Course materials:

There are no Textbooks for this course. Rather you should check Canvas at the beginning of each unit for the supplemental reading materials for that unit.

Course description

Geography 2305, Fundamentals of Geography, is designed to meet the needs of those students planning to teach geography at all grade levels (K-12) in the Texas school system. To that end, it introduces students to the geographic discipline and geography’s core themes, traditions, and concepts and offers in-depth explorations of geographic concepts taught in the K-12 Texas social studies curriculum. The course therefore familiarizes students with core tenets and concepts of physical and human geography. Additionally, it applies geographic concepts and perspectives to selected global and Texas case studies to deepen students’ knowledge of contemporary landscapes at home and farther afield.
Learning goals

Upon completion of this course, students will:

• Identify the core themes, traditions, and concepts that define the disciplinary boundaries of geography and recognize the value of geographic perspectives in the social sciences.
• Develop an appreciation of map use and interpretation as a central tool of the geographer’s toolkit.
• Understand core concepts and patterns in selected fields of physical geography, including those relating to climatic patterns; physiographic regions and landforms; the lithosphere, atmosphere, and hydrosphere; and hazards relating to physical geography.
• Understand core concepts and patterns in selected fields of human geography, including regions; those relating to patterns of population and settlement; the interconnectedness between places and regions via processes of globalization; and the historical processes contributing to the making of contemporary landscapes.
• Understand core concepts and patterns of human-environment interactions, including patterns of human modifications to the physical environment and causes and impacts of climate change.
• Appreciate the relevance and application of geography to everyday living.

Prerequisites: None

Real talk Doing well in this course is not complicated, but it requires work: regularly attend class, read the assigned readings before the lecture, be attentive and take good notes during lecture, review lecture material afterwards while it is fresh, attend review sessions prepared, and communicate promptly when the
need arises. Studying in small batches consistently between exams will yield better results than trying to absorb it in huge chunks. Reading assigned for any lecture is very manageable. Reading material before class will reinforce learning. Facing fifty pages the night before an exam is overwhelming and typically results in a poor score. Similarly, hurriedly completing an assignment the night before it is due often results in sloppy work and increases the number of otherwise easily fixed mistakes. The cliché holds true: slow and steady effort wins the race. Your instructor is here to help you be successful, consult me! Much of what it takes to do well in your undergraduate endeavor is time management, attention to detail, and the ability to prioritize. Remember, your professors were undergraduates too, so please do not hesitate to ask for help when you need it.

Evaluation

Your performance is evaluated by assignments and exams. Exams and Projects will make up 60% of your grade and Assignments will make up 40% of your grade. There is an exam with every unit. Exams will be made up of multiple choice questions and three essay prompts. Most units will have an associated project completed using Arc-GIS online. You will be provided with a student account to use during this course. Daily assignments will be outlines of major readings, reading quizzes, analysis of data acquired using geographic tools and other items provided by the instructor.