

## **GEOGRAPHY OF FLORIDA**

**University of Florida, Department of Geography**

**GEA 2270**

**Fall 2020, 3 Credits**

**Instructor:** Carly Muir

**Class Time:** Tuesday Period 3 (9:35 – 10:25)

Thursday Periods 3-4 (9:35 – 11:30)

**Office:** online office hours

**E-Mail:** [carlysmuir@ufl.edu](mailto:carlysmuir@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Wednesday (2:30 to 4:30) and Thursday (3:00 to 4:00).

Department of Geography's Main Office Location: TUR 3141

For questions or to inquire about majoring in Geography, please contact the Undergraduate Coordinator: Dr. Liang Mao, Ph.D., Associate Professor Email: [liangmao@ufl.edu](mailto:liangmao@ufl.edu) Telephone: (352) 294-7502

Web site information: <http://geog.ufl.edu/programs/undergrad/>

**Special Note for Fall 2020:** Our class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate verbally are agreeing to have their voices recorded.

If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared.

### **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 population, natural resources, and regional geography. The class will incorporate lectures, various media (articles/videos), 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 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.

### **Class 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. The class will follow these general sections:

- Introduction to the regional geography of Florida
- Physical Geography (natural resources, tectonic history, landforms, climate, soil, vegetation,)
- Human-Environmental Interactions (drainage and deforestation, pollution, impact of conservation, environmental problems, natural hazards)
- Cultural Geography (indigenous populations, languages, religion, and population geography - birth and death rates, age cohorts, disease, mobility)
- Economic/Political Geography (Governance at local to state levels)
- Development (urbanization, city structures, globalization, economic development, transportation)
- Social Geography (education, popular culture, tourism)

This class will NOT be about geography trivia. My 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.

## **CLASS 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.

## **Required**

- Good Attitude
- There will be no assigned text in this class. I will provide reading materials in Canvas when necessary. 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. We will review the steps of accessing the library database from home within the first few weeks of the course.
- Good written and oral communications skills. 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.

## **Reading and Literature Citation**

In your assignments and presentations, I expect you to cite all sources using proper standards (MLA, Chicago, APA). The suggestion to attend the library review day will assist you if you are unsure of literature citation standards. You will be provided class time to familiarize yourself with library access and materials. It is sufficient under an image or after work attributed to an author, to use Last Name and Date (Muir, 2013). After a direct quotation you should use Name, Date, Page Number (Muir, 2013, page 23). When required, at the end of every assignment and

presentation please include a complete reference list

**Citation example:**

Khatami, R.; Southworth, J.; Muir, C.; Caughlin, T.; Ayana, A.N.; Brown, D.G.; Liao, C.; Agrawal, A. Operational Large-Area Land-Cover Mapping: An Ethiopia Case Study. *Remote Sens.* 2020, 12, 954.

**Canvas e-Learning System**

This class will be conducted using the e-Learning System, Canvas. The syllabus, course calendar, reading materials and resources will be available through Canvas. All assignments must be posted through Canvas unless otherwise instructed. Grades will be posted in 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, as this is the University standard for security reasons, you cannot discuss 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, 392-HELP for assistance.

**Discussion Techniques**

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

**Class Attendance**

This class will operate in a hybrid manner. On Tuesdays, students will log on during the scheduled time to attend lectures. Tuesday is the only day that attendance is required. However, if the lecture is not completed on Tuesday then we will meet again on Thursday to finish the lecture (this may happen only a couple times this semester). The option to record lectures will be discussed with the class on the first day.

Attendance will be taken every Tuesday. Students should write their name in the Zoom Chat to show their attendance. Students have 1 unexcused absence before points are deducted (will be deducted from discussion posts). If you miss a day without an excused absence you are responsible for obtaining the material from a classmate. **Please note that there are several days that I expect everyone to be present at the scheduled time (see schedule below).**

Cameras and/or microphones are not required to be turned on during lectures, however they will be required for class presentations.

## **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 regulations can be viewed at

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/Pages/academic-regulations.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

Academic dishonesty (cheating) is not accepted in any class at the University of Florida. The practice of any type of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the entire class. You will find me to be a flexible faculty member in all aspects except academic honesty.

## **Assistance with Writing**

If you need (or desire) assistance with writing (grammar, expression, style), I encourage you to visit the Writing Studio. It is a part of the University Writing Program and the services are FREE. Note: Even students who earn A and B grades may benefit from this assistance and are welcome to make appointments at the Writing Studio. One-on-one assistance and consultations are available. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center>

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

In compliance with University of Florida policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. You must be registered with Disabilities Resource Center (DRC) in Reid Hall for disability verification and determination of reasonable academic accommodations. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first week of the semester (except for unusual circumstances) so arrangements can be made. For more information, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) 352-392-8565

## **Grading Scale**

| <b>GRADE</b> | <b>PERCENTAGE</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|
| A            | 92-100            |
| A-           | 90-91.99          |
| B+           | 88-89.99          |

|    |          |
|----|----------|
| B  | 82-87.99 |
| B- | 80-81.99 |
| C+ | 78-79.99 |
| C  | 72-77.99 |
| C- | 70-71.99 |
| D+ | 68-69.99 |
| D  | 62-67.99 |
| D- | 60-61.99 |
| F  | <59.99   |

Grades are used as a tool to measure performance. To perform well in this class, the following will help you: (1) Attend all lectures (2) take lecture notes and set aside time to review your notes (3) participate in class exercises (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.

Meeting deadlines matters! All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the due date or as indicated on the Calendar. Late assignments will be marked down 20% each day they are late. A day is defined as 24 hours and begins immediately after 11:59pm. ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TURNED IN THROUGH THE LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CANVAS).

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

**Below is a list of the writing assignment you will submit to reach the 6000 word minimum in order to satisfy the General Education Composition requirement:** Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e. grammar, punctuation, usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive, require multiple drafts submitted to the instructor for feedback prior to final submission, and fulfill 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement. Course content must include multiple forms of effective

writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students are expected learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

**Peer interview: 300 words (3 pts)**

On the first day of class you will be assigned a peer to interview. This Assignment is about them, not you. This assignment is an introduction of your peer (hometown, major, interests, etc), their expectations and personal stereotypes about Florida. You will demonstrate your writing skills to me in the description of your peer's experience and opinions of Florida based on their current levels of knowledge.

**Field trip write-up: 1000 words (15 pts)**

During the semester you will take a self-guided field trip to a cultural or natural place unique to Florida (i.e. community/state/national park, beach, cultural center, historic building/community). An option for a "virtual field trip" will be given to those students whose circumstances hinder them from reaching a site in-person. While you are there you should take pictures or record videos of important or noteworthy features. These features may be part of the location's physical environment (soils, vegetation) or human-built features (roads, buildings, art). Consider how the location and its use has changed over time and what significance it has to Floridians and/or the larger region. For your submission you will write a report that is at least 1000 words documenting the history, importance, and current use of the site you selected. You may also consider how it is funded, who manages the site, and who visits the site (tourists or locals?). If it helps, you may write it as if you were giving someone a tour of the selected site. You must use at least 2 references with proper in-text citations and works-cited list.

**Discussion posts: 1000 words (10 pts total)**

Some weeks you will be required to watch a video or read an article and write a discussion post. The word count will vary depending on the prompt, so be sure to check the instructions in Canvas!

**Favorite Florida Place: 1000 words (15 pts)**

The prompt of your term paper is to write about your favorite place in Florida. This could be a park, beach, town, building, etc. *Place* is a central feature of geography: place-based research, the specific characteristics of places, sense of place—you name it, geographers think much about places. Your mission: Capture the essence of the place and describe what makes this place special. You can include facts about this small piece of Florida and combine them with personal observations; maybe connect this place to a broader constellation of places or tell why it is unique. You must use at least 3 references with proper in-text citations and works-cited list.

**Famous Floridian Profile: 500 words (5 pts)**

You will select an individual who is native to Florida that made significant contributions in your field of choice (music, science, politics, sports, etc). Your write up should be a biographical account of the individual, a discussion of their contribution and their connection to Florida.

**Move/Book Review: 1000 words (10 pts)**

This assignment requires you to view a film or read a novel with subject matter pertaining to Florida. The objective of the assignment is for you to report on your experience in the context of what you have learned about Florida. The assignment is intended to develop your ability to evaluate information that you hear and see and assess your ability to produce a written analysis in the context of Geography. You

will write no less than 1,000 words on your selected movie or book in the context of the geographic sub-disciplines. A list of movies can be found in Canvas under assignments. If you are unsure that your selection is valid, please ask. Geography is a broad discipline and this assignment is designed so that you can experience a movie or book.

**Florida issue report: 1200 words (20 pts)**

You will pick an issue in Florida to report. The submission will include a 1200-word essay and a presentation at the end of the semester. A list of topics has been provided in the Discussion board on canvas. Please review your options and post a comment of your selected topic. You may also propose your own topic; to do so please email me for approval. You must use at least 5 references with proper in-text citations and works-cited list.

**Final Exam: 12 points**

At the end of the semester you will have a short final exam that will cover the materials presented in lectures. It will also include questions from the Florida Issue presentations made by your peers.

**Florida Issue Presentation: 10 points**

You will give a presentation to the class at the end of the semester to summarize your research on a Florida issue of your choice. You should also submit 2 potential exam questions based on your presentation. These questions will be used as a question bank for the final exam. The time limit will be decided upon depending on the final course enrollment number and how much time we have left at the end of the semester, but it will not be longer than a 10 minute per person (15-20 if it is a group\*).

\*If someone else in the class chose the same topic as you then you will do the presentation as a group (unless given permission for individual presentations). No more than 3 people can choose the same topic.



| Week | Dates & Topics                        | Assignments  |
|------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1    | Sep 1: Course introduction            | Discussion: Ethnocentricity (25 words)                             |
|      | Sep 3: Defining Florida               | Discussion: Accents (25 words)                                     |
| 2    | Sep 8: History of Florida             | <b>Peer interview Due 9/11 (300 words)</b>                         |
|      | Sep 10: Optional Class Discussion     |  |
| 3    | Sep 15: Climate of FL                 |  |
|      | Sep 17: Library Access Review         |  |
| 4    | Sep 22: Weather and Climate Change    | Discussion: Hurricane discussion post (250 words)                  |
|      | Sep 24: Optional Class Discussion     | <b>My Favorite Florida Place Due 9/22 (1000 words)</b>             |
| 5    | Sep 29: Natural Resources of Florida  |  |
|      | Oct 1: Optional Class Discussion      |  |
| 6    | Oct 6: <b>No class – Field trip</b>   | Submit your Florida Issue topic                                    |
|      | Oct 8: Field trip discussion          | <b>Submit field trip write-up Due 10/8 (1000 words)</b>            |
| 7    | Oct 13: Demography of FL              |  |
|      | Oct 15: Optional Class Discussion     |  |
| 8    | Oct 20: Energy Sources & Energy Uses  | <b>Famous Floridian Profile Due 10/22 (500 words)</b>              |
|      | Oct 22: Optional Class Discussion     |  |
| 9    | Oct 27: Politics and Governance       | Discussion: Political office or ballot measure in 2020 (250 words) |
|      | Oct 29: Optional Class Discussion     |  |
| 10   | Nov 3: Economic Geography of Florida  | <b>Florida Issue Rough Draft Due 11/5</b>                          |
|      | Nov 5: Optional Class Discussion      |  |
| 11   | Nov 10: Urbanization and Tourism      | Discussion: Tourism suggestions (250 words)                        |
|      | Nov 12: Optional Class Discussion     |  |
| 12   | Nov 17: <b>FL issue Presentations</b> | <b>Required attendance</b>   |
|      | Nov 19: <b>FL issue Presentations</b> |  |
| 13   | Thanksgiving Break                    | <b>Florida Film/Book Review Due 11/23 (1000 words)</b>             |
| 14   | Dec 1: Weird Florida                  | Discussion: Weird Florida (200 words)                              |
|      | Dec 3: Optional Class Discussion      |  |
| 15   | Dec 8: Review for exam                | <b>Florida Issue Final Draft Due 12/8 (1200 words)</b>             |