

Geography 110
Geography of the U.S. and Canada 110-003 and 005
Course Syllabus—Fall 2009

Dr. James Dunn

Office: Candelaria 2080 Hours: Mondays 10:00 am–11:00 am, Weds 12:30-2:30 and by appointment
Phone/voice-mail: 970-351-2834 (Dept phone: 351-2715) E-mail: james.dunn@unco.edu
Course Website: <http://geography.unco.edu/departments/faculty/DUNN/index.htm> then choose US and Canada (Dunn)

Course Description:

Geography of the US and Canada offers a spatial analysis of the cultural and environmental patterns of North America, with an emphasis on the geographic processes that shape them (Liberal Arts Core Area 5b and Gen Ed 5C). It is also an introduction to the physical, cultural, political, and economic characteristics within subregions and on how geographic subregions interact with each other. These relationships are explored using both current and historical case studies from the United States and Canada.

This course introduces a selection of critical issues that hinder the well-being of people and the environment in North America. These issues cross subregional boundaries and are expected to persist into the future. Although many issues are depressing, though there are emerging strategies that may alleviate their intensity.

Main Objectives*--at the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about peoples, places, and environments.
2. Describe the physical and human characteristics of places in North America and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
3. Explain how physical processes shape North America's surface patterns and systems.
4. Explain how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation, and conflict.
5. Describe the effects of interactions between human and physical systems and the changes in meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.
6. Apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future.
7. Demonstrate the ability to ask geographic questions.
8. Demonstrate the ability to apply the appropriate methods and research skills to analyze and solve geographic questions.
9. Demonstrate the framework, skills, and theory identified as Social Science objectives by the University's Liberal Arts Core and the older General Education Program:
 - A. The student will understand the framework, world view, or philosophical assumptions of the discipline.
 - B. The student will understand the methods and research skills used by the discipline.
 - C. The student will understand the principal theories of the discipline.
 - D. The student will demonstrate familiarity with current problems in the discipline (optional).
 - E. The student will demonstrate familiarity with laboratory experiences in the discipline (optional).

This course provides content necessary to enable secondary licensure students to address the K-12 Colorado Model Content Standards in Geography.

*The first 6 objectives are the Colorado Model Content Standards for K-12 education.

Required Materials

1. McKnight, T.L. 2004. *Regional Geography of the United States and Canada, 4th edition* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall). This book comes with Goode's World Atlas (21st edition) that we will use in class. Available at the UNC Bookstore and other places (ISBN is 0-13-169213-5).
2. This course relies on a website that has study guides to all quizzes and exams, hot links to sites with required data, and other relevant material and announcements. The address for the site is listed on the first page of this syllabus.

Note: If you purchased the 3rd edition of McKnight, you'll be OK, but the page references given in class will differ. The atlas is necessary for this class; bring it daily for atlas work and to increase your knowledge of North America.

Assumptions I Make About You

1. I assume that you will be monitoring news events on the regions we study. There are many excellent internet sites you can use to search for news on any part of North America. We'll announce websites that have value.
2. I assume that you will question all published and electronic data, and not accept things without confirmation from multiple sources. Critical thinking is valued highly!
3. I assume that you will take responsibility for your own education. Don't wait to learn things from me; probe and question, read further, add to the class; I welcome your contribution!

Evaluation

First, a general point: The surest way to succeed in this course is to attend class. The course grade is based on a point system, with a total of 500 points possible to earn during the semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of all points you earn. Your grade is based on the total points you accumulate on all exams, quizzes, exercises, and activities, according to this scale:

Grade	Grade Points	Percentage	Minimum on a 500 Point Scale
A	4	93-100%	465
A-	3.67	90-92.99%	450
B+	3.33	87-89.99%	435
B	3	83-86.99%	415
B-	2.67	80-82.99%	400
C+	2.33	77-79.99%	385
C	2	73-76.99%	365
C-	1.67	70-72.99%	350
D+	1.33	67-69.99%	335
D	1	63-66.99%	315
D-	0.67	60-62.99%	300
F	0	Below 60%	<300

Exams (100 points each, for a total of 300 points): Two midterms and a final; these consist primarily of multiple-choice, matching, and mapping questions, and sometimes with several short-answer questions. All items on the exams are drawn from the material covered during class and in the assigned readings. **Important: Exam questions may also be given on dates before or after the exam date, so you must be present to earn those points.**

Map Quizzes (75 total points): Four short quizzes on different places in North America; a study guide for each quiz is posted on the course website.

Take-home Exercises (75 total points): Two writing assignments to be completed individually; one will cover basic geographic skills, another will cover a geographic issue. Additional may be added during the semester.

Open Atlas Skills (50 points): **You must bring your atlas to every class meeting (except Exams). There will be a number of unannounced atlas skills checks throughout the semester. These cannot be made up. You will be given questions that assess your ability to read and use our atlas. You can use your atlas to answer the questions.**

Policies

1. Special Note: **Turn all of your technology off before you come into class.** With permission, you may use a laptop to take class notes. **You will be asked to leave class if you use cell phones, I-pod or other audio devices, or other such technology.**
2. Each student is expected to attend all classes. Attendance is taken randomly. If you'll miss a scheduled exam, quiz, or exercise due date because of illness, family problem, or other valid reason, it is your responsibility to contact me before class (351-2834). Make-ups on exams, quizzes, and exercises are only allowed for excused absences.
3. If you happen to miss an unscheduled in-class activity, you can make-up points only if you turn in the finished activity within two class meetings of the original assignment. Activities cannot be made up after that under any circumstances.
4. If you miss any other class (where no graded assignment or activity occurs), it is your responsibility to obtain notes from someone in class and/or schedule time with me in office hours to cover the missed material.
5. Note the scheduled date and time of the final exam. Final exams will not be offered at any other time. Make your holiday travel plans accordingly.
6. Any form of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in assessment of severe penalties.

Disability Support Services

Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

UNC's Policies

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link <http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

Hints for Using the Textbook

Readings listed on the tentative schedule (next page) are in the text by McKnight; additional pages or supplemental readings may be assigned.

This book has a lot of detail about the geography of North America. This course couldn't and won't cover all that material. Page numbers in each chapter covering the course's key topics are given on the schedule. Read for the geographical background of each region and an overview of major concepts covered in class.

The remaining (unassigned) pages in each chapter are optional readings.

Tentative Schedule

<u>Unit Topics & Required Readings</u>	<u>Week Beginning</u>
A. Regions of the United States and Canada Readings: Chapter 5 and Chapter 2	Aug 24
Map Quiz A: Physical Geography of North America (13 points)	Sep 9
B. Human Settlements in North America and Issues Readings: Chapter 3 (32-40); Chapter 4, Chapter 1	
Class Exercise A (25 points)	Sep 16

Exam A: Units A & B (worth 100 points) in class	Sep 23
C. Southern Canada	
Readings: Chapter 7 French Canada	
Chapter 18 (pages 441-451) Pacific NW	
Chapter 13 (291-302) Prairie	
Chapter 6 (104-113) Atlantic Provinces	
Map Quiz B: Southern Canada (17 points)	Oct 5
D. Northern North America	
Readings: Chapters 19 and 20	
Map Quiz C: The North (worth 23 points)	Oct 19
Chapter 15 Intermontane West	
<u>Unit Topics & Required Readings</u>	<u>Week Beginning</u>
Exam B: Units C & D (worth 100 points) in class	Oct 28
E. California and the West	
Readings: Chapter 16 California	
Chapter 17 Hawaii	
Map Quiz D: Western US and Hawaii (22 points)	Nov 16
F. Urbanism in North America	
Readings: Chapter 8	
Chapter 12 (275-277) Twin Cities	
Chapter 18, (436-441)	
Chapter 3 (43-44; 54-55 Closer Look;	
Class Exercise B: (50 points) (NO Makeups Permitted!)	Nov 20 + 23
Course Review Session	Dec 4
Final Exam: Units E & F, with some review of Units A-D	

Final Exam Schedule: The exam begins at the beginning of the scheduled time and may be timed for 60 minutes. Show up late and your test time is reduced accordingly.

Date and Time for the Final will be announced. The exam is held in our classroom.