ENVS489 Independent Study: Environmental Geography

I. General Information
Course syllabus summer II 2015
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Office hours: online
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Requires enrollment in Lab

II. Course Description
This course is designed to provide an overview of Environmental Geography, which encompasses natural science, social science, and humanistic understandings of the Earth. Environmental Geographers study the complex relationships between humans and the natural environment over time and through space.

III. Student Learning Objectives
To understand basic concepts in environmental geography and related disciplines.
To analyze the geographic dimensions (e.g., scale, connectivity across space, etc.) of the activities of agencies or individuals working on solutions to environmental problems in a particular location.
To develop a reading tradition.

IV. Learning strategies
Reading assignments
Lectures
Analysis of Case Study Samples
Individual work, analysis of free reading
Homework

V. Assumptions, Expectations, Philosophy
University students are a select group of students soon to be professionals.
Instructors can have high expectations of student performance.
Demanding courses benefit students more than easy courses.
Assignments are due on time unless you have made a prior arrangement with me (only granted for unusual or extenuating circumstances and in case of health
issues proper medical excuse is required.
Reading and assimilating information is a critical part of your current and continuing education. This will help you become a better writer, a more rounded individual, and expose you to subjects outside of your immediate knowledge.

VI. Tentative course outline
   Part I. An exploration of Connections (week 1)
       Population
       Gender
       Development
       Food
       Urbanization
       Globalization
       Power and Politics
       Water
       Global change
   Part II. Geography Perspectives (weeks 2-3)
       Physical Geography
       Human Geography
       Cultural Geography
   Part III. Regions (weeks 3-5)
       North America
       Central and South America
       Europe
       Russia and Post-Soviet States
       North Africa
       South West Asia
       Sub-Saharan Africa
       South Asia
       East Asia
       South East Asia
       Oceania

VII. Course Requirement and Evaluation Method
Readings, lectures, quizzes, exams, case study project and discussions are required.

Grade basis:
1 case study (50 points)
5 assignments (50 points)
5 quizzes (100 points)
5 laboratory activities (75 points)
Total 300 points

Grading Scale: The following scale is adhered to strictly.
Assignments (5)
Journal articles
Reading and assimilating information is a critical part of your current and continuing education. For each assign date, a journal is named in the right column of the table, choose and read a paper from that journal that you find interesting or relevant. These journals are available in our library (online resources). On that date, provide me a citation and a short description of the paper (10 sentences).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Journal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul 12-17</td>
<td>Applied Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 19-25</td>
<td>Geography and Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jul 26-1</td>
<td>Journal of Environmental Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2-8</td>
<td>Geography Compass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 9-13</td>
<td>GEO: Geography and Environment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Case Study
Each student will identify a case study exemplifying Environmental Geography principles. You will be responsible of understand and apply this scenario to other potential case studies. You also will propose alternative solutions (scenarios) to complement and improve the example you are presenting. You will develop an essay (800-1000 words) to document your case study, deadline will be the last day of class (August 13th).

Format for the case study:
I. Describe the problem or case question.
II. Describe the case
   Introduction
   Background
   Affected area, species, communities, ecosystems
   Environmental policy in place (if any, or potential)
   Implications
III. Conclusions

LABORATORY:
The laboratory will account for 25% of your final grade and will follow the same topics of the class. The laboratory sessions/activities will be posted each week.

VIII. Course and University and Policies
University Specific Procedures:
ADA Statement-Students with Disabilities:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.