

Human Geography: Our Global Identity Course Syllabus

What you will learn in this course

Human Geography: Our Global Identity

How do language, religion, and landscape affect the physical environment? How do geography, weather, and location affect customs and lifestyle? Students will explore the diverse ways in which people affect the world around them and how they are affected by their surroundings. Students will discover how ideas spread and cultures form, and learn how beliefs and architecture are part of a larger culture complex. In addition to introducing students to the field of Human Geography, this course will teach students how to analyze humans and their environments.

Unit 1: Introduction to Human Geography

When you think of geography, you may think of maps and countries. Although geography does include these things, there's more to the field of geography than just maps. In fact, geography is such a broad category that it has subfields, including physical geography and human geography. This unit will introduce you to the field of human geography. How is human geography different from other forms of geography? This unit will discuss some of those differences. You will also learn the history behind human geography and the relevance of human geography in today's world.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe the differences between physical and cultural geography.
- List the subfields of human geography.
- Understand relevance of culture and cultural ecology to geography.
- Discuss theories of environmental determinism and possibilism.
- Relate the history of how modern geography has evolved.

Unit 2: Population

Human geography studies population by analyzing density and distribution; that is, geographers look at how many people live in specific areas and why they live there. Geographers also look at the consequences of various distributions and densities. They look at the effect of the land on its population and at the effect of the people on the land. Those studying human geography also examine population growth and decline over time and place.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand the difference between population density and population distribution.
- Discuss the importance of patterns of composition.
- Describe the purpose of population pyramids.

- Analyze historical population trends and projections.
- Discuss regional variations of demographic transitions.

Unit 3: Cultural Patterns & Processes

This unit explains how human geography studies the cultural patterns and processes of a region or place. Human geographers study concepts of culture as well as cultural differences. These cultural attitudes and practices have an environmental impact but also provide a cultural identity or cultural landscape to a particular region.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand the difference between culture traits and culture trait complexes.
- Describe the methods of cultural diffusion.
- Discuss the relevance of acculturation.
- Understand the environmental impact of cultural attitudes and practices.
- Identify cultural landscapes and cultural identities.

Unit 4: Language

Language is an important component of Human Geography. Language can unite a culture group or divide it—language can be a unifying force or a dividing force. Language geography looks at the distribution of language throughout history. Language can give us clues about the culture of a region, such as the structure of the culture or its social status.

What will you learn in this unit?

- List the major language families in the world.
- Examine the branches of language families.
- Consider the relevance of the English language as a means of communication.
- Discuss the environmental impact of cultural attitudes and practices.
- Discuss how languages evolve over time.

Human Geography Midterm Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first five units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Unit 5: Religion

This unit explains the nature, role, and effects of religion on human geography. Human geographers study types and patterns of religion. These types and practices often provide a cultural identity or cultural landscape for a particular region. Religion affects facets of daily life as well as overall structures like the government, and it can also be studied by examining its diffusion within a single cultural group and among different cultural groups.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Discuss the origins of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.
- Describe the diffusion of Buddhism into China.
- Consider the importance of holy days to different religions.
- Understand the relationship between religion and environment.
- Identify religious conflicts.

Unit 6: Ethnicity, Gender, & Geography

This unit explains the roles of ethnicity, race, and gender in human geography. Once a relatively obscure field of geography, the study of ethnicity and gender has shown geographers a significant amount of information related to population density and dispersion. This unit will explain how ethnicity differs from nationality, and how both play a role in human geography. In addition, we will cover how gender has factored into human geography and how it has helped to shape society.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe how ethnicities become clustered.
- Consider the different types of segregation.
- Discuss how class relates to ethnicity and gender.
- Identify the differences between a nation-state, a part-nation state, a multinational state, and a stateless nation.
- List examples of ethnic conflict.

Unit 7: Political Geography

Political geography is one of the most easily recognized facets of human geography. Human geography began alongside the study of the influence of geography on political and military boundaries. Political geography involves researching the location and shape of a State. It also examines how imperialism and colonization affect cultures. Finally, this branch of human geography studies the relationship of physical geography and the State.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe the nature of a State.
- List the different shapes of States.
- Understand the importance and diversity of borders.
- Consider the consequences of colonialism and imperialism.
- Describe the history of the United Nations.

Unit 8: Agriculture

Agriculture is an important concept in human geography because it affects a culture's food supply. Advancements in agriculture have also enabled societies to advance in an industrial

capacity because mechanization means that less of a workforce is needed to sustain the food supply. This enabled people to obtain jobs in other areas, and increased the industrialization of society.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe the nature of the Von Thünen Model.
- Identify the different types of agricultural mechanization.
- Comprehend the importance and purpose of animal domestication.
- Understand the value of crop rotation.
- Understand the purpose of chemical farming.

Human Geography Final Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units six to ten in this course – the last five units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

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