SYLLABUS

HUNTER COLLEGE GEOGRAPHY
Geography of New York State

GRADING for GEOG 260/62151 students
- 1. Exams (28%)
  - 2 exams (midterm and final) worth 15% each.
- 2. Thematic exercises (72%)
  - 12 required internet-based homework assignments and handouts.
  - Extra credit 4-page research paper.
- 3. Extra Credit Options
  - Extra credit thematic exercises.
  - Extra credit definitions on exams.
  - Can only benefit your grade.
- 4. Class participation
  - Can only benefit your grade.
- 5. Late submission of an assignment will lower the earned score.
- 6. GEOG 709 students – see me at the end of class.

PURPOSE
1. To learn about the geography of NYS – its physical environment, the distribution of its people and their activities, and the interrelationships between the people and the environment in NYS - and to apply geographic principles and reasoning to a real world situation where NYS is used as an example of regional analysis.
2. To explore, navigate through and use the geographic information available on the Internet, especially that provided by the State of New York.
3. For those in the education sequence, in addition to 1 and 2 above, to gather and use information about NYS within the guidelines of the national geography standards for presentation at a grade-specific level.

SYLLABUS

List of Topics

1. Introduction
   - Course requirements
   - Fundamental themes
2. Map Reading and Interpretation
   - Intro to the GeoLab
   - New York in maps
3. Physical Characteristics of NYS
   - Paleo-geography, physiographic regions, geomorphology, glaciation
   - Mineral deposits, land reclamation
   - Climate controls, climate regions, climate change, air quality, wind energy
   - Soil
   - Water: Resources, surface, groundwater, coastal zone, water quality
4. Midterm Exam
5. Historical Geography of NYS
   - Native Americans in pre-European times
   - European “discovery,” exploration, settlement
   - NYS and the American Revolution
   - Post-revolutionary period: settlement patterns, cities, railroads, industrialization, urbanization
6. Population Geography
   - Trends
   - Aging of NYS
   - Health issues
7. Rural NYS
   - Agriculture, land classification system; land use, conservation issues
   - Forestry
   - Agriculture
8. Urban NYS
   - Development of the urban-economic landscape, industrial location and manufacturing
   - Geographic city, economic base and variables/trends
   - Original site location of the major cities
   - Post-World War II period in the present
   - Nassau and Suffolk counties
   - New York City
9. Final Exam

Counts of New York State

There are 62 counties in NYS, five of which are the boroughs of NYC.
List of Exercises

Each student will be assigned three counties which are the focus of these exercises.

1. County Summary (R)
2. Political Map of NYS (R)
3. Map & Imagery Resources (R)
4. Physiographic Regions (E)
5. Mineral Resources of NYS (R)
6. Climate Regions of NYS (R)
7. Air Quality in NYS (E)
8. Wind Power Potential (E)
9. County Literature Search (R)
10. Watersheds of NYS (R)
11. The Iroquois Village (R)
12. Military Geography (R)
13. Canals of NYS (E)
14. Population Issues (R)
15. Agriculture in NYS (R)
16. NYS Economy (R)
17. Neighborhoods of NYC (E)
18/19. Malls, Farms and the River – Orange County Field Trip (E; this is worth double extra credit)
20. Museum Visit (E)

R= Required  E=Extra Credit

What is Geography?

- Geography is the study of people living on the surface of the earth.
- It studies the interaction of people with the physical elements of the natural environment.
- The result is the creation of the cultural environment or the “human imprint on the natural environment.”

What is Geography?

- All of this is done within the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography as developed by the NCGE and AAG.
  1. Location
  2. Place
  3. Movement
  4. Region
  5. Human-Environment Interaction

Five Fundamental Themes

1. LOCATION
   - Addresses the question: Where?
   - Absolute location = site
   - Relative location = situation

2. PLACE
   - Addresses the special features of location that make it unique.
   - Includes size and physical and human characteristics (landscapes)

3. MOVEMENT
   - Addresses the idea of mobility to, from and within a location.
   - Studies the movement of people, goods and ideas.
   - Analyzes diffusion (or spread) from a point of origin.

4. REGION
   - Addresses the unifying factors of location.
   - Identifies similar characteristics.
   - Studies formation and 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

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.

The National Standards
- For those in the education sequence, there are 18 geography national standards that have been developed for inclusion into the curriculum at various grade levels to enable students become geographically informed people.

Geographic Methodologies
- Geographers study the earth from a number of different points of view.
  - World in Spatial Terms (standards 1,2,3)
  - Places and Regions (standards 4,5,6)
  - Physical Systems (standards 7,8)
  - Human Systems (standards 9,10,11,12,13)
  - Environment and Society (standards 14,15,16)
  - Uses of Geography (standards 17,18)

Geography of the Present
- Studies current conditions, interrelationships and happenings.
- It focuses on today.
- It goes back in time to set the scene.
- It evaluates the present for future interactions.

Geography of the Past
- Historical Geography looks at and analyzes the conditions that have led to or influenced the actions of people over time.
- It emphasizes developmental processes.
- It studies change.
Geographic Methodologies

**Geography of the Future**

- *Regional and Urban Planning* uses the knowledge gained from the past and present to make assumptions about the future.

**Geographic Methodologies**

*All three (past, present and future)*

- are studied from geographic dualisms point of view: human vs. physical, topical vs. regional, descriptive vs. analytical
- use geographic research methods to gather and analyze data: field work, library research, remotely gathered information, and data analysis software programs.
- use cartographic methods and GIS to portray information spatially: mapping

**What is a Region?**

- A **region** is a part of the earth exhibiting similar traits. Dividing the world up into regions helps us to bring order to a diverse planet.
- **All regions have**
  1. Location
  2. Spatial Extent
  3. Boundaries

**What is a Region? (cont’d)**

- **All regions also have**
  4. Categorization
    a) formal
    b) functional
    c) vernacular
  5. Hierarchical Arrangement
    a) major
    b) minor

**NYS is a Region.**

- It has location – both site and situation
- It has spatial extent – about 54,470 sq mi
- It has boundaries – political designation of authority
- It can be categorized – it is a formal region
- It has hierarchical arrangement – it is part of larger regions and has many smaller regions within it.

**Physical Regions**

- [Map of Geographic Regions of New York State]

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9/1/2011
Development of the Cultural Landscape

1. The natural landscape sets the scene by influencing (not controlling) people.
2. People have an awareness of their environment (surroundings).
3. People interact and exploit their environment (use what is available to them).
4. The result is the formation of the cultural landscape (man-made environment) that gives personality to the area.

Geographic Axiom

The quality of location changes with time.

As we study the historical geography of NYS, it will become evident how true this statement is.

What is your perception when you hear the words New York?
- Urban area
- Tall buildings
- Congestion
- Many people
- Little open space
- New York City
- Business and finance
- People with money

What do we find in NYS
- 84% of the state is rural (62% forested; 22% agriculture).
- NYS has the most ski areas of any state.
- Lake Placid is one of only three US Winter Olympic sites.
- NY is an agricultural state.
- NY is a mining state.
- Adirondack Park is the largest state park outside of Alaska.
- There are high poverty levels in upstate areas
- Shrinking towns.
- Depopulation of rural areas.
Vital Statistics

- **Area:** 54,471 sq. mi. (27th in size)
- **Population:** 19.4 mil (2010 preliminary, 3rd in size)
- **Pop. Density:** 411 persons per sq mi (7th most densely populated state)
- **Pop. Distribution:** 65% (12.5 mil) live in and around NYC; 42% (8.2 mil) live in NYC; 13% (2.5 mil) live in Brooklyn.

New York City

- **NYC is the largest city of the US (8.2 million).**
- It is the only city that is not part of a county.
- It is the only city made up of more than one county.
- There are 5 counties within its political boundary: Bronx, New York, Queens, Kings and Richmond. The 5 counties are conterminous with the 5 boroughs.
  - New York County is the Borough of Manhattan.
  - Kings County is the Borough of Brooklyn.
  - Richmond County is the Borough of Staten Island.
  - Queens County is the Borough of Queens.
  - Bronx County is the Borough of The Bronx.

Population Density Map of NYS

Largest Cities
1. New York City
2. Buffalo
3. Rochester
4. Yonkers
5. Syracuse
6. Albany
7. New Rochelle
8. Mt. Vernon
9. Schenectady
10. Utica