

2 History of Geography

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Flow Diagram The Five Fundamental Themes of Geography

Source: Michigan Geographic Alliance

This handout is available on the course homepage for viewing and printing.

Geography
Five Themes to Help Understand the World and its People

ACCESSING COURSE MATERIAL

1. Access G101 course home page via the Geography Dept web site. **It is NOT on BlackBoard.**
2. Click on Course Syllabi
3. Scroll to our course/section number and click on the link.

1. Hunter College web page:
<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu> > Academic depts > Geography
Direct link to course listings:
<http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/cwpages.html>

4. Scroll to our course/section number and click on the link.

GEOG 10100

ACCESSING COURSE MATERIAL

5. Access the links to get the material you wish to view or copy, including **Power Point** lecture slides, hand-outs and atlas extra credit assignments.

5: course home page

5. Access the links to get the material you wish to view or copy, including Power Point lecture slides, hand-outs and atlas extra credit assignments.

4. Direct link to home page (also printed on the syllabus)

http://www.geo.hunter.cuny.edu/courses/geog101_grande/

Flow Diagram The Five Fundamental Themes of Geography

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Geography
Five Themes to Help Understand the World and its People

Five Fundamental Themes

1. **LOCATION**
Addresses the question: **Where?**
There are 2 types of location:
 - A. **SITE: absolute location**
This is **exact placement** on earth's surface: *latitude and longitude* or another grid-based system.
 - B. **SITUATION: relative location**
This is location **in relation to other sites**: *includes aspects of accessibility, connectivity, change through technology, and strategic positioning.*

NEW YORK CITY
Latitude: 40° 7' N
Longitude: 74° W

Five Fundamental Themes

2. PLACE

Addresses the **special features** or **characteristics** of a location that make it **unique**.

Includes:

- **Size** (how large or small)
- **Land surface** (terrain, river systems, coastlines)
- **Physical characteristics** (climate, geology, soils, water, wildlife, ecosystems)
- **Human characteristics** (population, ethnicity, land use, architectural styles, transportation networks)

Five Fundamental Themes

3. MOVEMENT

Addresses the idea of **mobility** to, from and within a location.

- ✓ Studies the **flow and repositioning** of people, wildlife, disease, goods and ideas on the earth's surface.
- ✓ **Analyzes diffusion** (or **spread**) from a point of origin.

Five Fundamental Themes

4. REGION

Addresses the **unifying factors** of location.

- Identifies similar characteristics.
- Studies formation.
- Tracks change over time.

Five Fundamental Themes

5. HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

Addresses the **relationships** within locations between **people** and the **physical environment**.

- > Perception
- > Technology
- > Land use decisions
- > Impact

Five Fundamental Themes Plus One

To the Five we add the **Earth science tradition of geography**.

Addresses the **processes, cycles and systems** that constantly modify the natural world and therefore influence people.

These include:

- ☐ geologic and atmospheric processes.
- ☐ seasonal and ecological cycles.
- ☐ biomes and ecosystems (unique zones of life).

The Five Fundamental Themes of Geography

Source: Michigan Geographic Alliance

This handout is available on the course homepage for viewing and printing.

Keep a copy of the diagram handy throughout the semester, especially as you do the text-book readings.

Origins of Geography

Roots

❖ Geography's origin goes back as far as humans began interacting with their environment and making decisions.

Awareness

□ Early humans developed an awareness of their surroundings:

- An awareness of the **component parts** of the physical environment.
- An awareness of the **sequence of events**.
- An awareness of the **natural cycles**.

Survival

➢ People have always made decisions about habitat use.

- Food, water and shelter (protection) were needed to survive.

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Natural Curiosity

Why does it happen?

How does it happen?

When does it happen?

Why does it happen here?

Where else does it happen?

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Origins of Geography

❖ The Ancients divided knowledge into two categories: **TIME** and **PLACE**

➢ **TIME** >>> *When?* >>> History

➢ **PLACE** >>> *Where?* >>> Geography

From these all other fields of study evolved as people became specialists by narrowing their areas of study.

>>> *The Why?*

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CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY

PLACE

ANCIENTS: Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Babylon, Indus Valley, Americas

← GREECE →
Oldest known maps (3800 BC, clay tablets)
 Domestication of animals
 Development of technology
 Navigational skills
 Trade

← ROMEO →
Descriptive writing, Systematic study

← CHINA →
Exploration, Mapping, Inventories

← ARABIA →
Travel, Mapping, Inventories, Natural processes

← SCANDINAVIA →
Preservation of the works of Greeks and Romans
 Exploration, Record keeping, Research

← RENAISSANCE EUROPE →
Exploration of Northern Lands (N.Eur., Iceland, Greenland, N.Am.)
 Great Explorations, Scholarship, Earth Sciences

This chart is available on the course home page for viewing and printing.


Timeline: 3800 BC to 1700 AD (in 100 yr intervals)

slg 12/03


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Clay Tablets, Babylonia

Oldest known maps are clay tablets from Mesopotamia dating back to the 3800s BC (5800 years ago).




Map of the world, c.600s BC
British Museum Collection



Map of city of Nippur, c.1400s BC

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Present-day Map of Europe



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The writings of the Greek poet Homer reflected the geographical concepts of his time.

Maps of coastal areas made by Ancient Greeks were fairly accurate.

Sailors tended to avoid the open seas and vessels hugged coastlines.

After National Geographic

The World of Homer
9th century BC (3000 yrs. ago)

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Herodotus (a Greek living in Italy) **gained much of his information about the earth from his extensive travels.**

He was one of the early group of people who believed the earth was round, not flat.

World of Herodotus
5th century BC (2500 yrs. ago)

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Eratosthenes, the chief librarian of Alexandria, is called the **“Father of Geography.”**

Over 2200 years ago, he estimated the earth’s circumference to be 25,000 mi by recording the angle of the sun’s shadow in deep wells at noon.

Eratosthenes's World Map
3rd century BC

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The World of Strabo
1st century AD

❖ Strabo was born in present-day Turkey into a wealthy family. He was well-educated and had access to the great libraries of Rome and Egypt.

❖ Strabo’s **“Geography”** is a series of 17 books written 2000 years ago that recount the historical geography of Greece and Rome.

- It was used to educate statesmen and military leaders of the Roman Empire.
- He used Eratosthenes’s map of the world as a base.

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Last of the ancient classical geographers was **Ptolemy**, a librarian at Alexandria, who compiled the 8-vol **“Guide of Geography”** which became the standard reference work for centuries.

Ptolemy’s estimate of the size of the earth made it **smaller** than Eratosthenes’s earth.

Columbus based his calculations on Ptolemy’s measurements.

These numbers were used into the 1500s when explorers traveling the distances began to prove him in error.

Ptolemy’s World Map
2nd century AD

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Non-Western Contributions

- The **“Tribute to Yu”** was an inventory of the Chinese empire written c.2,600 years ago (5th century BC).
 - The **oldest Chinese maps** date from 4th century BC.
- The **libraries of the Arab world** preserved the works of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Scholars continued earth-focused studies during the period in Europe called the **“Middle Ages”** or **“Dark Age”** (5th -10th centuries AD).
- Arab scholars**, esp. **al-Idrisi** (d. 1154), **ibn-Battuta** (d. 1378), and **ibn-Khaldun** (d. 1406) were travelers who wrote detailed descriptions of places they visited (Mediterranean, North Africa, Southwest Asia and India).
- Asian scholars and merchants** recorded info and mapped areas as they traveled overland across central Asia to Europe and by ship to SE Asia, India and East Africa.
- No record exists** of exploration outside their region by **empires in Africa and the Americas.**

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Kangnido Map, Korea: 1402

Compiled in the late 1300s this map drew on the knowledge of traders from Korea, Japan, China, Arabia and from Islamic scholars. It shows India, Africa and part of Europe.
Note size and place distortions.

Martin Waldseemuller's Map of the World - 1507

This is the first map in which the name AMERICA is used to designate the lands of the western hemisphere.

Note shape of North America and South America

Munster Map of the New World: 1552

It is the first map focused on the western hemisphere.

Ornate but very general.

Note location of Japan (called Zipangri) next to Mexico.

Juan Bellerio Map of the Americas 1554

This is one of the first maps devoted just to the Western Hemisphere.

Nova Orbis Tabula in Lucem Edita Frederick de Wit, c. 1665

Maps like this were used as wall decoration in the grand rooms of palaces and estates.

Regni Mexicani Sie Nova Hispania Ludoviciana, N. Angla

1730 map with detailed information and accurate location.

The David Rumsey Collection (<https://www.davidrumsey.com>) has a very extension collection of scanned images.

MODERN GEOGRAPHY

This chart is available on the course homepage for viewing and printing.

Milestones and highlights

<p>Rebirth in Europe. Basic Principles and General Laws of Nature recognized.</p> <p>Humboldt: generalist Von Thunen: specialist Kant: philosopher Ritter: academician</p> <p>Late 1700s to mid-1800s</p>	<p>Division of the discipline into branches.</p> <p>Physical Geography Anthropo (human) Geography Schools of thought develop: <i>Environmental Determinism vs Possibilism</i></p> <p>Mid/late 1800s to early 1900s</p>	<p>Creation of subunits within the branches. American geography grows.</p> <p>Regionalization Cultural landscape studies Geopolitics</p> <p>Accepted as a distinct university discipline</p> <p>Heyday of the great geographic societies.</p> <p>Mid/late 1900s</p>	<p>Increased specialization. Less description. Fades as it loses its distinctive nature but 1980s "Back to Basics" movement results in a resurgence.</p> <p>Spatial analysis Quantification Hypothesis testing</p> <p>Data manipulation Computerization Geographic Education Geog Info Systems</p> <p>New technologies Extreme specialization Modeling</p> <p>Mid/late 1900s</p>	<p>Humanistic, theoretical, and scientific points of view espoused. Local area studies.</p> <p>Qualitative methodologies: Microstudies Social Theory: Radicalism; Structuralism; Gender Studies Environmental studies, esp. climate related</p> <p>Late 1900s-early 2000s</p>
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GENERAL TIME LINE

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MODERN GEOGRAPHY

Full chart is available on the course homepage.

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GENERAL TIME LINE

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MODERN GEOGRAPHY

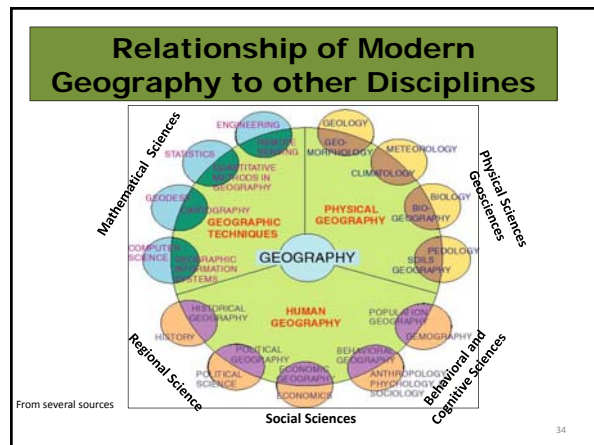
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Milestones and Highlights

<p>Increased specialization. Less description. Fades as it loses its distinctive nature but 1980s "Back to Basics" movement results in a resurgence.</p> <p>Spatial analysis Quantification Hypothesis testing</p> <p>Data manipulation Computerization Geog Info Systems</p> <p>New technologies Extreme specialization Modeling</p> <p>Mid/late 1900s</p>	<p>Humanistic, theoretical, and scientific points of view espoused. Local area studies.</p> <p>Qualitative methodologies: Microstudies Social Theory: Radicalism; Structuralism; Gender Studies Environmental studies, esp. climate related</p> <p>Late 1900s-early 2000s</p>
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1945-----2000-----present

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ESSAY 1 Option

- From **Chapter 1**, you will discuss the contribution to the field of geography or to our knowledge of the world of a **noted geographer, earth scientist or explorer not mentioned in class or in the textbook.**
- Focus on the **person's contribution**, not the biography, and don't refer to the person by his/her first name as "Christopher discovered America in 1492."
- Do not use** Columbus, Magellan, de Gama, Marco Polo or any names from the lecture slides.

- Maximum length is 2 pages.
- Include a bibliography of at least 2 sources on a separate page and footnotes if appropriate.
- All required essays are due by **Tuesday, April 9, 2019** but may be handed in at any time prior to the that date.
- A **lateness penalty** as stated in the syllabus will be assessed.
- Any two topical essays from the 3 topics listed on the syllabus are to be submitted by the due date.
- If you do all three, the third will count as an extra credit assignment!

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NEXT

Studying Geography

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