

# **GEOG 3304: Regional Geography of North America**

## **Fall 2021**

**Angelo State University**  
**Dr. Arnaldo De León Department of History**

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### **Instructor**

Rob Briwa (he/him/his) | Office: Academic 210G | rbriwa@angelo.edu |

### **Course Details**

GEOG 3304 Lecture Section 001 | Classroom: Academic 225 | Monday, Wednesday, Friday | 10 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

### **Required Reading Materials**

There is no required textbook for this course. **Required readings will be uploaded to GEOG 3303's Blackboard web page as .pdf files or web links.**

### **Office Hours**

Briwa | Mondays 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. | Wednesdays 11 a.m. to noon | Other times by e-mail appointment.

### **Course Description**

GEOG 3304, Regional Geography of North America, is a survey-level geography course introducing and exploring the physical, historical, and cultural geographies of North America through a regional framework. Through weekly readings, class discussions, and lecture, we will familiarize ourselves with vignettes of the North American scene as viewed through the eyes of cultural/historical geographers. Along the way, we will explore fundamental themes and topics within the geographic discipline and gain new understandings about the intersections of North American geographies with rural and urban cultural landscapes, ethnicity and race, expressions of folk and popular culture, and the imprint of government entities and capital on North American landscapes. This course fulfills advanced geography degree requirements for ASU History Department majors, and serves as a course substitution for GEOG 3302/3303.

### **Learning Goals**

Upon completion of this course, students should have achieved the following goals:

- Identify the locations of key North American physical and political features on a map.
- Gain an understanding of the geographical concept of regions and insights to the production of regional identity.
- Understand past and contemporary patterns of physical and environmental settings, settlement, culture, and economic practices for 8 vernacular regions in the United States.
- Be able to read and process selected geographical peer-reviewed scholarship.
- Appreciate the relevancy of geographical thinking and perspectives in daily life.

## **You are not alone**

Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with your learning experience. So, too, can problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis. It's OK to experience difficulty, and it's OK to reach out for help.

Students' mental and physical health are my utmost concerns this semester. I encourage you to explore and make use of health services available to students. The University Health Clinic is based in the [University Sports Medicine Clinic, Shannon Clinic - Jackson](#). The Health Clinic provides confidential services to ASU students *who have paid the current Medical Services Fee*. Students who are registered, attending classes, and have paid the medical services fee have access to unlimited visits to all [Shannon Urgent Care locations](#) for Basic Medical Care by board certified healthcare providers at no additional cost.

Similarly, ASU Counseling Services provides short-term therapy to ASU students. Whether you are suffering from issues like depression, anxiety, adjustment issues, relationship problems, academic concerns, emergencies, or trauma, ASU Counseling Services are there to help. Appointments can be made by calling [325-942-2371](tel:325-942-2371) or visiting [Counseling Services](#), at 1901 Johnson St, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

You are not alone in navigating this semester. **I am a resource for you.**

## **Keys to Student Success**

Doing well in this course is not complicated, but it does require hard work. Over the course of GEOG 3304 you will be required to conduct substantial out-of-class readings and assignments, search for geographical topics on your own time, and above all to write. To succeed in these tasks, aside from staying mentally and physically healthy (see above), you must stay on top of your assignments and remain organized. Be sure to take good notes; proofread all assignment submissions for spelling, grammar, and argumentation; and to contact me with questions and concerns. Lastly, avoid waiting to the last minute to work on assignments, especially for our final project. This often results in sloppy work and a poor grade.

## **Evaluation**

Your performance is evaluated by journal entries; writing projects; map quizzes; and reading response activities (see below for overviews of each type of assignment). There are a possible **400 points** for this course (not including extra credit points). Total points are tentative and subject to change. Extra credit is not available on an individual basis. Grades are not discussed over email, utilize office hours or schedule an appointment.

## **Grade Thresholds**

- A: 360-400 points
- B: 320-359 points
- C: 280-319 points
- D: 260-279 points
- F: Under 260 points

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you

from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 [Grading Procedures](#) for more information.

### **North America Regional Geography Paper Responses: 175 points (7 @ 25 points each)**

Our course in GEOG 3304 has no traditional textbook. Instead, we will gain a deeper understanding of our regions through engaging with selected geographic scholarship. I recognize that for many, reading academic works can be a challenge (It often is for me, too, and I'm trained to do so!). To help guide your reading, 7 of our course readings will be paired with "paper response" assignments that require you to reflect on what you are reading and respond to assorted writing prompts. **Unless otherwise noted, Paper Response assignments are due on Turnitin on Thursdays by 5 p.m. the week they are listed in the syllabus.** This way we can discuss these assignments in-class on Fridays, time permitting.

Paper Responses are distributed on a rolling basis throughout the semester. You will always have at least 1 week to complete a Paper Response.

### **What Region is Texas? / Reflective Essay 50 points (1 @ 50 points)**

As we will learn, the notion of a region seems a simple idea at first glance. However, when reflected on more deeply, regions and regional identity are much more complex and merit geographers' attention. This assignment will require you to pursue one of two essay prompts. The first will ask you to 'place' Texas into one of the wider regions we have discussed in class: the South, the Great Plains, the Southwest, or the Arid West. To do so, you will have to offer evidence—grounded in secondary literature, fieldwork and data collection, or both! The other option is to produce a reflective essay that asks you to consider and identify the ways this course complicated your understanding of a selected region and/or topic. Further details and instructions will be provided in-class and on Blackboard.

### **Take-Home Map Quizzes: 75 points (3 @ 25 points each)**

A fundamental goal of this course is to establish students' awareness of geographical features of North America. To achieve this, I require that you take three open-book map quizzes over the course of the semester that will test your knowledge of geographical features of North America. Further details will be provided in-class and on Blackboard, and due dates for each of the map quizzes are listed in the syllabus.

### **In-Class Pop Quizzes—and potential extra credit! 100 points (7 @ 20 points each)**

A primary means through which students learn is through attending class, taking notes, and engaging with classroom materials. **To incentivize classroom attendance and note taking, I will randomly distribute 7 in-class, open-book pop 'quizzes.'** These quizzes will take various forms, and may include multiple choice, video response, short answer responses, or participation in discussions and activities. They may be related to any in-class material or readings covered that week in the syllabus. You cannot make up a pop-quiz if you are absent the day it is distributed.

**Note I will distribute 7 pop quizzes: you only need to complete 5. Your lowest two pop-quiz scores will contribute to extra credit, up to a maximum of 40 points extra credit.** There may be other extra credit opportunities as the semester continues; should this arise, I will announce these opportunities in class and on Blackboard.

Note I also reserve the right to implement a final course curve (for all students) at the end of the semester in order to account for any structural biases that may have made the course unfairly difficult.

### **Missed assignments and late assignments**

Any late work submitted will receive a 5% deduction prior to grading (which may then result in further deductions depending on the submission's quality), but I will still offer written comments on the submitted work. Any work submitted 5 days after the due date will accrue a 20% deduction, and I reserve the right to offer no comments.

Extensions and are given only in cases where a valid/verifiable absence **has been approved at least 24 hours in advance** of the due date (e.g., serious illness, a University-approved event). In the case of an excused absence without prior arrangements, you must notify me within 48 hours of the scheduled due date.

### **Blackboard**

This course makes use of Angelo State University's Blackboard program. Please check our class site often. I will post all messages and documents relating to the class to the site, including this syllabus, study guides, project assignments, and other miscellaneous required and supplementary readings. Scores for quizzes, reading responses, and projects are tracked through Blackboard, including cumulative course totals. This allows you to stay aware of how you are doing at any point during the semester.

### **Course policies and procedures**

#### **Disruptive behavior**

Disruptive behavior is behavior that interferes with the learning environment of your fellow students. I do not tolerate immature, rude, and inappropriate behavior in the classroom. This includes talking during lecture, as well as personal use of digital communication devices during lecture including, but not limited to: text, instant or email messaging, social media, and web browsing. Disruptive students will be ejected from the class at my discretion, according to University policy, and will be given an unexcused absence regarding any missed coursework. All electronic devices must be switched off during class and headphones/ear-buds removed! I regard phone use, texting, or wearing headphones/ear-buds during tests as cheating.

#### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU. The College of Arts and Humanities adheres to the Statement of [Academic Integrity](#).

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's [Academic Integrity policy](#) in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft. In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be

evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the [ASU Writing Center](#). **When in doubt—ask me in advance of submission! I’m happy to talk through proper documentation of scholarship.**

### **Copyright Policy**

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

### **Student Disability Services**

Angelo State University and the Department of History are committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation. Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at [ADA@angelo.edu](mailto:ADA@angelo.edu). For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at [www.angelo.edu/ADA](http://www.angelo.edu/ADA). The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

[Ms. Dallas A. Swafford](#)  
**Director of Student Disability Services**  
325-942-2047  
[dallas.swafford@angelo.edu](mailto:dallas.swafford@angelo.edu)  
[Houston Harte University Center](#) 112

### **Title IX at Angelo State University**

Angelo State University and the Department of History are committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee, meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, you are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

**Michelle Miller, J.D.**  
*Title IX Coordinator*  
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210 325-942-2022

[michelle.miller@angelo.edu](mailto:michelle.miller@angelo.edu)

You may also file a report online 24/7 at [www.angelo.edu/incident-form](http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form).

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the **University Health Clinic at 325-942-2171, Counseling Services at 325-942-2371** or the **ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345**.

The Office of Title IX Compliance also provides accommodations related to pregnancy (such as communicating with your professors regarding medically necessary absences, modifications required because of pregnancy, etc.). If you are pregnant and need assistance or accommodations, please contact the Office of Title IX Compliance utilizing the information above. For more information about Title IX in general you may visit [www.angelo.edu/title-ix](http://www.angelo.edu/title-ix).

### **Student Absence for the Observance of Religious Holidays**

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for [Observance of Religious Holy Day](#) for more information.

### **Diversity and Inclusivity Statement**

I acknowledge that Angelo State University is located on the original homelands of Indigenous peoples, and that their rich history is central to our commitment to learn from the past. I value human diversity in all its complex forms, and I respect the value of every person in this class. Everyone in class is encouraged to share their unique perspective as an individual, and not as representative of any category.

Furthermore, multicultural and intercultural awareness and competencies are key skills we must cultivate to create a safe environment defined by equity, participation, and empathy for others, as well as to develop the leadership skills that enable us to stand up against injustices experienced by marginalized individuals. To help develop these competencies and in keeping with Angelo State University's Values Journey, I intend to present material and classroom activities that celebrate diversity of thought, background, and experience.

Higher education is most useful when it challenges assumptions and provides new and sometimes uncomfortable ways of looking at issues. If you feel uncomfortable regarding content or perspectives presented in this course, I encourage you to contact me immediately so we can discuss those feelings. Your perspectives on course materials and diversity and inclusion matter to me, and I encourage you to share those as well.

Note that I would prefer to use your preferred language when addressing you, so please let me know if your preferred name differs from what I am using. Similarly, please let me know your preferred gender pronouns.

**Course schedule** (Tentative and subject to revision. All revisions explicitly announced in class and announced on Blackboard.)

Week	Day	Topic(s)	Reading	Assignments Due
1 <sup>st</sup>	8/23/21	Course Introduction Intro. to Regions and Cultural Landscapes	Syllabus!	
	8/25/21			

	8/27/21			
2 <sup>nd</sup>	8/30/21	Physiographic Regions		
	9/1/21			
	9/3/21			
3 <sup>rd</sup>	9/6/21	Regional Identities and their Construction		Map Quiz 1
	9/8/21			
	9/10/21			
4 <sup>th</sup>	9/13/21	The Mid-Atlantic and Coastal Northeast	Miller (2017)	Paper Response 1
	9/15/21			
	9/17/21			
5 <sup>th</sup>	9/20/21	Appalachia and the Inland South	Cooper et al. (2011)	
	9/22/21			
	9/24/21			
6 <sup>th</sup>	9/27/21	The Southeast and Gulf Coasts	Trépanier (1991)	Paper Response 2
	9/29/21			
	10/1/21			
7 <sup>th</sup>	10/4/21	The Great Lakes Region and Old Midwest		
	10/6/21			
	10/8/21			
8 <sup>th</sup>	10/11/21	The Great Lakes Region and Old Midwest II		Map Quiz 2
	10/13/21			
	10/15/21			
9 <sup>th</sup>	10/18/21	Great Plains, Middle West, or Heartland? I	Shortridge (1985)	Paper Response 3
	10/20/21			
	10/22/21			
10 <sup>th</sup>	10/25/21	Great Plains, Middle West, or Heartland? II	Shortridge (2003)	Paper Response 4
	10/27/21			
	10/29/21			
11 <sup>th</sup>	11/1/21	Many Wests I	Wright (2014)	Paper Response 5
	11/3/21			
	11/5/21			
12 <sup>th</sup>	11/8/21	Many Wests II	Post (2013) <b>Final Essay Guidelines</b>	<b>Final Essay Guidelines Distributed</b>
	11/10/21			
	11/12/21			
13 <sup>th</sup>	11/15/21	The Pacific Northwest	Lang (2003)	Map Quiz 3
	11/17/21			
	11/19/21			
14 <sup>th</sup>	11/22/21	The Southwest Borderlands <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS</b> <b>THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS</b>	Arreola (1993; 2010)	Paper Response 6 <b>(DUE 11/29)</b>
	11/24/21			
	11/26/21			
15 <sup>th</sup>	11/29/21	Regional Identity in a Globalized North America	Schnell (2013)	Paper Response 7 <b>(DUE 12/3)</b>
	12/1/21			
		12/3/21	Course Wrap-Up	
Finals Week		<b>Final Essay Due by 5 p.m.</b>		

I am happy to see you here in GEOG 3304: Regional Geography of North America.

Welcome!!!