

## Course Syllabus

# GEOGRAPHY OF FLORIDA

GEA2270 Fall 2021

**University of Florida, Department of Geography**

**Instructor: Audrey C. Smith**

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

**Class Meeting Times:**

Tuesday Period 3 (9:35 – 10:25am)

Thursday Periods 3-4 (9:35 – 11:30am)

**Class Meeting Location: Turlington (TUR) 2350**

**Instructor Office Location: TUR 1215**

**Office Hours:** Tuesday (10:30am– 12:30am) & by appointment

**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

**Website information:** <http://geog.ufl.edu/programs/undergrad/>

## 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.

## 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 include general sections:

- 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.
  - **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. 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 classmates.

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 all required reading materials in 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. 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.

## 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.

## 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. For APA citation style, to attribute an image to its source or after paraphrased writing derived from published work attributed to an author, use in-text citations with the following format:

Author's Last Name and Date of Publication: (e.g., for single author: (Smith, 2021); for two authors (Smith & Muir, 2021); for more than two authors: (Smith et al., 2021)).

After a direct quotation you should use: Name, Date, Page Number (Smith, 2021, page 23). When required, at the end of every assignment and presentation please include a complete list of references.

## 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. **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 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.

## Class Attendance

Attendance will be taken at random. Students have 1 unexcused absence before points are deducted. 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).**

## 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** (all final grades will be rounded up 2 decimal places, i.e. a grade of 93.45% is rounded to 93.5%, which will then be rounded to a 94%)

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	88-89
B	82-87
B-	80-81
C+	78-79
C	72-77
C-	70-71
D+	68-69