

**GEOGRAPHY 225
GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE**

BULLETIN INFORMATION

GEOG 225 - Geography of Europe (3 credit hours)

Course Description:

Physical and human geography of Europe.

SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW

This course uses a 'historical-geographical' approach to examine social, economic, environmental, and political aspects of the European subcontinent. We will utilize a political-economic perspective that focuses on the mutually transformative relationships between production systems, state/regulatory systems, social systems, and built, cultivated, and natural environments. Throughout the semester, we consider key geographical patterns and transformations in different historical periods ranging from the Medieval/Pre-modern period, the Age of Industrialization and Urbanization (covering mainly the 17th-early 20th centuries), and the Contemporary Period (covering the period since World War II). In each period, we examine agricultural production and land tenure, urban systems and landscapes, demographic changes (including migrations), and political geographies (i.e. systems of territorial organization and sovereignty). Throughout the course, we will constantly be asking, what is Europe, and what (if anything) makes Europe a 'unique', definable space?

ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of Geography 225, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the geographical organization of economic production and resource extraction, labor markets, cultural life, and urban space in contemporary Europe and the historical processes that have created these patterns.
2. Explain the physical landscape of the European subcontinent and the changes wrought to this physical landscape by human settlement, demographic changes, and systems of production
3. Identify the changing political-territorial organization of European space and the impacts of Europeans on the political-territorial organization of non-European spaces.
4. Demonstrate employment of human geographic concepts (e.g. space, place, territory, region, borders) in analyzing the factors that shape cultural, economic, and political patterns in Europe.
5. Apply concepts, patterns, and processes discussed in the classroom in independent reading and writing assignments.
6. Demonstrate recognition of the contentiousness of 'Europe' as a geographical concept, and critique fundamental assumptions behind the concept of the region in Geography.

SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this course. Weekly readings are listed in the syllabi and will be posted on Blackboard.

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS

- 1. Quizzes:** The main purpose of the quizzes is to ensure student attendance and to allow the instructor to gauge how well students understand key concepts discussed in lectures and in readings. These will be 'pop' quizzes, i.e. students will not be informed when they will be given, so it is crucial to attend lectures and to take notes.
- 2. Short research and reading assignments:** These short assignments require students to do some independent, in-depth research. Students will be given several topics that correspond to lectures and readings; they must select three of these on which to write over the course of the semester. Writing assignments will be 700-750 words in length and must make use of THREE academic sources (articles or book chapters); these assignments should be typed using 12-point Arial font, 1-inch margins, and double spacing. There will be three due dates over the semester for submitting assignments.
- 3. Midterm Exams:** The midterms will be in a multiple choice format and will test your mastery of lecture and reading material from each midterm period. Midterms will include map identification questions. To help you prepare for the map component, you will periodically be given lists of places mentioned in lecture and readings, along with study maps and blank maps for practicing your map identification skills.
- 4. Final Exam:** The final exam will include a multiple choice section (covering only material from the second midterm), a written short-answer section (covering material from the whole course); and map identification questions. Students will need to bring a blue book to the final.

SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS

Week 1 Introduction to the course

Week 2 The idea of Europe
European zones
The European landscape (key features of the European physical environment)
Reading for this week: Excerpt from Murphy, A., Jordan-Bychkov, T. and Bychkova Jordan, B (2008). *The European Culture Area*, Plymouth, UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers (Chapter 1, pp. 1-16, up to 'The approach of this book').
Ostergren, R.C. and Rice, J.G. (2004). *The Europeans: A Geography of People, Culture, and Environment*, New York: Guilford Press (Chapter 2)

- Week 3 Pre-modern Europe
 Medieval social organization and production systems
 Medieval/pre-industrial cities
 Political geography and religion
Reading for this week:
 Pounds, Norman (2005). *The Medieval City*, Westport, CT: Greenview Press
 (Chapter 5: The urban way of life)
- Week 4 Urbanization
 Proto-industrialization and industrialization
 Demographic change (population growth and migrations abroad)
 Rationalizing the city: the beginnings of urban planning
Readings for this week:
 Engels, Friedrich (1845 [1980]). *The Condition of the Working Class in England*,
 Moscow: Progress Publishers, pp. 59-73.
 Ogborn, Miles (1998). *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680-1780*
 (Chapter 7).
- Week 5 The birth of the nation-state system
 Age of Empire
 The European colonial imagination
 Imperial cities
Readings for this week:
 Standage, Tom (2005). *A History of the World in Six Glasses*, New York: Walker
 and Company (Chapter 10: Tea Power).
 Schneer, Jonathan (1999). *London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis*, New Haven:
 Yale University Press (Chapter 2: The face of imperial London, pp. 17-36).
- Week 6 Lecture catch-up/ Midterm review
 Midterm exam
- Week 7 Industry and society in the interwar period
 Post-war reconstruction and economic boom
 The birth of the European Union
 The welfare state and public housing
 Immigrant flows to Europe
 Western Europe's economic crisis
Reading for this week:
 Western, John (1992). *A Passage to England: Barbadian Londoners Speak of
 Home*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (Chapter 5)
- Week 8 Cold War political geographies
 Industry and agriculture in the Soviet Bloc
 The fall of the Berlin Wall

Eastern European integration into the European Union
The politics of memory in the former Soviet bloc

Readings for this week:

Ziegler, DJ (2002). Post-communist Eastern Europe and the cartography of independence, *Political Geography*, 21(2): 671-686.

Till, Karen (1999). Staging the past: landscape designs, cultural identity and Erinnerungspolitik at Berlin's Neue Wache, *Cultural Geographies*, 6(3): 251-283.

Week 9

Europe in the global economy
Europe's new economic geographies
The problem of intra-European labor mobility
Turkey, Russia, and the European Union
Europe in question: the end of the Euro zone?

Reading for this week:

Dawley, S., Stenning, A., and Pike, A. (2008). Mapping Corporations, Connecting Communities: Remaking Steel Geographies in Northern England and Southern Poland, *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 15: 265-287

Week 10

Contemporary migrations
Guarding Europe's borders

Reading for this week:

Del Sarto, R. (2009). Borderlands: The Middle East and North Africa as the EU's southern buffer zone, in D. Bechev and K. Nicolaides (eds.), *Mediterranean Frontiers: Borders, Conflicts, and Memory in a Transnational World*, London: IB Tauris.

Week 11

Lecture catch-up and midterm review
Midterm 2

Week 12

Europe's new Muslim minorities
Nationalist conflict in contemporary Europe: Northern Ireland, Basque separatism, and the former Yugoslavia

Reading for this week:

Saint Blancat, C. and Schmidt di Friedberg, O. (2005). Why are mosques a problem? Local politics and fear of Islam in Italy, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(6): 1083-1105.

Tansey, Oisín (2009). Kosovo: Independence and Tutelage, *Journal of Democracy*, 20(2):153-166.

Week 13

Europe's post-industrial cities
Urban decline and urban regeneration
The end of the welfare state?

Readings for this week:

Rousseau, Max (2009). Re-imagining the city centre for the middle classes: Regeneration, gentrification, and symbolic policies in 'loser cities', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 33(3): 770-788.

Spevec, Dubravka and Kempic' Bogadi, Sanja (2009). Croatian cities under transformation: New tendencies in housing and segregation, *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie*, 100(4): 454-468.

Week 14

EU subsidies and the 'Common Agricultural Policy'
Europe and global food production
Re-imagining the rural

Reading for this week:

Owen, David (2009). The ghost course, *The New Yorker* (April 20)

Week 15

Environmental degradation and preservation
The challenge of climate change
Italy's garbage crisis
Urban environmental policies

Reading for this week:

Pavlinek, P. and Pickles, J. (2000). *Environmental transitions: transformation and ecological defense in Central and Eastern Europe*, London; New York: Routledge, (Chapter 10: 'Environmental effects of post-communist transformation')

Pucher, J. and Buehler, R. (2008). Making cycling irresistible: Lessons from the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany, *Transport Reviews*, 28(4): 495-528.

Final Exam according to University exam schedule