

GEOG 365: Geography of the Pacific Summer 2010 Syllabus

TIME & PLACE: MTWΘ 11^{:00} am - 12^{:40} pm, Saunders 443B
INSTRUCTOR: David Strauch
EMAIL: <strauch@hawaii.edu>
OFFICE & HOURS: after class or by appointment
CLASS WEBSITE: <<https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal/site/MAN.91375.201040>>

This course explores the physical and cultural geography of the Pacific region, focusing on inhabited Oceania. How is this region variously circumscribed? Does the division of the Pacific Islands into Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia make sense? What challenges does the region currently face? Drawing work from numerous disciplines into a geographical perspective allows us to better understand the configurations and relationships of Oceanic places, and the circulations of energy, species, people and capital throughout the region. The course will include lectures, class discussions, student presentations, and some on-campus field trips.

Goals & Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- identify and locate all of the major island groups of the region on a map
- explain how Pacific landscapes have been shaped by geomorphological, climatic, biogeographical and cultural processes
- delineate the major culture areas of Oceania and critically discuss the history of and potential problems with this division
- discuss current social and environmental issues facing Pacific nations with reference to the historical, physical and cultural geography of the region
- discern and analyze theoretical and cultural biases inscribed in scholarly and popular literature
- know where to find resources for further research

Participant Responsibilities (for students and instructor)

- Clear communication, including daily use of UH email
- Regular class attendance, punctual and prepared
- Courteous conduct and academic honesty
- Readiness to investigate resources on other parts of campus

Note on summer classes

Because the summer session only gives us six weeks, we will be working rather intensively. Sometimes this means reading more than a chapter a day. A good strategy is to work ahead when possible; ideally by the end of a weekend you will have read the material for the following week.

Readings

Our primary text for this class will be *The Pacific Islands: Environment & Society*, edited by Moshe Rapaport (1999). Other readings will occasionally be assigned and posted on Laulima or made available at the reserve reading desk in Sinclair library. Students will also need to keep abreast of current news from the Pacific, through daily email headlines from the East-West Center's Pacific Islands Report.

Grading & Assignments

Participation (30%)

Attendance (on time), preparation, participation in class discussions of course material and current events.

Journals (30%)

Students are expected to keep a daily journal to record activities & thoughts related to the class & subject, which should contain at least 5 entries/week. This journal should be submitted by email daily, on nights before classes and once before the weekend (i.e. *by* midnight SuMTuWF) — if you won't be able to email it at the deadline, then send it before it is due, rather than afterwards. Some specific assignments will be given for journal writing. (More below.)

Map quiz (5%)

While the emphasis in this class is on mastering concepts rather than learning information by rote, we need to quickly learn where things are so that discussions will make more sense. In the first week, learn the map locations of the major islands and island groups, and demonstrate the acquisition of this knowledge in a quiz given the beginning of the second week.

Short quizzes (5%)

Short quizzes given at the beginning of class (11^{:00} am sharp).

Presentation: Country review (or alternative) (20%)

Each student should prepare a short (15-20 minute) presentation for the class based on individual research. Along with the presentation, please turn in a formal outline and a short annotated bibliography of academic references you used. Students are expected to choose one Pacific country or island group (which you are not from) and describe its physical and cultural geography, including a summary of recent news stories — but, alternatively, may choose a *theme*, and discuss it in a wider Pacific context, or present an original work of art or film (with references).

Book and film reviews (10%)

Summer means reading novels! For class choose at least one novel & one film, and write a short (1000 word) review of each. Suggestions for books and films will be provided.

Geography 365 Schedule [subject to revision as needed]

Details of readings and assignments will be posted on the Laulima schedule online.

Week 1: Introduction: the region, the study

6 July: Class overview and introduction to the subject

7 July: Orientation & epistemologies

8 July: Oceania & the Academy; Resources for Pacific Studies

Week 2: The physical environment: energy and form

12 July: Intro to Physical Environment [[Map quiz](#).]

13 July: Geomorphology

14 July: Climate and water

15 July: Coastal & Marine Environments

Week 3: Life in the Pacific

19 July: Introduction to evolutionary and island biogeography

20 July: Terrestrial ecosystems

21 July: Marine ecosystems, and fishing systems

22 July: Impacts of settlement, and synthetic reorganization of landscapes

Week 4: Cultural diversity in the Pacific

26 July: Representations of Pacific cultures

27 July: Stories of origins and interactions

28 July: Linguistics and culture groups

29 July: Landscapes and social organization [[1st review due](#)]

Week 5: Political economies in the cosmopolitan era

2 Aug: Globalizing economies since the 18th century

3 Aug: Contesting empires, 19th & 20th centuries

4 Aug: Moral economies: missionaries, tourism and development

5 Aug: Human mobility in the contemporary Pacific

Week 6: Spatial organization and distributions

9 Aug: Change and continuity in Pacific environments

10 Aug: Student presentations & topics to be determined

11 Aug: Student presentations & topics to be determined

12 Aug: Student presentations & course review

Class Journals

Keeping journals of what you're doing for this class provides a good way both for you to organize your work, and for me to make sure you're staying up to speed with the class. You are encouraged to use the journal template posted on Laulima but you may use another format if you prefer. Information recorded in your journal should be referenced, and attention should be given to proper Pacific orthography. Entries need not *always* be extensive, and may briefly summarize your work or thoughts. Journals should include the following:

Class summaries

Write short summaries of what we've covered each day in class. You might make note of any connections you see between the class presentation or activities and the projects you've been working on or materials you've been reading.

Extracurricular activities

Use the journal to record impressions of visits to museums or gardens with Pacific collections, or cultural events (e.g. Prince Lot Hula Festival), or observations of the island environment made on hikes.

Reading notes

Each time you read a paper or chapter, try to write a concise (3-5 sentence) summary in your journal, describing the main argument and giving your evaluation of it. These summaries become extremely useful later when you are trying to find something you've read in the past.

Reviews

For book and film reviews, and for journal entries which review events or exhibits, you want to do more than simply summarize the contents of the work. You should also describe as well as you can the context in which the work is located, which can be both historical and personal, and your assessment of whether it is effective.

Suggested Books and Films for Review**Oceanic Films***Flying Fox in a Freedom Tree**The Land has Eyes**No. 2**Once Were Warriors**Sione's Wedding**Whale Rider*

See also:

Moving Images of the Pacific Islands

<<http://www.hawaii.edu/oceanic/film/>>**Oceanic Novels**

Alan Duff (Aotearoa)

*Once Were Warriors**One Night Out Stealing*

Sia Figiel (Samoa)

*Where We Once Belonged**They Who Do Not Grieve*

Patricia Grace (Aotearoa)

*Tu**Potiki**Baby No-eyes**Cousins*

Epeli Hau'ofa (Tonga)

*Tales of the Tikongs**Kisses in the Nederends*

Keri Hulme (Aotearoa)

The Bone People

Witi Ihimaera (Aotearoa)

Whale Rider

Rexford Orotaloa (Solomon Islands)

Two Times Resurrection

Russell Soaba (PNG)

Maiba

Chantal Spitz (Tahiti)

Island of Shattered Dreams

Joseph Veramu (Fiji)

Moving Through the Streets

Albert Wendt (Sāmoa)

*The Mango's Kiss**Leaves of the Banyan Tree*