student Name\_Assignment Name.docx. I expect assignments to be submitted via AIMS on time. Assignments due in class must be turned in at the beginning of class. I reserve the right to deduct points for late submissions and I reserve the right to determine the percentage to be deducted.

### **Makeup Work**

Aside from exceptional situations, there will be no chance to make up missed exams or quizzes or turn assignments in past their due day/time. Proof of an exceptional situation must be submitted to me in writing and signed by the appropriate authority within 24 hours of the beginning of the missed exam. I reserve the right to define an exceptional situation and furthermore to make all final decisions relating to amending, redoing, or making up late, incomplete, or not-completed work.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

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### **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, failing the class, and possibly dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty consists of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and

falsification, multiple submission of the same work, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for being observant of and attentive to Akita International University's policies about academic honesty.

### **Attendance**

This course is not an online or distance course—being in class matters! Learning is an ongoing process; one that builds upon previously acquired insights and skills. Consistent and engaged attendance is vital for success in this and all college courses. I will sanction attendance by tracking assignments and random roll calls. I reserve the right to deal with or exceptional or extended absences, on a case-by-case basis.

### **Special Needs**

If you require accommodations, please alert me of your needs on the first day of class so that I can work within Akita International University policies to adequately provide them.

### **Civility & Classroom Decorum**

Silence all cell phones, beepers, etc. during class. Speaking on cell phones, texting, or using electronic equipment in any way that is not directly related to class (i.e. taking notes, using a translation program during lectures, etc.) is strictly prohibited.

### **Student Participation**

Learning is a participatory process; therefore student contribution to class is important. This course is based in large measure on critical thinking and class discussion. Disagreement is part of these processes. Colleagues can disagree *and* maintain respect for each other and one another's views. I insist that we strive to learn from the differences that manifest while debating the merit of theoretical and empirical evidence by maintaining an atmosphere of civility during discussion. I will sanction participation by tracking of individual student contribution to the in-class learning environment.

## **SCHEDULE**

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### **Week 1    Thinking Spatially**

Sept 2    Lecture  
Reading    Sapiens - Chapter 1

### **Week 2    Physical Geography**

Sept 7    Lecture  
Sept 9    Lecture  
Reading    Sapiens - Chapters 2 & 3

### **Week 3    Demography and Medical Geography**

Sept 14    Lecture  
Sept 16    Lecture  
Reading    Sapiens - Chapters 4 & 5

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Open Campus</b>
Sept 21	NO CLASS
Sept 23	NO CLASS
Reading	Sapiens - Chapters 6 & 7
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Cultural Geography</b>
Sept 28	Lecture
Sept 38	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapters 8 & 9
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Development Geography</b>
Oct 5	Lecture
Oct 7	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 10
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Europe</b>
Oct 14	Lecture
Oct 16	Make-up Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 11
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Russia</b>
Oct 19	MIDTERM EXAM
Oct 21	Lecture
Reading	Chapter 12
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>The Middle East &amp; North Africa</b>
Oct 26	Lecture
Oct 28	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 13
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>
Nov 2	Lecture
Nov 4	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 14
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Latin America &amp; The Caribbean</b>
Nov 9	Lecture
Nov 11	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 15
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>North America</b>
Nov 16	Lecture
Nov 18	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 16
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Oceania</b>
Nov 23	Make-up Lecture
Nov 25	Lecture
Reading	Sapiens - Chapter 17

**Week 14 Asia**

Nov 30 Lecture

Dec 2 Lecture

Reading Sapiens - Chapter 18

**Week 15 Asia**

Dec 7 Lecture

Dec 9 Lecture

Reading Sapiens - Chapter 19

**Week 16 Final Exam**

Dec 14 FINAL EXAM REVIEW

Dec 16 FINAL EXAM (Room D204 15:30-16:45)