



## GEA 2270: GEOGRAPHY OF FLORIDA

Department of Geography  
University of Florida  
Course Syllabus, Fall 2023  
[3 Credits – 6000 word req.]

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Class Meeting Times and location</u></b></p> <p><b>Tuesday:</b> Periods 4-5 (10:40am – 12:35pm) – FLI0115 [Keene-Flint Hall]</p> <p><b>Thursday:</b> Period 5 (11:45 – 12:45pm) – LIT0237 [Little Hall]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Instructor: Zainab Ali</u></b></p> <p><b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:Zainabali@ufl.edu">Zainabali@ufl.edu</a> (or Canvas inbox)</p> <p><b>Office Hours:</b> Thursday: 9:30am – 11:30am or by appointment</p> <p><b>Office Location:</b> TUR 1215 or Zoom (details on canvas)</p>
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### Course Description

The course will emphasize the significance of Florida’s physical and cultural environments, and economic and political affairs in a globalizing world. This course presents the Geography of Florida in a comprehensive and systematic survey of Florida’s demographics, natural resources, and regional characteristics. The class will incorporate lectures, reading, various media and exercises.

Rather than lazy, beach dwelling, flamboyant and privileged populations impacted by immigration, corruption, and environmental degradation, we will consider the diverse and resilient landscapes and people. Media stereotypes and contemporary questions will be addressed in geographical context and evaluated. Students will be asked to address their preconceptions and work to understand contemporary Florida.

This course will enhance student awareness of how geographic concepts apply to and have influenced their lives specific to the state of Florida. Students should anticipate the requirement to develop an understanding of the approaches used by geographers to identify and analyze physical and cultural landscapes, and human-environment relationships of Florida.

### Course Objectives

The objective of this course is the development of an understanding of the importance of the geography of the State of Florida and provide an academic and practical foundation to evaluate the historical, current, and future issues and events in Florida. The relationships between physical environment and human systems are the basic tenant of geography. The physical and human landscapes of Florida will be evaluated in relation to current events, politics, and challenges, while considering the historical perspective.

The course is constructed to incorporate writing and research in the examination of the origin and evolution of the physical and human landscape of Florida. Assignments will emphasize all scales of geography from global economic dimensions to grains of sand, using original research, design, and writing. The course will provide essential background material and concepts will be considered systematically. While the course will be divided into sections, students should anticipate the interconnectedness of the discipline of Geography.

Before beginning with the Florida-centric content, you must first discover what the field of geography is truly all about! This will help as we go through the modules, as each lecture will touch on fundamental concepts to subfields of geography. The class will follow include general sections:

- **Physical Geography of Florida** (tectonic history, climate & weather, natural resources)
- **Human-Environmental Interactions** (drainage and deforestation, pollution, impact of conservation, environmental problems, natural hazards)
- **Economic/Political Geography** (political territory, power, geospatial technology, commodities, and economic sectors)
- **Cultural & Human Geography** (indigenous populations, population geography/demographics - birth and death rates, immigration, age cohorts)
- **Development** (urbanization, city structures, globalization, economic development, transportation)
- **Social Geography** (education, popular culture, tourism)

This class will NOT be about geography trivia. The goal for this course is to instill an ability to write and think geographically, rather than the requirement to memorize information. While this course is by its nature fact based, the assignments are designed to develop the following important skills: (1) written and verbal communication; (2) research and critical thinking; (3) problem evaluation and analysis; and (4) application of knowledge. Each assignment will provide the opportunity for a student to demonstrate creativity in applied geography.

### **Course Expectations**

You are expected to follow the syllabus closely, attend/watch lectures, attend office hours when needed, and communicate with your instructor and fellow students.

Each member of this class will be participating in a presentation and support from your peers is essential. While I understand that the requirement to make a presentation to the class may be daunting, every student will participate and I expect demonstrated effort and creativity, and respect for each other.

## Course Assignments

- There will be no assigned textbook in this class. You will be provided with all required reading materials on Canvas. You will be expected to be prepared by reading the materials and each of you will be assigned/choose a topic which will engender considerable outside research in preparation of a paper and a presentation to your peers.
- Proficient use of the library databases for research of scholarly materials for assignments.
- This class will include written assignments and an expectation for college level writing in the discipline of geography. References to scholarly material must be made in a professional format, as shown below. All work should be well structured, clear, and concise.

## Discussion Techniques

- Listen to each other and learn a variety of perspectives upon which you can build your opinions in favor or against an issue.
- Discussions should be focused. Connections between the various sub-disciplines of Geography will enhance your ability to evaluate issues.
- Insight from readings, supplemented by awareness of current events and connections to your personal interests or other classes will enhance your discussion skills.

## Reading and Literature Citation

In your assignments and presentations, you are expected to cite all sources using proper standards (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago). For more information about citing sources check the UF Libraries website for more information about proper guidelines for proper citation formats:

<https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/libraryresearch/citingsources#s-lg-box-18406855>

## Canvas E-learning

This class will be conducted using the Canvas e-Learning System. The syllabus, course calendar, reading materials and resources will be available through Canvas. I will communicate with the class regularly through Canvas announcements, so be sure to check regularly for updates. All assignments must be posted through Canvas unless otherwise instructed. Grades will be posted on Canvas. The best method of contact for the instructor is through Canvas email. Please note that private discussions about grades are ONLY allowed through canvas or during offices hours, as this is the University standard for security and privacy reasons, we cannot discuss your grades through UFL email.

If you experience problems with the e-Learning system, such as log-in issues, please contact the **UF Computing Help Desk** at the Hub. You can also call the help desk at **352-392-4357** or send them an email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

**Course Makeup and Grading Distribution:**

Writing Assignments	<b>50%</b>
Discussions	<b>25%</b>
Class Participation, Quizzes & Activities	<b>5%</b>
Final Presentation	<b>10%</b>
Final Exam	<b>10%</b>

**Grading Scale**

<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>D-</b>	<b>E</b>
94-100	90-93	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	74-76	70-73	67-69	64-66	61-63	< 61

To perform well in this class, you will need to: (1) Attend all lectures (2) take lecture notes and set aside time to review your notes (3) participate in class activities (4) Check Canvas announcements regularly. If you are not doing well and have studied, read, and attended class, please e-mail me – do not wait until the end of the semester. All assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the due date or as indicated on the Calendar. Late assignments will be marked down 10% each day they are late. Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## Course Schedule

	Date	Topic	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	24-Aug	Course Introduction	Syllabus Quiz
<b>Week 2</b>	29-Aug	Defining Florida; What is Geography?	Discussion 1: Ethnocentricity (25 words)
	31-Aug	Physical Geography of Florida	Discussion 2: Accents (25 words)
<b>Week 3</b>	5-Sep	Florida Geological History	Discussion 3: Peer Interviews (250 words)
	7-Sep	Florida Weather & Climate	
<b>Week 4</b>	12-Sep	Florida Weather & Climate	Favorite Florida Place Essay (1000 words)
	14-Sep	Florida's Natural Resources	
<b>Week 5</b>	19-Sep	Florida's Natural Resources	Discussion 4: Hurricanes (250 words)
	21-Sep	Land-use & Land Cover of Florida	
<b>Week 6</b>	26-Sep	Historical Geography of Florida	Forgotten Coast Essay (500 words)
	28-Sep	Historical Geography of Florida	
<b>Week 7</b>	3-Oct	<b>GIS Activity</b>	Submit Field Trip Site Selection
	5-Oct	Demographics & Population Dynamics of Florida	
<b>Week 8</b>	10-Oct	<b>Field Trip</b>	The Everglades Essay (500 words)
	12-Oct	Demographics/Population Geography	Famous Floridian Profile (500 words)
<b>Week 9</b>	17-Oct	Urban Geography of Florida	<b>Submit your Florida Issue Topic</b>
	19-Oct	Urban Geography of Florida	Discussion 5: Tour Guide (250 words)
<b>Week 10</b>	24-Oct	Political Geography of Florida	
	26-Oct	Political Geography of Florida	
<b>Week 11</b>	31-Oct	Economic Geography of Florida	Discussion 6: Politics in FL (250 words)
	2-Nov	Economic Geography of Florida	
<b>Week 12</b>	7-Nov	<b>Field Trip: FNHM Scavenger hunt</b>	Field Trip Essay (1000 words)
	9-Nov	Energy Sources & Use in Florida	
<b>Week 13</b>	14-Nov	Weird Florida & Future of Florida	Discussion 7: NASA Space Program (250 words)
	16-Nov	Weird Florida & Future of Florida	
<b>Week 14</b>	21-Nov	Florida Issues	Discussion 8: Gator Country (50 words)
	23-Nov	<b>Thanksgiving break – No class</b>	
<b>Week 15</b>	28-Nov	<b>Final Presentations</b>	Final Presentations

	30-Nov	<b>Final Presentations</b>	Final Presentations
<b>Week 16</b>	5-Dec	<b>Final Exam Review</b>	Florida Issues Report Essay (1200 words)
	7-Dec	<b>Reading Day – No class</b>	
<b>Week 17</b>	15-Dec	<b>Final Exam (12:30 – 2:30 PM)</b>	

\*Assignments & due dates are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

### Course Policies:

- Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. If you miss a day without an excused absence, you are responsible for obtaining the material.
- If you are unable to attend a class due to illness, personal emergency, or any other valid reason, it is their responsibility to notify the instructor as soon as possible. In the case of prolonged absences, such as illness, students should provide appropriate documentation from a medical professional.
- Acceptable reasons for absence or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, court-imposed legal obligations, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate etc.
- The UF Attendance Policy is available at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.
- Meeting deadlines is important! However, life happens sometimes, and unexpected events can pop up. Please ensure that you communicate with your instructor if you feel that you will not be able to meet a certain deadline. All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the due date or as indicated on the course calendar. All assignments must be turned in through Canvas unless otherwise instructed.
- Active participation in class discussions, activities, and group work is a significant component of the learning process. Students are expected to contribute constructively to discussions and engage with the course material.

### Academic Honesty, Regulations, and the Honor Code

The very nature of higher education requires that students adhere to accepted standards of academic integrity. Details on student responsibilities and academic regulations can be viewed at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/>

Academic dishonesty (cheating) is not accepted in any class at the University of Florida. The Honor code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies several behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. The practice of any

type of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the entire course. You will find me to be a flexible instructor in all aspects except academic honesty.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Academic Resources**

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via email at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services at <https://career.ufl.edu/>.
- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

### **Health and Wellness Resources**

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- University Police Department: Visit <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; <https://ufhealth.org/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center>

This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.