

Department of Geography  
University of Florida

**Introduction to Human Geography  
GEO 2420**

Tuesday. 3:00 PM - 4:55 PM; Thursday. 4:05 PM – 4:55 PM  
Synchronous Online Class

Instructor: Neha Kohli

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:45 PM - 3:00 PM, or by appointment



Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. Photo: Neha Kohli

**Course Description**

Humans are in constant interaction with the environment they inhabit. In a world that has become interconnected in more ways than one, these interactions have changed over time to produce effects everywhere, like the pandemic we are all experiencing now. The discipline of Human Geography provides an analytical lens to critically examine these changes and effects across the globe. The course is designed to make us think geographically about these changes using key concepts like place, space and scale, while engaging with select topics such as creation of nation-states, migration, culture, and politics. We will together ask questions relationally about *who, what, where, when, how and why*. Tuesday of each week will be lecture based and students are expected to complete the assigned readings before we meet for class. Thursday will be dedicated to either discussion based on the readings and lectures of the week, a guest lecture or activities that may require participation. There will be no exams

for this course. Instead, students are asked to work on a project based on which presentations need to be made and an essay needs to be submitted towards the end of the semester.

### Course Objectives

1. Articulate what Human Geography is and its role as a social science discipline.
2. Understand key concepts in Human Geography and relate concepts to real-life situations across states, cultures and landscapes around the world.
3. Gain awareness of how human and more-than-human forms interact spatially and develop an appreciation for the complexity of processes that shape these interactions.
4. Learn to write a well conceptualized, analytical and critical essay.

### Required Texts:

1. \*Knox, P. and Marston, S. 2016. *Human Geography: Place and Regions in Global Context*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Pearson. ISBN: 9780321984241.  
\*Book available at UF Bookstore and at the Publisher's website for rent or to buy.
2. Other articles, book chapters etc. will be made available as PDF via Canvas

### Assignments

The final course grade will be evaluated upon completion of the following tasks.

1. **Weekly deliverables:** 50 points
  - Every Wednesday, by 8:00 pm, each student is expected to post a response to the reading and lecture material on the discussion board on Canvas. The response should be no more than 300 words and should be a critical reflection of the reading and lecture material. The reflection can include questions and doubts. Each response entry is worth 2 points. If a response is less than 250 words or exceeds 300 words, 1 point will be deducted. A response exceeding 400 words will not be considered for a grade. The entry will be assessed on the basis of critical reflection and clear writing.
  - On the Thursday of each week, students will be assessed for participation in the discussion and activities that may take place during class or may include take-home assignments and quizzes. Each week's participation in the activity is worth 2 points. For days there are take home quizzes and assignments, participation is considered complete if the assignment has a score of at least 85%. Students with a full score will receive bonus points, which can be used to compensate for falling short in any other assignment.
2. **Project:** 50 points
  - The project asks you to engage with a particular issue, which could include questions about discourse, patterns of behavior, events, beliefs or attitudes that shape interactions. The issue must be related to a topic discussed in class and must incorporate at least two key concepts which include space, place, scale and nature.
  - The project can be done in a group (no more than three students) or individually. The idea for the project, worth 5 points, needs to be sent in an email or through canvas to the instructor by 8:00 pm on October 22. Students are advised to start thinking about the project from the start of the semester.
  - In preparation for the project, data needs to be determined to generate geographic information. The data can be primary in nature, such as from conducting an online survey or interviews; or secondary in nature, such as from the census or published literature. Data can also be based on visual imagery such as films or GIS and remote sensing. It can also

be mixed in nature such that is a combination of both primary and secondary data. This part of the grade is worth 10 points.

- The findings of the project need to be communicated through a presentation. The presentation qualifies for a maximum of 15 points. The presentation will be assessed on the basis of clarity, structure, creativity and keeping within the time limit. The presentation can be in the form of a PowerPoint, a Prezi, or through other creative mediums such as film or a performance. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to each other on completion of their presentations.
- Finally, the findings of the project need to be submitted through an essay of 2000-2500 words in a format that includes an introduction, main body (methods, analysis & results) and a conclusion.; or alternatively through other creative mediums such as film, a photo-essay or a comic script. In case of the latter, there should be an accompanying text providing evidence of use of literature and concepts used to guide the project. To list references in the essay you can use any style, as long as it is consistent. The final submission, worth 30 points, will be assessed on the basis of clarity and structure, engagement with class material, critical reflection and originality of project idea. The submission should be uploaded on Canvas by 5:00 PM on December 12, 2020.

All written assignments will be evaluated using Turnitin.com originality-checking software.

### Summary of Assignments and Grade Values

- Weekly deliverables: 50 points
  - Project: 50 points
- Total: 100 points

Grades will be awarded according to scores listed below

94-100: A    90-93.5: A-    87-89.5: B+    83-86.5: B    80-82.5: B-    77-79.5: C+    73-76.5: C  
 70-72.5: C-    67-69.5: D+    64-66.5: D    60-63.5: D-    0-59.5: E

More information on grading policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### Course Schedule

| Date   |        | Topic  | Reading (before class)/ Activity*   |
|--------|--------|--|---|
| Week 1 | Sept 1 | Introductions<br>Course overview<br><br>Geographic thought                   | Short video and a discussion of student perceptions of Human Geography  |
|        | Sept 3 | Early writings:<br>Humanistic and Marxist Geography<br><br><i>Discussion</i> | Tuan, Y.F. 1976. Humanistic geography<br>Peet, R. 1985. An introduction to Marxist geography<br><br><i>Guest participant: Michael Waylen, University of Florida</i> |
| Week 2 | Sept 8 | Key concept: Place<br>On why <i>where</i> matters                            | Knox & Marston, Chap 1 (p. 3-12, 13-27)<br>Chap 7 (p. 230-238)  |

| Date          |         | Topic  | Reading (before class)/ Activity*  |
|---------------|---------|--|--|
|               |         | Place making<br><br>Key concept: Space   | Thrift, N. 2009. Space: the fundamental stuff of geography   |
|               | Sept 10 | <i>Activity</i>  | <i>Mental map making activity</i>  |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Sept 15 | Colonialism, capitalism, core-periphery, divisions of labor, commodity chains    | Knox & Marston, Chap 2 & 8<br>Cook. I. 2004. Follow the thing: papaya  |
|               | Sept 17 | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Activity on following 'your' thing</i>  |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Sept 22 | The 'Global'<br><br>Key concept: Scale<br>Global or local?                       | Massey, D. 1994. A global sense of place<br><br>Herod, A. 1999. Scale: The local and the global<br>Swyndedouw, E. 2004. Globalization or 'glocalisation'? networks, territories and rescaling      |
|               | Sept 24 | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Short videos on the 'global' nature of things, Take home review of "The Forgotten Space"</i><br><a href="http://icarusfilms.com/if-fs">http://icarusfilms.com/if-fs</a>                         |
| <b>Week 5</b> | Sept 29 | Population, mobility and migration<br><br>Displacement                           | Knox & Marston, Chap 3 (p. 66-89)<br>On China: (Links to articles on Canvas)<br><br>Knox & Marston, Chap 3 (p. 90-104)<br>Taub, B. 2017. Lake Chad: The world's most complex humanitarian disaster |
|               | Oct 1   | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Guest talk: Justin Scott Schon, University of Virginia</i><br><i>Take home quiz</i>   |
| <b>Week 6</b> | Oct 6   | Boundaries, frontiers, nation-state citizenship<br><br>What kind of nationalism? | Knox & Marston, Chap 10<br><br>Anderson. 1983. Imagined communities<br>Koch, N. and Perreault, T. 2018. Resource nationalism   |
|               | Oct 8   | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Guest talk: Tom Perreault, Syracuse University</i><br><i>Take-home quiz</i>   |

| Date   |        | Topic  | Reading (before class)/ Activity*  |
|--------|--------|--|--|
| Week 7 | Oct 13 | Key concept: Nature<br><br>Nature-society<br>Anthropocene  | Ginn, F & Demeritt, D. 2009. Nature – a contested concept<br><br>Knox & Marston, Chap 4 (p. 111-148)<br>Case 1. Robbins, P. 2003. Producing and consuming chemicals: the moral economy of the American lawns<br>Case 2. Myers, N. 2019. From edenic apocalypse to gardens against Eden   |
|        | Oct 15 | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Case study discussion</i>   |
| Week 8 | Oct 20 | More than human worlds, toxicity & health<br><br>Agriculture, food and consumption<br><br>Degrowth | Case 1: Van Doreen, T. 2010. Vultures and their people in India: equity and entanglement in a time of extinctions<br>Case 2: Manes, C. 2020. The Bat, the pangolin and the city: The Tale of Covid-19<br>On Plastic: (Links provided on Canvas)<br><br>Knox & Marston, Chap 9 (p. 299 – 323)<br>Correia, J. 2019. South America’s second-largest forest is also burning – and ‘environmentally friendly charcoal is subsidizing its destruction<br><br>Schmid, B. 2019. Degrowth and post-capitalism: transformative geographies beyond accumulation and growth.<br>Callis, G et al. 2020. The case for degrowth in a time of pandemic |
|        | Oct 22 | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Debate on degrowth</i>  |
| Week 9 | Oct 27 | Culture as a process and system<br><br>Culture, art, politics and identity                         | Knox & Marston, Chap 5 (153 – 176)<br><br>Abaza, M. 2012. Intimidation and Resistance: Imagining Gender in Cairene Graffiti  |
|        | Oct 29 | <i>Discussion</i>  | <i>Activity based on reflections on art and culture in Gainesville</i><br><i>Take home quiz</i>  |

| Date    |        | Topic   | Reading (before class)/ Activity*   |
|---------|--------|---|---|
| Week 10 | Nov 3  | Music and culture   | Chang, J. 2005. Can't stop won't stop (p. 231-261)  |
|         |        | Landscape, culture and consumption                        | Knox & Marston, Chap 7 (p. 239- 254)<br>Bendjelloul, M. 2012. Searching for sugar man   |
|         | Nov 5  | <i>Discussion</i>   | <i>Activity to reflect on cultural meaning and significance through pop music</i>   |
| Week 11 | Nov 10 | Geography of language and religion                        | Knox & Marston, Chap 6 (p. 188-223)   |
|         | Nov 12 | <i>Discussion</i>   | <i>Documentary viewing in class</i><br><i>Take home quiz</i>  |
| Week 12 | Nov 17 | Indigenous Peoples & Decolonization                       | Niezen, R. 2003 The origins of the international movement of indigenous Peoples<br>Clouthard. 2012. Place against empire: understanding indigenous anti-colonialism |
|         |        | Indigenous geographies                                    | Yeh, E. and Bryan, J. 2015. Indigeneity<br>Li, T.M. 2014. Land's end: capitalist relations on an indigenous frontier (p. 1-29).                                     |
|         | Nov 19 | <i>Discussion</i>   | <i>Guest talk: Joel Correia, University of Florida</i>  |
| Week 13 | Nov 24 | City processes and structures                             | Knox & Marston, Chap 11 & 12<br>Winner. 1980. Do artifacts have politics?   |
|         | Nov 26 | <i>Holidays</i>   |   |
| Week 14 | Dec 1  | An Island Human Geography                                 | Taussig, M. 2004. My Cocaine Museum: (p. 271-297)<br>Deleuze, G. 2004. Desert Islands   |
| Week 15 | Dec 3  | <i>Project Presentations</i>                              |   |
|         | Dec 8  | <i>Project Presentations</i>                              |   |
| Week 16 | Dec 10 | Course Ends<br><b>Project Essay due Dec 12 by 5:00 pm</b> |   |

\*When required, instructions for activities will be shared on Canvas prior to class.

**Online Participation and Audio-Visual Recording Policy:** Zoom will be used to conduct the class. Since the class encourages open dialogue, participation and involves activities and discussions,

students are encouraged to use their cameras and keep them on for the duration of the class other than for taking breaks. Given that the lecture and reading material will be made available on Canvas and active participation is required for the successful completion of the course, classes are not going to be recorded. Unauthorized recording of classes is prohibited.

In the event a student is unable to actively participate or attend class due to extenuating circumstances, there is a make-up policy described below. In the event that we collectively feel the need to record any particular session, students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image would agree to have their video or image recorded. If you would be unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, you will have to make sure to keep your camera off and not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate verbally would agree 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. Any unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

**Class Attendance & Make-Up Policy:** Class attendance is essential and important for completing assignments. Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) and requires documentation. Students should arrange with the instructor for makeup material, if circumstances allow it; the student will receive one week to prepare for any makeup assignment.

Students are expected to join the online class prepared, on time and should demonstrate participation. Being late by 10 minutes or more will be counted as an absence, unless previously discussed with the instructor. Every student is allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. Students will begin to lose 10% of their participation score with each absence following the first one.

Students are expected to turn in assignments on time. Assignments will be subject to reduction of points if turned in late and no assignments will be accepted beyond 48 hours past the due date. The final paper will not be accepted late.

### **Classroom Behavior Policy**

Students are requested to avoid activities such as texting and chatting that do not contribute to and disturb the class lectures, discussions, and activities. Use of cell phones is not allowed during class and laptops may be used only to view class-related materials relevant to the class schedule. Students should respect each other's opinions and contributions in class and maintain a congenial learning environment.

The instructor will use University of Florida email and the class Canvas platform to communicate with students about the course. Students are expected to check Canvas for any updates and information. It is requested that professional language be used in all communication.

### **University of Florida Honesty Policy:**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code, which can be found at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>, specifies a number of

behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

### **Student Accommodations**

Students requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://dso.ufl.edu> ) by providing the necessary 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.

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu>. You will be notified when evaluations are open once in the middle of the semester and another time towards the end of the semester.

### **Counselling and Wellness Center**

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Counseling and Wellness Center if you need their services: <https://counseling.ufl.edu>, 392-1575; or the Sexual Assault Recovery Services at the Student Health Care Centre: 392-1161; and if need be, to the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

If you find that your class mate or friend is in distress, please don't hesitate to report your concern about them to U Matter, We Care: [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575

### **Subject to Change Statement**

Information contained in the course schedule may be subject to change if advantageous for learning. Students will be given advance notice as deemed appropriate by the instructor.