GES 3980 001 Places and Faces: Geographic Issues in Film

Carole Huber, Instructor

Spring 2017
Tuesdays 1:00 – 4:20 PM
Columbine Hall Room 329
4 Credit Hours
Syllabus is subject to change if necessary.

Office: COLU 2019, 262-4057
Office Hours: Tues 10:00-10:30 AM
Thurs 10:00-11:30 AM; or by appointment
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Course Objectives
The advanced world regional geography course explores global geographic issues within the context of contemporary popular film. As we examine the cultural, political, economic and environmental issues that shape societies around the world, we will focus on groups of people often marginalized: certain ethnic and racial groups, women, and the economically disadvantaged. Students will gain a greater understanding and raised awareness of other peoples and cultures and the issues that shape their lives and their societies. This course is approved for the following Compass Curriculum requirements: writing intensive and global/diversity.

Course Format
The course will consist of a weekly meeting in a seminar format. Films viewed during class and associated background readings will serve as the basis for discussion. The focus will be on the geographic issues raised - the current realities, the underlying causes, and the local, regional and global impacts. Students, in groups of 2-4 each, will serve as discussion leaders.

Course Grade
Semester grades will be based on a total of 500 possible points. Assignments include place name quizzes, group discussions and presentations, and reflections on readings and films. See pages 3-6 for assignment details and a point breakdown.

The Films ~ A Warning
In many cases the films we will be watching are disturbing. Although I have tried to include a few "lighter" films, major global issues generally do not lend themselves to levity. Vulnerable groups or individuals and their exploitation are often at the heart of global issues. Because many of these issues are by their very nature troubling, most of the films that address these issues are also troubling. I found many of these films difficult to watch. They might not be easy for you to watch either; you need to be prepared for that. Obviously, the films are the central core of this course. If your personal beliefs prevent you from viewing films that contain "bad" language or sexual or violent scenes, you might want to talk to me about whether this is the right class for you.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>REGION/TOPIC</th>
<th>FILMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues Jan 17</td>
<td>Introduction Developing Geographic Skills: Reading the Landscape Films as Geographic Texts</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Jan 24</td>
<td>&quot;The Uncomfortable Classroom&quot; Due: Read Lorraine Dowler article: &quot;The Uncomfortable Classroom: Incorporating Feminist Pedagogy and Political Practice into World Regional Geography&quot; (in Blackboard) &quot;lizardpoint&quot; Map Quizzes Due</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues Jan 31</td>
<td>North America: Race Relations Race Card Project Due Book Reflection Due: Men We Reaped</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Feb 7</td>
<td>Europe: Changing Demographics and Immigration Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;When We Leave&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Feb 14</td>
<td>Groups Organizational Meetings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Feb 21</td>
<td>North America: Immigration and Assimilation Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Real Women Have Curves&quot;</td>
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<td>Tues Feb 28</td>
<td>South America: Corruption, Poverty and Income inequality Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Trash&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Mar 7</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa: Ethnic Violence Its Underlying Causes and Manifestations Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Hotel Rwanda&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Mar 14</td>
<td>North Africa/Southwest Asia: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Omar&quot;</td>
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<td>Tues Mar 21</td>
<td>South Asia: Tradition and Modernity in a Globalizing World Article Reflections Due Book Reflection Due: behind the beautiful forevers</td>
<td>&quot;Monsoon Wedding&quot;</td>
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<td>3/26-4/1</td>
<td>Spring Break – No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues Apr 4</td>
<td>East Asia: War Ethics Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Grave of the Fireflies&quot;</td>
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<td>Tues Apr 11</td>
<td>Drones and Contemporary War Ethics Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Eye in the Sky&quot;</td>
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<td>Tues Apr 18</td>
<td>Fossil Fuels and Environmental Hazards Article Reflections Due</td>
<td>&quot;Deepwater Horizon&quot;</td>
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<td>Tues Apr 25</td>
<td>Alternative Film Suggestion Presentation and Film Paper Due</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues May 2</td>
<td>Movie Night View/discuss Selected Film</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
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ASSIGNMENTS
See late assignment policy, p. 6

1. **Readings**
   Readings for the course consist of two books and 27 articles.

   The following books are required reading. They are available at the campus bookstore; however, you may be able to find them at a lower cost elsewhere. They are also both on reserve at the library for 3 day checkout.


   In addition, required readings for the class include journal and magazine articles. You are expected to complete the readings and write a short reflection on each of the readings prior to the class period when we will view the associated film (see p. 4 for details).

   All articles can be accessed directly from the “Course Readings“ folder in Blackboard.

   **Although you must still read the articles, you may skip the written reflection portion of this assignment for the film for which you are the discussion leader (pertinent information should be included in your presentation and discussion) – as well as one other film* of your choice. *You may not select to skip the first film – everyone must complete the initial reflections.**

2. **Place Name Geography Challenge - 30 points** *Find full details in the BB Assignments Folder.*
   The lizardpoint website offers online quizzes of different continents/regions of the world to test your knowledge of global place names. The player locates each country when prompted on the world map provided.

   Your assignment:
   - Refresh your knowledge of the names of all the world's countries.
   - Take the following 5 quizzes: (1) European Countries; (2) The Americas – countries; (3) All Countries of Africa; (4) Middle East countries (Western & Central Asia); and, (5) Asia countries (excludes Western)
   - For Quiz mode select “test” (rather than “practice” or “strict test”)
   - After you have completed each quiz, click on “View Detailed Results”
   - Take a screen shot of the results page which will include your score as well as the detailed results.
   - You may use outside resources and take the quizzes as many times as you like.
   - **Submit your top result for each of the quizzes in the Assignments folder in Blackboard.** Your grade for this assignment will consist of a totaling of the 5 quizzes, each prorated to be worth a maximum possible of 6 points each.


   Due Date: Jan 24 – Submit your top scores for each of the 5 regions in Blackboard.
3. **Group-led Film Discussions – 100 points**
This course will be conducted in a seminar format – most of the class will consist of discussion rather than lecture. Students will be responsible for leading the discussion about the films we will be viewing in class. Students will form their own 2-4 person groups and sign up for the film for which they will be responsible.

Group responsibilities include the following:
- previewing the film and reading the associated articles;
- finding other pertinent articles or material on the film and relevant issues;
- presenting an introduction to the film and issues prior to the class viewing; and,
- leading the class discussion after the viewing.

**What to turn in:** 1 set/group: Prepared introduction and discussion material - (1) PowerPoint presentation; (2) written material in either a paragraph/essay and/or outline format; and, (3) a bibliography of all sources you used.

**1/person:** To ensure fair grading for group work, each person will complete an anonymous evaluation of each member of the group. Also, include individual student names on written material and each PowerPoint slide to identify who did what work.

Your discussion should reflect but not be limited to the topics listed on the "Guidelines for Discussion." Go to the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard for “Guidelines for Discussion”.

**Due Date:** The class period for which you are the discussion leader. Specific date will vary depending on which film you are assigned.

To help ensure you have identified major discussion issues, you may e-mail me your discussion questions/outlines beforehand for feedback.

4. **Article Reflections – 15 points per set = 105 points total**
Use the "Tools for Taking Scholarly Notes – or Reflections on Assigned Articles" as a guideline to write a brief reflection on each of the assigned articles. (1-2 page single space)

This document is posted in the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard.

**TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED:** AFTER I HAVE GRADED YOUR FIRST SET OF REFLECTIONS (for the film *When We Leave*), YOU MAY REWRITE AND RESUBMIT THEM FOR FULL CREDIT THE FOLLOWING WEEK.

**Skip this assignment for a film of your choice (other than the first film) as well as the film for which you are the discussion leader; however, be sure to read the articles associated with your film and use issues raised in them to guide your discussion.**

**Due Date:** At the beginning of each associated class period – i.e. no later than 1:00 PM.
Even if you miss class, you must post them BEFORE class begins to earn full credit.

5. **Race Card Project – 15 points**
Distill your “experiences, questions, hopes, dreams, laments, or observations about race and identity into a six-word sentence” that you are prepared to share with the class.

That’s right: one sentence, 6 words ~ on the card provided. You may add illustration.

(Modeled after NPR’s Michele Norris’ *The Race Card Project* )

**Due Date:** Jan 31 – Turn in your Race Card Project
6. **Book Reflection – 50 points**
   Use the "Tools for Taking Scholarly Notes – or Reflections on Men We Reaped" as a guideline to write a 3-5 page (double spaced) book reflection on Men We Reaped by Jesmyn Ward.

   Reflection guidelines are posted in the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard.

   Due Date: Jan 31 – Turn in your book reflection

7. **Book Review – 50 points**
   The Book Review Editor of The Professional Geographer has asked you to review behind the beautiful forevers by Katherine Boo.

   Go to the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard for review specifications. The guidelines are a slightly modified version of the guidelines The PG provides its reviewers.

   Refer to the sample book review to get a better idea of the format and content for your book review: go to the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard to read Sharon Hudgins’ review of The Other Side of Russia.

   Due Date: Mar 21 – Turn in your book review

8. **Alternative Film Proposal – 100 points**
   Select and view a non-documentary film that addresses a global or regional geographic issue and would be an appropriate film to show in this course. *In most cases the film should not be a major American film studio production.*

   Find three relevant articles: one that addresses the specific film and two that address the major geographic issue(s) explored by the film. Include an annotated bibliography.

   **Paper:** Discuss the geographic issues and the film’s presentation of the issue in a 2-3 page paper, plus bibliography. Draw on the articles you selected to discuss the issues. Include the following in your paper:
   - **Basic Film Information:** title, date, country of origin
   - **Brief Synopsis:** 1-page maximum
   - **Discussion of Issues:** What are the major issues raised in the film? Draw on specifics from the film to support your discussion. To what extent are these issues specific to the country portrayed? To what extent are they more universal issues?
   - **Annotated Bibliography:** For each of the articles you selected, include a full citation and a concise but comprehensive summary.

   **Presentation:** Be prepared to make a brief (5-minute max) presentation, in any format you choose, about your proposed film and relevant issues to the class.

   The class will select one of the proposed films to view the final week of class. *If your film is selected, you will be awarded 5 points extra credit for this assignment.*

   Go to the “Assignments” folder in Blackboard for full details and grading rubric.

   Due Date: Apr 25 – Turn in your 2-3 page film proposal and annotated bibliography.
9. **Participation – 50 points**
   Because the focus of the course is the class discussion pursuant to watching the films, class attendance and participation are critically important.

   **If you miss a film viewing**, you should talk to me about how to minimize the impact your absences will have on your participation grade. The primary option is viewing and analyzing the missed film on your own. View the film on your own (most are available on library reserve), and write a 2-3 page review of the film that includes the following:

   - A very brief synopsis of the film
   - A description of the cultural and physical landscapes portrayed that you found most interesting
   - A discussion of how the issues in the readings were reflected in the film
   - Your reaction to the film: Did you like it? Why or why not?

   **Due Date: Within 2 weeks of the missed film viewing**

10. **Policy regarding late assignments:**
    I expect assignments to be turned in on time. Unless you have a bona fide emergency or have made arrangements with me before the due date, all late assignments will be penalized **10% per day**.

    **No assignments will be accepted more than 2 weeks beyond the due date.**

    Missing a film showing does not result in an extension for the corresponding article reflections assignment. Unless you have made other arrangements with me beforehand, article reflections are due 1 PM the date of the film showing.

**Grading Summary: Semester grades will be based on a total of 500 points**

- Geography Challenge = 30 points
- Race Card Project = 15 points
- Group Led Film Discussion = 100 points
- Article Reflections – 7 sets @ 15 points each = 105 points
- Book Reflections - 2 @ 50 points each = 100 points
- Alternative Film Presentation and Paper = 100 points
- Participation = 50 points

**TOTAL 500 points**

**DISABILITY CERTIFICATION**
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to register with Disability Services and provide them with documentation of your disability. They will work with you to determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay, you should contact Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations cannot be provided until a Faculty Letter has been given to me. Please contact Disability Services for more information at Main Hall room 105, 719-255-3354 or dservice@uccs.edu