

## Geography 3810 – 100

## SOUTH AMERICA

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Room 3232, Wood Hall, Department of Geography

Office Hours: T/Thurs 1:45-4:00

Wed. 2-4

Lecture: Wood Hall Room 2722: Tuesdays 4 to 6:20

**THE COURSE:** this course provides an opportunity for the WMU student to step outside the North American experience by studying the relationships among cultural institutions, natural environments and the potential for human achievement in South America. The pedagogical challenge is to present South America as a system while examining relevant social, political and economic changes occurring in individual countries of South America.

You will be challenged to compare and differentiate the experiences and the cultures of the peoples of contemporary South America countries from their Anglo-American perspective and understand that the cultures, economies and politics of the region result from a unique mixture of Native South American, African and European influences.

Using multidisciplinary insights from Latin-Americanists and other social and natural scientists, the importance of place, the interactions between human beings and their environments, the challenge of ecologically sound sustainable development, the movement of people, and the cultural regions that change through time are studied. Utilizing these themes as a backdrop, students analyze, verify and evaluate the human condition in South America, with a focus on globally pertinent issues. Thus you will be able to place individual and group heritage into a larger perspective and develop respect for the diversity of people and environments.

### TEXTBOOK:

Caviedes, C. and G. Knapp. (1995). *South America*. Pentice Hall, NJ (out of print)

Geog 3810 Bernhard Center Bookstore Course Packet (if you cannot find text)

Goodwin, Paul B. (2009). *Global Studies: Latin America* 13<sup>th</sup> ed. McGraw Hill: Boston.

### GRADING

This is a course which meets only once a week, or 15 times this semester, thus it becomes very hard to test your comprehension of the material in a way that is both fair, and allows me to respond to problems. I do not wish to test you at the start of a new class period because this requires those of you who finish early to leave and then come back at a prescribed time. Nor do I wish to test you at the end of a class period because you will be thinking of the material on the exam and not on that of the lecture. What to do?..... We will have **TWO EXAMS** and **ONE COMPREHENSIVE FINAL!!** Class participation will play a role as well as map exercises and commentary on several issues of importance which will be in the form of readings.

**EXAMS**

**FINAL**

**PARTICIPATION, READINGS, QUIZZES ETC.**

**100 POINTS**

**200 POINTS**

**100 Points**

**500 TOTAL POINTS**

There will also be opportunity for extra credit.  
**BUT..... NO MISSED MATERIAL CAN BE  
MADE-UP!! EXCEPTIONS ONLY FOR  
UNIVERSITY EXCUSED ABSENCE!** If you wish  
to know your grade to date, check your portal under  
**my grades**. The letter grading scale for the course is  
as follows:

|          |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| A        | 90.0 percent or more |
| BA       | 88.0 – 89.9          |
| B        | 80.0 – 87.9          |
| CB       | 78.0 – 79.9          |
| C        | 70.0 – 77.9          |
| DC       | 68.0 – 69.9          |
| D        | 60.0 – 67.9          |
| E (Fail) | Below 59.9           |

|   |                                 |                          |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Tuesday January 6                      Introduction: The idea of regions - The place of South America in the world -<br>Indigenous Perceptions - Early Navigators   |                                 |                          |
| Physical Geography: The Natural Environment – Ecological Variety – Landforms: origin and development<br>– the climate of South America – the water resources of the continent – Plant and animal life. The Natural<br>regions of South America – The Eastern Highlands – The Central Lowlands – The Andean Cordillera   |                                 |                          |
| Tuesday February 3    Exam One  |                                 |                          |
| Cultural Geography: The Peoples of South America – the originals – the early transplanted peoples –<br>Modern migrations and formation of rural ethnic mosaics – Religious diversity – Demographic<br>characteristics of the population – the spatial distribution of the population. Settlement Network and Urban<br>Systems: character an morphology of cities – Evolution of the city functions – functional typology of South<br>American settlements – the ecological structure – the Environmental problems.<br>Geo-Economy: strategies for agricultural subsistence – domestications and origins of agriculture –<br>Formation of diets and cuisines – ownership: land tenure and reform – Hunger – techniques of agrarian<br>subsistence and low-input farming. |                                 |                          |
| Tuesday March 3    NO CLASSES – <b>Spring Break!</b>  |                                 |                          |
| Tuesday March 10    Exam Two  |                                 |                          |
| South America in the World Economy: the historical phases of the economy – the character of the<br>contemporary economy – regional development projects – criticisms and trends towards privatization and<br>free-trade.  |                                 |                          |
| Tuesday March 24      NO CLASSES<br>ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS   |                                 |                          |
| Political Geography and Ecology: the South American State, their origins and relations – the nation building<br>Process – the legacy of pre-Hispanic and colonial empires – independence and political fragmentation –<br>Expansionist states and changing boundaries – national perceptions and internal territorial organization –<br>Attempts at international integration<br>Cultural and Ecological survival: deforestation and Habitat destruction – species extinction – soil erosion –<br>Depletion of nonrenewable resources – dams and reservoirs – cultural survival.  |                                 |                          |
| <b>Tuesday<br/>April 21</b>   | <b>FINAL EXAM: 5:00 to 7:00</b> | <b>REGULAR CLASSROOM</b> |

**A Quick note on cheating**

The Faculty Senate Executive Board has suggested that the following statement regarding academic integrity be included in all syllabi:

“You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs that pertain to Academic Honesty. These policies include cheating, fabricating, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse [policies can be found at <http://catalog.wmich.edu> under Academic Policies, Student Rights and Responsibilities.] If there is a reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge (s). If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with your instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.” Please don’t do it!!

**Course background**

As a student, I most respected those teachers who seemed organized, but also allowed time and opportunities for discussion. I very much hope that this course will meet these dual goals. The syllabus is intended to let you know where we are at and where we are going during the course year, but I also want students to feel free to ask questions and share opinions in every class. If discussions take us a bit off schedule, that is fine. I have responsibilities to the class as a whole. I will be well prepared and open to discussion at any time in the lecture, right after class, or during office hours. You can raise your hand at any time. I will also spend as much time as you wish out of class helping you in any way I can to help you master the material. It is far better to spend some moments with me early than to get lost and struggle, so feel free to speak with me.

**Disabilities:**

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact Ms. Beth Denhartigh at 387-2116 or email [beth.denhartigh@wmich](mailto:beth.denhartigh@wmich) at the beginning of the semester. That office must make a disability determination before the instructor provides any accommodations.

**Library assistance:**

For assistance in locating articles, books and additional reference materials relevant to the class contact Michael McDonnell, Library Liaison to the Geography Department. Phone: 387-5208.  
Email: [Michael.McDonnell@wmich.edu](mailto:Michael.McDonnell@wmich.edu), Room 2030, Second Floor, Waldo Library.