

# [ADVANCED STUDY DESIGN IN MEDICAL GEOGRAPHY]

GEO6455 SECTION #26301, IT IS BEING TAUGHT IN 3012 AND ONLINE ON WEDNESDAYS 3-5 PERIODS.

[GEO 4938/6455]

[3 HOURS]

[FALL 2020]

\*\* [CLASS LOCATION] TUR 3012

\*\* [CLASS MEETING TIME(S)] WEDNESDAY 3-5 09:35 AM-12:35 PM

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Gregory E. Glass*

Office: Turlington 3139, [gglass@ufl.edu](mailto:gglass@ufl.edu), Phone: 352-294-7521

**OFFICE HOURS:** *Office hours: Turlington 3139 for one hour after class. If not possible, contact by email for mutually convenient arrangement. Emails will be answered as quickly as possible but may not generate an immediate response. If more than 48 hours pass without a response then please resend the message.*

**COURSE TA OR COORDINATOR:** N/A

## COVID-19 POLICY

This course is presented in a hybrid format, with a portion of the class presented live and a portion presented online. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([Go to the CDC website on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Check with the UF Health website for guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
- Under these conditions, course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. [Find more information in the university attendance policies](#).

For online portion of the course with recorded materials be aware that the 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 orally 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. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

**\*\*COURSE WEBSITE:** *All course materials, including syllabus, copies of class presentations and readings will be posted to e-learning at UF. To use, login using your Gator Link username and password.*

After logging into Canvas, you will be taken to your "User Dashboard," where you can access the course and/or project site in which you are enrolled. You will find them listed under 'Courses & Groups' the top of the screen.

**\*\* COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

*Communication regarding course materials can be dealt with either in class, during office hours or electronically by e-learning or email. If of general concern and asked outside the class period, questions will be answered during subsequent class times.*

*Communication relating to attendance, presentations and examinations should be provided as soon as possible to the instructor. The need to miss presentations and examination will be excused only under the most significant of reasons and require adequate documentation (see Attendance).*

**\*\*COURSE DESCRIPTION:** We examine problem solving in medical geography by focusing on how studies should be performed to reduce the effects of under-performing study designs that impact the interpretations of results. Alternative methods of detection, analyses, data and study design are reviewed and the implicit and explicit limitations are examined.

**\*\*PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:** GIS 3420C/6425C or equivalent; GEO 3452/6421 or equivalent, or consent of instructor.

**PURPOSE OF COURSE:** Medical Geography focuses on using spatio-temporal variation in disease risk or health outcomes to better understand the causes of disease, targeting of interventions and the success of health delivery. It merges methods and approaches from disparate fields including diagnostics and modern biology with environmental characterization in a geographic framework. This course assumes students have at least a beginning level understanding of the methods used with geographical approaches to gather and manipulate data (see required courses, above). It reviews the origins of the field, modern approaches to data gathering and study designs in ancillary fields to provide an overview of the current state of the art. Students will read published papers that highlight the various components of modern Medical Geography and learn to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative approaches. The purpose is to make students conversant with why studies are designed as they are, and to be able to identify limitations of studies and the options for problem solving in medical geography.

**COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES:** *By the end of this course, students will:*

- Identify approaches used to measure health outcomes for infectious and chronic diseases
- Describe measures and methods to characterize spatial/temporal scale of environment conditions
- Identify assumptions of alternative study designs of health outcome relationships with environment
- Describe the strengths and limitations of different study/analytical approaches
- Learn methods to infer causal relationships between spatial variability in environment and health outcomes

**REQUIRED TEXT:** *There are no required texts for the course. Most readings will be derived from recent or key historical publications and accessed in Canvas. Background readings to provide needed information can be recommended for those believing that they lack sufficient knowledge of some specific topic and will be suggested at the student's request.*

**\*\*ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

Medical Geography interfaces several fields of study. It is not expected students to be completely conversant in all these areas. Students sometimes prefer to have textbooks and reviews that summarize knowledge. Below are some texts that previous students have found helpful and are suggested but not required for students. Oftentimes, published review articles on specific topics may be satisfactory for the lecture. Students should be familiar with performing primary literature searches either specifically on the UF system or more generally (e.g. Google Scholar). If not, please contact the course instructor

A general text in Medical Geography such as: Meade, M, J Florin, W Gesler. 1988. Medical Geography. Guilford Press, London OR Meade, MS, M Emch 2014. Medical Geography 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Guilford Press for background in Medical Geography.

Study design and background biology – selected chapters in: Nelson, KE, CM Williams. 2007. Infectious Disease Epidemiology: Theory and Practice. Jones & Bartlett, Boston.

Spatial analyses: Lawson, A, A Biggeri, D Bohning, E Lesaffre, J-F Viel and R Bertonllini. 1999. Disease Mapping and Risk Assessment for Public Health. Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

**\*\* HOW THIS COURSE RELATES TO THE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN MEDICAL GEOGRAPHY:**

*This course focuses on the identified skills in the Medical Geography SLO by reinforcing previous training to:*

- 1. define the earth's physical environment and the geographic relationship between environment and society;*
- 2. train students to identify geographic techniques, skills and concepts;*
- 3. develop expertise in the analysis and interpretation of data involved in problem solving and;*
- 4. modeling in medical geography and global health while identifying the social and economic impacts from a spatial perspective.*

**\*\*TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:** Learning in an advanced level class is primarily self-directed and self-motivated. Advanced topics are driven by learning key principles that are often assumed by experts in the field and consequently not communicated. The course attempts to go beyond the mechanics of methods to the underlying questions implied by the methods, as a way to gain proficiency in Medical Geography. The primary goal of the instructor, therefore, is to provide strategies used to gain knowledge, draw logical conclusions, and reinforce the implications derived from key principles. The remainder of the course is the student becoming comfortable with manipulating the ideas in their own work. Thus the overall purpose of the course is to give students those experiences necessary to advance in the application of medical geography beyond an introductory level.

**\*\*INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:** Background materials and basic skills for medical geography are presented in a lecture format. Typically, slides used to illustrate topics are maintained for the students to review. Important aspects of topics are illustrated by discussing relevant literature in medical geography. Students will gain experience in evaluating the methods and interpretation of results in this field by discussions to the class. These presentations will be evaluated by the instructor and the other students using a standardized format. These skills will be reinforced by exercises provided out of class that can be worked on alone or in small groups. There will be a midterm in-class examination that reviews the student's understanding of the basic topics and a final written and orally presented topic review of a relevant medical geography problem that will be presented to the instructor and the class.

## UF POLICIES:

## COURSE POLICIES:

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** A class roll will be recorded at the beginning of class. If a student is late, she or he may sign the roll after class. Please arrive on time. Attendance is strongly encouraged, as classroom participation both in presentations and reviews of other students' work is part of the course grade. Failure to attend and participate necessarily reduces one's grade.

Please minimize distractions to yourself and others during class time (cell phones at least on vibrate, no ancillary conversations, quiet typing only). Emergencies do sometimes occur so, if necessary, please leave class to deal with them as quietly as possible.

**Please contact the instructor by email if you know you will be absent especially if you are presenting during the class. You will be responsible to find an alternative student to present during your missing time.**

**NO CLASSES:** Wednesday-11 November or Wednesday 25 November. *Classes will resume 2 December but this class and 9 December class will be entirely on-line in keeping with University policy at the time this version was created.*

**\*\*QUIZ/EXAM POLICY:** In-class exams are 'closed book' and performed individually by each student. The instructor will correct any arithmetical errors associated in grading the exams. Students should confirm the accuracy of such scores upon receiving the graded material and bring any errors to the instructor's attention as soon as is practical. Otherwise, interpreting the instructor's scoring of exam and other materials will only be reviewed at the end of the term and only to the extent that it alters the final, assigned grade for the course.

**MAKE-UP POLICY:** There are no make-up exams without written approval of the instructor. These will be limited to situations, such as prior medical excuses.

**\*\*ASSIGNMENT POLICY:** Students are expected to read assignments prior to class and be prepared to discuss the methods and interpretations of the papers. This may require students to independently identify needed background readings, such as review articles of specific methods if students believe they need additional information. Students should anticipate the need for outside of class effort. The instructor will assist with suggestions as time permits.

Written assignments will be provided with the due dates determined by the professor. These assignments may be worked on with other members of the class and are intended to encourage problem solving. If worked on as a team all team members will receive the same grade. Alternatively, projects may be worked on individually.

Mid-term exams will be short answer, in-class, closed-book analyses of topics covered during classes up to that time ( such as, various approaches and study methods used in medical geography) that are reviewed in lectures and reading.

The final project will vary depending on the course number of the enrolled student. Those taking the course for graduate credit will develop a short (less than 10 page) design analyzing a health problem in medical geography of the students' choosing. Alternative methods and approaches to data collection, analysis and interpretation are to be evaluated. Students will present the results of their analyses in class for evaluation. Details of the format and examples of topics will be provided during the second week of class. Students taking it for undergraduate credit will write a two page evaluation of one of the graduate student's evaluations.

**\*\*COURSE TECHNOLOGY:** N/A

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) 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.

Please be aware that the University Counseling Center (392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>), the Student Health Care Center (392-1161) and Student Mental Health (392-1171) can assist students as they work through personal, academic and social issues. Please take care of your health. Provide advance notice and obtain documentation for excused absences where possible.

If needed, University Police Department can be contacted at 392-1111 or Dial 9-1-1 for emergencies.

**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code (item 3 at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>).

To briefly summarize, UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge; "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 (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that violate this code and the possible sanctions.

Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor for this class.

You are encouraged to help each other with projects by discussing general aspects of the topics, but you must turn in your own work. If you have a question or need clarification please contact the instructor.

All suspected cases of honor code violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office and actions such as lowering of the course grade, and/or other penalties may be assigned.

**\*\*NETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY:** All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

## GETTING HELP:

Much of the material for the course will be posted on the E-Learning site. To access the site

Open your Internet browser and navigate to [the e-Learning Homepage](#)

NOTE: If you are going to create a bookmark for e-learning login, please bookmark the [e-Learning Homepage](#), not the actual login page or the "User Dashboard" page once you are in e-Learning in Canvas.

- Click the big orange "Login to e-Learning" button
- Login using your Gator Link username and password.
- After logging into Canvas, you will be taken to your "User Dashboard," where you can access the course(s) and/or project site(s) in which you are enrolled. You will find them listed under 'Courses & Groups' the top of the screen.

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

**Help Desk at 352-392-4357** anytime during Help Desk [hours](#), or **email [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)**. If you use email, write from your [gatorlink@ufl.edu](mailto:gatorlink@ufl.edu) email address, or include your UFID and/or GatorLink username

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

**EVALUATIONS:** Students may provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

## GRADING POLICIES:

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Lecture Assignments (four)	20%
Mid-term Exam	30%
Class Project	20%
Final Project	30%

**GRADING SCALE:** A = 92 or above; A- = 90-91.9; B+ = 88-89.9; B = 82-87.9; B- = 80-81.9; C+ = 78-79.9; C = 70-77.9; C- = 68-69.9; D+ = 66-67.9; D = 60-65.9; D- = 58-59.9; E = < 58

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

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

### \*\*FINAL EXAM:

There is a final, in-class, presentation (approximately 30 minutes) of a project by students that is given orally to the class and a 10 page or less summary report that describes the background and results of the project. Examples of such projects are to design a research study that identifies why there is spatial or spatio-temporal variation in a specific infectious disease, OR, how space-time variation helps identify the mechanisms of a chronic disease such as a specific cancer OR how spatial distributions might determine the strategy for vaccine delivery. This exercise is intended to use approaches highlighted in the course to identify alternative methods to solve the specific challenge and should weigh the practicalities, advantages and disadvantages of different alternatives.

Shortly after the mid-term the student will provide a brief commentary (< 1page) to the instructor on the chosen topic to improve the likelihood of successfully completing the project. The report will be turned in to the instructor for review. Details will be provided during the course introduction and topic reviewed by the instructor.



Week	Topic	Assignment	% Grade
2 September	Introduction; History of Medical Geography		
9 September	(Is there) Science in Med Geo	#1 Due	5%
16 September	What does 'Good Science' look like?	#2 Due	5%
23 September	Observational Studies vs Experiments	#3 Due	5%
30 September	Spatial Analysis I (Observational)	#4 Due	5%
7 October	Spatial Analysis II (Observational)		
14 October	MIDTERM EXAM	Due at end of Class period	30%
21 October	Experimental Designs		
28 October	Experimental Medical Geography (Interventions)		
4 November	Interventions (con't)		
11 November	HOLIDAY		
18 November	Project		
2 December	Project		20%
9 December	Final	End of Class Period	30%

Group Project: This is permitted to be a 'team' project with the intent that you may choose to work as a group to design and carry out an analysis of an assigned task with the goal of using your skills to solve a problem. Because of the need for IRB review of a 'health related project' and the time needed to receive those approvals the project WILL ONLY be allowed to be a health related problem if the UF IRB has previously approved the use of the data and the PI provides written approval for its use. In this case all project members also must be included on the IRB approval before beginning work. Instead, it may be easier to perform a project that involves many of the same approaches that Medical Geography uses to acquire, analyze and interpret data.

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents the current plans and objectives. As the semester progresses and current conditions evolve, those plans may need to change. Such changes, will be communicated as soon as possible, are not unusual and can be expected.

