

GEOG 2305: Fundamentals of Geography

Fall 2021

Angelo State University
Dr. Arnoldo De León Department of History

Instructor

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

Course details

GEOG 2305 Lecture Section 001 | Classroom: Academic 225 | Tuesday/Thursday | 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

GEOG 2305 Lecture Section 002 | Classroom: Academic 225 | Tuesday/Thursday | 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Course materials

There is no required textbook for this course. **Required readings will be uploaded to GEOG 2305'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

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 Texas and global case studies to deepen students' knowledge of contemporary landscapes at home and farther afield.

Learning goals

Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Identify core themes, traditions, and concepts defining the disciplinary boundaries of geography and recognize the value of geographic perspectives in the social sciences.

- 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.
- Understand core concepts and patterns in selected fields of human geography including those relating to patterns of population and settlement; 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.
- Interpret and communicate geographical information through active engagement with maps, charts, graphs, and creative writing.
- Appreciate the relevance and application of geography to everyday living.

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 well-being 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 2305 you will be required to conduct 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 weekly geographical news entries; writing projects; and applied geography 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

Weekly Geographical News: 200 points (8 @ 25 points each)

One of our learning goals in GEOG 2305: Fundamentals of Geography is to appreciate the relevancy and application of geography to everyday living. To that end, I ask that you seek out and find news articles that relate to our course materials. You will then produce a short, original reflection that summarizes the news article and poses an argument as to why it fits within the contexts of our geography course materials. **Unless otherwise noted, Geographical News items will be due Fridays by 5 p.m. on Turnitin on the weeks specified in the syllabus.**

Applied Geography Activities 120 points (4 @ 30 points each)

Successful learning hinges upon student engagement with the subject matter via active learning. To incentivize active learning in the geography classroom, we will complete four applied geography activities throughout the semester. These require you to apply what you have learned in lecture materials to new contexts. **These activities are designed to be completed within a single class period or will be assigned as take-home assignments.** You will always have at least one week to complete Applied Geography Activities. **Unless otherwise noted, they will be due Sundays by 5 p.m. on the weeks specified in the syllabus.** Further details and instructions will be provided in class!

Final Project: Geography and Professional Development 80 points (1 @ 80 points)

As an integrative discipline that spans the physical and social sciences as well as the humanities, geography has relevance in innumerable professional fields. This project is designed to get you thinking about how what you have learned in GEOG 2305: Fundamentals of Geography will inform your professional development. Broadly, you will have a choice of two tracks to complete this project: 1) You may write a reflective narrative applying geographical

perspectives or themes learned in this class to your intended professional field; or 2) You may draw on what you have learned to write a Geography Lesson Plan you may implement as an educator in your future classrooms. Further details will be provided in-class!

Extra Credit: In-Class Pop Quizzes Up to 30 points (Variable @ variable 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 in-class, open-book pop 'quizzes.' These quizzes will take various forms and range in their points value, but if successfully completed they may contribute up to 30 extra credit points to your overall grade. **You cannot make up a pop-quiz if you are absent the day it is distributed.** 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.

Course policies and procedures

Disruptive behavior

I define disruptive behavior as behavior that interferes with the learning environment of your peers. This includes talking out of turn 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!

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, as familiarizing students with proper citation methods and improving writing skills is a fundamental goal of GEOG 2305.**

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. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at 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

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

You may also file a report online 24/7 at 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.

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) in Class	Reading	Assignments Due
1 st	8/24/21	Course Intro: Strategies for Success	Syllabus	
	8/26/21	What is Geography? I		
2 nd	8/31/21	What is Geography? II	De Blij (2005): 5-14 Geographical Association (2012)	"News" 1
	9/2/21	Exploring Maps I		
3 rd	9/7/21	Exploring Maps II	De Blij (2005): 23-45	
	9/9/21	Exploring Maps III		
4 th	9/14/21	Exploring Maps IV		Activity 1 (9/19)
	9/16/21	Physical Geography of N. America and Texas I		
5 th	9/21/21	Physical Geography of N. America and Texas II		News 2
	9/23/21	Anthropogenic Climate Change I		
6 th	9/28/21	Anthropogenic Climate Change II		News 3
	9/30/21	No Class 9/30: Work on Applied Activity 2		
	10/5/21	Population Dynamics I		News 4

7 th	10/7/21	Population Dynamics II		Activity 2 (10/10)
8 th	10/12/21	Migration and the Global Scene I		News 5
	10/14/21	Migration and the Global Scene II		News 6
9 th	10/19/21	Political Geographies and State Power		Activity 3 (10/24)
	10/21/21	Political Geographies and State Power II	Jones (2017)	
10 th	10/26/21	Cultural Geographies I: World Religions		
	10/28/21	Reading Cultural Landscapes: Halloween!	Lewis (1979)	
11 th	11/2/21	Cultural Geographies III: World Languages		
	11/4/21	Cultural Geographies IV: Constructing Identities	Gourevitch (1998)	
12 th	11/9/21	Cultural Geographies V: Racialized Landscapes		
	11/11/21	Cultural Geographies VI: Globalization and Neolocalism		
13 th	11/16/21	Global Patterns of Development I		News 7
	11/18/21	Global Patterns of Development II		Activity 4 (11/21)
14 th	11/23/21	Global Patterns of Development III		News 8 NOTE: (11/28)
	11/25/21	No Class 11/25: Thanksgiving Break		
15 th	11/30/21	Global Patterns of Development IV		Final Project Due 12/2!
	12/2/21	Where to Now? Going Forward with Geography		
Finals Week	12/9/2021	Section 1: 8:00-10:00 Section 2: 10:30-12:30		

I am happy to see you here in GEOG 2035: Fundamentals of Geography. Welcome!!!