

Mayville State University

GEOG 262: Geography of North Dakota and North America

Fall 2024
3 Credit Hours

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Senjuti Mallik, Ph.D.
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Contact Information: Office – Classroom Building, room 115B

Office Phone- 7017885240

Hours of Availability: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

(Note: Outside my office hours, I will try to respond to emails during regular business hours (9 am-5 pm CST). Please allow 24 hours for a response during the week and 48 hours during class breaks.) Do not expect a response from me on weekends! Plan accordingly).

Instruction Mode: on-campus face-to-face

Time Zone: All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

Lecture times and location: Classroom Choir C-101, Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Course Description

This course will broadly introduce physical and cultural landscapes of North America, including population and migration trends, regional development, natural resources, and U.S.-Canadian relations, as well as broader global issues and connections to these places. Moreover, we will emphasize the environmental and human diversity of both countries, with special attention to those geographies of under-represented groups (e.g. Indigenous, women, etc.). The first part of the course gives an in-depth survey of North Dakota.

Course Objectives

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to English Education Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

In this course, we will explore basic themes and tools that human geographers use to study cultural, political, and economic activities and connections among people and processes in North America and North Dakota.

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- *identify* local, regional, and national processes of environmental and human change.
- *explain* the role of geographical analysis in understanding interrelationships of economic, cultural, social, and physical elements in the North American landscape.
- *use* critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills to address issues affecting people and places in North America.
- *develop* a critical understanding of the diverse human and physical geographies of North Dakota.
- *observe* and *explore* local cultural and physical landscapes.

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Standards Alignment (English Education Program Approval Standards-ND-ESPB)

- 15035.1 In the social studies composite major curriculum the program requires the study of a broad base of social studies including history (eighteen semester hours) and at least two of the following three core areas: political science and civics (twelve semester hours), economics (twelve semester hours), and geography (twelve semester hours). Additional electives to the social studies composite may include: sociology (six semester hours) or psychology (six semester hours) or anthropology (six semester hours) or global studies (six semester hours).

Course Materials and Technologies

Textbook

Required

Benton-Short, L., Short, J., and Mayda, C. (2019). A Regional Geography of the United States and Canada Toward a Sustainable Future, Second Edition. Rowman and Littlefield.

*Caraher, W. and Conway, K. (2016). The Bakken Goes Boom: Oil and the Changing Geographies of Western North Dakota. The Digital Press, University of North Dakota.

Optional / Additional

Estes, N. (2019). Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance. Verso.

Immerwahr, D. (2019). How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States. Random House.

*This text is an open educational resource book that is available for free (found in Blackboard)

- The main channel for communication will be the Blackboard Ultra site for this class. The Announcements function will alert you to assignment changes and the occasional reminder. I will not, however, remind you of every single quiz or assignment due. It is your responsibility to keep a current calendar. You will also be able to check your grades through the Grades feature on Ultra.
- Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the syllabus, to arrange access to a computer, and to ensure that your Ultra account is working properly. It is also your responsibility to track your grade and communicate any concerns to the course instructor promptly.
- On Ultra we will have weekly modules which will include everything that you need to complete for that week, including the readings. We will use Ultra for announcements, assignments, discussions, quizzes, and exams.

Course Structure

On Ultra we will have weekly modules which will include everything that you need to complete for that week, excluding the textbook readings. We will use Ultra for announcements, assignments, discussions, quizzes, and exams.

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Course Requirements

Announcements will be made using Ultra. Students are responsible for checking Ultra at least **once every day**. If you do not generally use your KU email, it is your responsibility to make sure the email sent to your MSU email address is forwarded to you at an appropriate address. When you receive an email from the instructor, please read it!

Attendance: Attendance is taken in both the lecture and some discussion assignments that will be informed earlier. Students are allowed **three** free absences from lectures during the semester. **For every absence after that, your grade will drop by 25 points out of the total 100 participation points. If you exceed the allotted 100 points for Participation due to absences, the instructor may deduct an additional 25 points (2.5%) out of your final grade total.** Students are still expected to turn in their assignments on time, even if they miss class. Students should actively participate in the discussion sections of the class and finish the discussion assignment allotted in the class. The class is made up of a combination of Lectures, Reflection Assignments, Quizzes, and Discussion Posts and exams. All are equally important, and you are responsible for all material presented. Attendance will be observed in class by way of quizzes and through participation in discussions in classes.

Readings: There will usually be 2 to 4 reading assignments per unit. Further, there will occasionally be supplementary videos assigned. The length of each reading will vary but should not be overwhelming: generally, between twenty and fifty pages. Even though we may not directly discuss a particular reading in the lecture, the readings are an essential part of this course; you are expected to complete the assignments and may be quizzed on them.

Submitting Assignments: The assignment deadlines are due according to the time indicated on the syllabus in Central Standard Time. **Late work is NOT accepted.**

Course Assignments

For the sake of consistency, all assignments will be due at 11:59pm before a given deadline and you are encouraged to submit a little earlier (i.e., not at 11:58pm).

a) Film Discussions/ Film Essays (3 Films): There will be **3 film essays** (or essays that will attempt to explain or “expose”) this term based on three films: 1) *Black Gold Rush: A New American Dream* (2020), 2) *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (2011), and 3) *Shadow of a Drought* (2018). The essays will explain observations and understandings with information and examples from the films, as opposed to simply your opinion. The essays are meant to have you critically consider various aspects of the North American and North Dakotan landscape, including environmental change, identity, poverty, and urbanization, among others. Moreover, these essays will help you develop skills to analyze and write about multiple aspects of identity situated in place. You will view each film on your own and proceed to complete your essay before the scheduled in-class discussion day (see Course Schedule). Each essay will have a 1000-word minimum, are worth 20 points each, and will be submitted through Blackboard. These essays will also form the point from which we discuss these films in class. Essays will be due PRIOR to our in-class discussions. See Course Schedule for due dates. More information about writing expectations and how to view films will be provided in class and on the Blackboard. If required, we might schedule watching the films together in class.

b) Reading Reflection assignments (12 reflections): To put it short, there will be lots of reading in this class. Some of these will be challenging, but I wish to push you a bit with the various topics we cover. I do not expect you to understand all of what we read, but I do expect you to read and pick up as much as possible. Assigned readings are scheduled for nearly every class session, and these readings will form the basis of much of the conversation we have in class. You will need to come prepared with readings completed in order to participate accordingly. **Participating in – and not just attending – these classes is essential.** To ensure your preparation in reading the other books assigned for this course, you will be required to complete a brief reading reflection prior to each class meeting! These journals (and thus, your

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participation in this class) amount to a possible 120 points. These are weekly opportunities to provide you with a space to write about the week's concepts and your experiences. The assignments are designed to make you think about applying what you have learned from the readings and lectures and facilitate an opportunity for you to express your ideas clearly and concisely. You will complete your reflection assignments on Blackboard and will be used as discussion starters (small group, pairs, entire class). The format and structure of the assignments will be mentioned on Blackborad.

Out of the 12 reflection assignments, **some will be discussion reflection assignments** that you will be assigned and required to finish in the class. You need to be present in the class, participate and finish the discussion assignment to gain full points. If discussion assignments (mostly on Thursdays) are posted online, you are required to participate on Zoom and in that case, you will be informed earlier.

Classes sometimes might be moved online on Zoom on particular days if required. In that case, students will be informed prior.

Since there is such a fair amount of time to work on and submit assignments, there will not be any extensions granted. Manage your time wisely and pace yourself accordingly.

*Students who need assistance with writing skills should contact the MSU Writing Center at:
<https://mayvillestate.edu/student-resources/writing-center/>

c) Discussion Board Posts (3 posts): You are expected to post responses to a prompt and reply to your peers on Blackboard discussion boards. For each prompt, you are to write one substantial comment of your own (100-200 words) and respond to the comments of two of your peers. Your responses to your peers may be shorter (50-100 words) than your comment. **You can earn 10 points in each discussion: 5 for your own post and 2.5 for each response to a peer. There will be 3 discussion posts on the weeks of Midterm 1, 2, and on the week of the Final Exam.**

d) Midterm Exam 1 The midterm exam will mainly consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Only **discussion posts are due** in the week of the Midterm 1 examination. Midterm exams will be posted online.

e) Midterm Exam 2 A **discussion post due is** on the week of the Midterm 2 examination. Midterm Exam 2 will also be a few true and false and some multiple-choice questions.

f) The Final Exam will take place during finals week. The final exam will not be cumulative and only cover course material presented after the midterm exams. The final exam will consist of fill-in-the-blank, true/ false, multiple-choice questions. **Discussion posts are due** in the week of the FINAL examination. **The Final exam is scheduled on December 18 (Wednesday at 10 A.M.)**

Evaluation and Grading

Grading Policies

If campus is closed because of weather, items are still due in Blackboard and will not be reopened. Late work **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**. If an emergency arises which interrupts student's abilities to turn assignments in on time, you must contact me at least a day prior to the class period in which it is due.

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Attendance/Participation Policies

Coming to class ensures that you receive the correct & current information! If exams days or content changes, if impromptu points are rewarded, if assignments are handed out or if quizzes are administered and miss class without a university sanctioned excuse, you miss those points. I will be taking attendance daily. This can strongly impact your grade.

University sanctioned excuse with proper documentation for missing class periods, exams, quizzes, projects, films, and other items:

- Hospitalization
- Death in the Family
- Jury Duty
- Military Duty
- Illness
- Athletics, Student Government, Speech, DECCA, Multi-Cultural Club, CRU & Drama.

Grading

Student Work	Available Points
1. Film essays (03)	= 60 (13%)
2. Reflections (12)	= 120 (26%)
3. Discussion Posts (03)	= 30 (6.5%)
4. Midterm Exam 1	= 50 (10.8%)
5. Midterm Exam 2	= 50 (10.8%)
6. Final Exam	= 50 (10.8%)
7. Attendance	= 100 (21.7%)
Total	= 460 points

Grading Scale

We will use the standard grading scale for the class:

A 100-90% B 89-80% C 79-70% D 69-60% F 59-0%

A=Outstanding achievement to meet course and assignment requirements

B=Work above requirements

C=Barely meeting requirements

D=Work that does not fully meet requirements

F=Failure to meet requirements

Extra credit assignments will not be given. Incompletes will not be given in lieu of a final grade. Automatic "W" will not be given after the final withdrawal date deadline. GRADES ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE. Grades will NOT be changed for any of the following reasons:

- 1) You are trying to get into business school
- 2) You want to keep/earn a scholarship/award
- 3) You want to rush and need to boost your GPA
- 4) You want to study abroad and need to boost your GPA

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- 5) You tried really hard
- 6) This class was more difficult than you expected
- 7) You worked on assignments with a friend, and they got a higher grade than you

Your grade may change if you find a legitimate mistake in scoring or calculating a grade on your assignments. You must provide the original graded assignment to the instructor and show them the error for this to occur.

In this class, your grade is the grade you earn! A little effort can go a very long way towards earning an A!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about your grades, please speak to me in person, but remember all grades are non-negotiable. I am not permitted to discuss your grades with outside parties by law and will not discuss grades via email or telephone. If you have concerns, please come to my office hours or make an appointment.

Academic integrity

Mayville State University prohibits academic misconduct. According to the Rules and Regulations of the University Senate (Art. II, Section 6), academic misconduct is defined as “the disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.”

Academic misconduct and academic dishonesty (plagiarism and cheating) will be treated in accordance with the Student Affairs policy on Academic Misconduct. In this course, I expect you to do your own, original work that has not been previously or concurrently submitted for credit. Penalty for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on an assignment or for the course overall. If you have questions or concerns about academic integrity, please bring these to my attention.

Course Policies

Late Assignments and Absences:

Late work will **not** be accepted. Make-up exams and assignments are not allowed. If you have an exceptional circumstance that requires you to miss class, such as a serious illness or death of a loved one, **you must submit documentation in order to have the absence excused**. You must notify the instructor of the absence excused no later than the end of the second working day after the last date of absence. **Do not expect to get partial credit for undocumented and unexcused late assignments.**

Accessibility and Accommodations

I am happy to make accommodations for differing abilities in the classroom, and I encourage you to talk with me about these accommodations early and often. The Disability Support Services coordinates academic accommodations and services for all eligible MSU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodation and have not contacted the Disability Support Services, please do so as soon as possible. Information about their services can be found at <https://mayvillestate.edu/student-resources/disability-support-services/> Please contact me privately concerning your needs in this course.

Dealing with stress

Know that there are resources on and off campus to help if needed:

MSU Counseling and Psychological Services: <https://mayvillestate.edu/student-resources/counseling/>

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National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24 hours) 1-800-273-8255

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: Don't do it. Just don't. Academic misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated. The University Senate Rules and Regulations (2.6.1) states:

Academic misconduct by a student shall include, but not be limited to, disruption of classes; threatening an instructor or fellow student in an academic setting; giving or receiving of unauthorized aid on examinations or in the preparation of notebooks, themes, reports or other assignments; knowingly misrepresenting the source of any academic work; unauthorized changing of grades; unauthorized use of University approvals or forging of signatures; falsification of research results; plagiarizing of another's work; violation of regulations or ethical codes for the treatment of human and animal subjects; or otherwise acting dishonestly in research.

Plagiarism is the act of passing off somebody else's work as your own. (By "somebody else's work," we mean not only the work of other students in class, but also ideas and writing in books, articles, and even on blogs and sites on the internet, including Wikipedia.) Additionally, the resubmission of an assignment you have submitted to another class, in full or in part, is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism can be intentional, but it can also be committed inadvertently by failing to follow standard citation practices. Either way, plagiarism is a serious violation of academic standards and invalidates your work. The instructor reserves the right to give a failing grade for the course to a student for any instance of cheating, including plagiarism. Appropriate MSU disciplinary procedures will also be taken. It is also your responsibility as a student to make sure you understand and follow all rules regarding plagiarism. Any work that is found to be involved with such misconduct will receive a failing grade and the incident will be handled according to the policies set out by the Mayville State University.

We also consider academic misconduct to include misconducting yourself in class, like antagonizing or baiting other classmates, bullying, and name-calling, or other personal attacks. If you experience any harassment in this class that has gone unnoticed by the instructor, please contact us without hesitation so we can deal with the situation.

Tech Help: Because this course relies on a number of online tools, it is reasonable that some tech issues might come up. **You should immediately notify me if you cannot access the course.**

Should you lose internet access or if Ultra goes down while you are interacting with it, notify me immediately. Please note, however, that if you wait until the last minute to submit an assignment or exam, there will be little I can do unless there are some extenuating circumstances. Again, procrastination will not be a valid excuse. Be aware that Ultra has an auto-timeout feature where if you leave them idle for long enough, you will be logged out. You can prevent this by interacting with the website every couple of minutes.

Content Warning

Like all forms of cultural expression, human geography articulates both positive and negative values and attitudes. Students may find some of the material in this course offensive in terms of language and/or content. This includes "bad words," obscene or threatening gestures, sexual references, jokes, ethnic slurs, stereotypes (of race, nation, gender, religion, etc.), etc. By discussing such items in lectures and discussion sections, we do not endorse or justify the attitudes they reflect, rather, we recognize the importance of trying to understand them as part of human communicative practices and the complex experience of living in a society. **If you cannot deal with this material with a mature and academic attitude, and in language that respects the feelings and opinions of others, you should not take this class.**

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Enrollment Verification

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors to conduct an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. Class attendance will be used to verify enrollment in on-campus courses. If you do not attend, your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

Proctor Notification

No proctors are required for this course.

Important Student Information

In the Announcements section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency
- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Course Timeline/Schedule

The class Blackboard page will be your main directive for assignment criteria, due dates, and all communication for the course. Course Timeline and Schedule are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor.

(** The following dates are approximate and **subject to change**: Students should **pay attention to announcements during class and on the Blackboard.** **)

Week 01 August 26- August 30

- Introduction To Geography
- Syllabus
- 01 Reflection

Week 02 September 3-6

- **Sept 2 Labor Day NO CLASS**
- Chapter 1: 5 themes of understanding Human Geography
- Important terms and concepts of Geography
- 02 Reflection

Week 03 September 9- 13

- Introduction to North America
- 03 Reflection Assignment

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Week 04 September 16-20

- Caraher and Conway Introduction and Chapter 12 (pp.1-6 and Ch.12 pp.225-254)
- North Dakota Introduction and Physical
- 04 Reflection

Week 05 September 23- 27

- North Dakota Historical Perspectives Caraher and Conway Chapter 4 (pp. 71-90).
- North Dakota Cultural Perspectives Caraher and Conway Chapter 15 (293-356)
- 05 Reflection

Week 06- September 30- October 4

- Midterm Review 1 Discussion Board
- **MIDTERM EXAM 1**

Week 07 October 7- October 11

- North Dakota Population, Immigration, and Diversity Caraher and Conway Chapter 3 (51-68)
- North Dakota Urban Trends Caraher and Conway Chapter 10 (181-197).
- 06 Reflection

Week 08 October 14- 18

- North Dakota Economy Caraher and Conway Chapter 1 (13-29)
- Film 1
- 07 Reflection

Week 09 October 21-25

- Midterm Review 2 Discussion Board
- **MIDTERM EXAM 2**

Week 10 October 28-November 1

- North America Physical Regions Short Chapter 3 (pp. 19-39)
- North America Human Context Short Chapter 4 (41-54).
- 08 Reflection

Week 11 November 4-November 8

- Northeast Megalopolis
- Pacific Northwest
- Short Chapter 6 and 7 (83-111 and 122-136)
- 09 Reflection

Week 12 November 11- 15

- **November 11 Veteran's Day NO CLASS**
- Appalachia
- Chapter 8 (143-169)
- Film 02
- 10 Reflection

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Week 13 November 18- 22

- California
- Florida
- Short Chapter 10 and 19 (171-199 and 453-483)
- 11 Reflection

Week 14 November 25 – December 1

- **November 27-29 THANKSGIVING BREAK NO class**

Week 15 December 2 – December 8

- Rocky Mountains
- Hawaii
- Short Chapter 15 (339 – 365)
- 12 Reflection

Week 16 December 9 – 15

- Great Plains
- The Midwest
- Film 03
- Queries/ Questions/ Make up work

Week 17 FINAL EXAM December 16- 20

- Final Exam Review Discussion Board
- **FINAL EXAM on December 18 (Wednesday at 10 A.M.)**