

Geography 482 Geography of Europe

Course Description:

Europe does not satisfy the definition of a continent, since it is not a separate landmass, but many argue that Europe represents a separate culture area. As a region smaller than most continents, it has had a disproportionately large impact on the world, including having spread its languages, and to some extent its culture, to every other permanently inhabited continent. This course examines Europe as a region and its place in the world, defined through cultural and physical geography within both a contemporary and historical context. We will examine the evolution of native cultures in indigenous Europe, their spread through time, and their current expression with attention to distinctive regions as defined through elements of culture (language, religion, political economy, agriculture) physical geography, and history. Major cities, home to most modern Europeans, will be examined. To the extent possible, we will immerse ourselves in Europe for one semester to try and get a feel for what the region is like for living or simply travelling.

Schedule

Lectures: TuTh 1:00-2:15 A.M. in 321 Mackay Science Hall.

Office Hours: TuTh 11:30-12:30 P.M. in the IGT-Mathewson Knowledge Center – 3rd floor, Northwest in the study area just past Government Collections. Just drop by the open tables in the study area- I will be there hanging out and this is the best way for me to get to know you; Or by appointment, 325 Mackay Science Hall. Ph 784-6346, email: smensing@unr.edu.

Required Textbook Reading: “The European Culture Area: A Systematic Geography, 5th ed.” (2009). Murphy, Alexander, B., Jordan-Bychkov, Terry G., and Jordan, Bella B. Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham MD. 425 pp. ISBN 13: 978-0-7427-5672-0

Required Newspaper Reading – the New York Times: You may read the print version, delivered every morning to the department, or the online version (<http://www.nytimes.com/>). There will be weekly quizzes (described below) on articles concerning Europe that appear in that week’s papers. I read the print version and will draw questions from that version.

Course Grade

By enrolling in this class, you agree to make yourself familiar with the contents of the syllabus and requirements of the course, including the grading system, dates for tests, frequency of quizzes, and due dates. Your grade will be calculated from a total of 400 points.

Quizzes (10 worth 5 points each)	50 points
Foreign film analysis	30 points
Research Paper	120 points
Midterm	100 points
Final examination	100 <u>points</u>
Total	400 points

In this course, a grading scale with pluses and minuses will be used. As a guide, the minimum percentage of total points for an A- will be 90%, for a B-, 80%, for a C-, 70%, and for a D, 60%. Below 60% is an F. Use these numbers as a guide. When determining the final grades, I will consider how well students have done in general. For example, if no students received 90% of the total points, I will consider lowering the cutoff rates accordingly, such that the cutoff for an A- would be 89% or 88% etc. Under NO circumstances will I raise these percentages such that 91% is required for an A- grade.

There is no extra credit work. Final grades are determined based on the work outlined in the syllabus. Please don't ask to do extra work. There are ample opportunities to demonstrate your desire for a good grade through the regularly assigned work. I will enter grades on the WebCampus website and I encourage you to regularly check your grades to make sure they have been correctly entered. I assume that if you do not inform me otherwise, the posted grades are correct. I recommend that you keep all work handed back to you during the semester in case there is a discrepancy between what you received for a grade and what I recorded in our grade sheet. In questions of discrepancies, I will trust the graded work.

Quizzes and tests:

Quizzes: on Europe stories in the NY Times - ~weekly – (50 points total)

There will be ten (10) 5-point quizzes (not quite one per week) on stories about Europe that have been published in that week's NY Times. Surprisingly, the Times does not publish a lot on Europe, so it is not too difficult to keep up on, but it will require that you check the paper daily on weekdays. Stories can come from any section of the paper, but will be about Europe, or events that have happened in Europe. You are free to bring the paper to class. These will be open paper quizzes, but you will not have enough time to read the paper in order to answer the questions. If you want to clip articles and bring them to class you are welcome to.

Midterm (100 points)

The midterm will consist of maps, short answer and essay questions from lectures and the readings. All reading from the text may appear on tests however in general emphasis will be placed on materials also covered in lecture.

Final (100 points)

The final will consist of maps, short answer and essay questions from lectures, readings, and your experiences throughout the semester. The final will be comprehensive, however the second half of the class will be emphasized.

Testing and disability accommodation

Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me or contact the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building, Suite 101), as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. If you require your test to be administered outside of the classroom at student services, I will happily accommodate this provided you bring me the appropriate forms from the testing center.

Writing assignments:**Foreign film analysis (2 @ 15 points each – 30 points total)**

At some point during the semester you are required to watch two European films (with subtitles - something you have not watched before) and write an analysis. The analysis should include an explanation of why you chose the film, a description of the story line (more than what comes on the back of the box), a description of the landscapes portrayed in the film, and a comparative analysis tying the film in to some aspect of European geography that is presented in the textbook and discussed in class. In your analysis, compare your own experiences with those of the film to draw distinctions (or similarities) between the United States and Europe. Length should be 3-5 pages. Due date is flexible. One must be done in the first half of the semester (Due on or before March 12) and the other in the second half of the semester (Due on or before May 5th).

Research Paper – Comparative study between 2 countries or regions (120 points)

This paper will be a literature review with a thesis statement arguing a specific point. It is not a country report. Please use it as an opportunity to expand your knowledge about any element about Europe that interests you beyond what is covered in class. 8-12 pages (not including figures or references).

Draft 20 points – Due Feb. 26

A 2 page introduction that includes a title, thesis statement, introductory paragraph that explains why this topic is of general interest, and a brief review of the most relevant literature as it relates to your topic (with a minimum of 5 citations from books or journal articles (web citations are allowed but must be over and above the 5 required citations). This will be graded and returned to you with comments to be used for your final draft. Your grade will reflect my judgment as to how well developed the paper topic is at that point.

Final 100 points – Due April 23

The final draft (8-12 pages not including figures or references, double spaced font size 11 or 12 point) must include a minimum of one figure with appropriate caption and 10 references from books or journal articles (web citations are allowed but must be over and above the 10 required citations). No cover page or folders. On page 1, list your name, the course and semester, and then the title (centered), followed by two spaces, followed by the introduction to the paper.

(Grading of all written assignments will include writing and grammar, content accuracy, and clarity of argument)

Graduate students

Graduate students will have an option to write either 2 papers of ~12 pages on different topics, or one comprehensive paper(20 – 25 pages). Specific details on the project must be discussed with the professor at the beginning of the semester.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS, TESTS, AND READING

Date	Topic	Reading
Jan. 20	Getting acquainted: What is Europe?	Ch. 1
22	Europe's roots – geologic history of the land	Ch. 2
27	European climate	
29	Vegetation patterns and history	
Feb. 3	Demography	Ch. 3
5	Guest lecture (Joseba Zulaika, Basque studies program)	
10	Language families and diffusion	Ch. 4
12	Modern languages and patterns	
17	Geography of religion	Ch. 5
19	Architecture, art and religion	
24	Religion, war and population	
26	The rise of Europe – Roman Empire to Colonial Powers (Research paper draft due)	Ch. 6
March 3	Europe everywhere – colonialism and nation building	
5	Case studies: the formation of France and Italy	Ch. 7
10	Modern states and the rise of European unification	
12	Midterm exam	
SPRING BREAK - March 16 - 20		
24	Origins of agriculture and diffusion through Europe	Ch. 7
26	AAG – no class	
31	Guest Lecture (Paul Starrs)	
April 2	<i>Appellation d'origine contrôlée</i> (AOC), European food regions	
7	The Industrial Revolution in Europe	Ch. 8
9	Modern Industrialism	
14	Transportation networks – Roads and waterways	Ch. 9
16	The tourist industry – Where should I go?	
21	Guest lecture (Tony Brinkman)	Ch. 10
23	The development of Cities – Roman – Medieval (Final Research Paper due)	
28	Modern European cities	
30	Social dynamics – Separatist movements / Immigration	Ch. 11
May 5	European integration vs. fragmentation	Ch. 12
7	FINAL EXAM THURSDAY MAY 7th Noon – 2:00 P.M. in MS 321 Bon voyage!	

Skills to be developed in this course:

Literacy, research, and professional skills:

- Writing (ability to write a complete, well constructed essay or paper using correct vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation)
- Visual communication (ability to prepare graphic illustrations that communicate ideas visually, through design, layout, color, symbols and graphic representation)
- Comprehensive reading (reading for the main ideas in a manuscript and the ability to articulate these ideas in written annotation)
- Library and archival research (ability to use appropriate search methods to find books, journal articles, maps, photographs, digital data, and other research materials)
- Qualitative analysis (skill interpreting information in the form of observations, text, and dialogue)
- Accountability, efficiency, precision & accuracy (development of professional skills including punctuality, meeting deadlines, working efficiently alone and in groups, selecting appropriate methods for work, and achieving accuracy in results)

Conceptual and analytical skills

- Memorizing (memorizing facts, ideas or methods from a course so students can repeat them pretty much in the same form)
- Analyzing (analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as a particular case or situation in depth and consider its components)
- Synthesizing (synthesizing and organizing ideas, information or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships)
- Judgment (making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how others have gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions)

Geographic knowledge

- Perception and geography (assessing relationships between the experiences and perceptions of individuals/groups and the transformation of places and landscapes)
- Regional understandings (evaluating the organization of space into regions based upon understandings of physical and social environments)
- Cultural interpretations of place and landscape (observing the influence of culture and society in the transformation of places and landscapes)
- Physical geographic analysis (recognizing environmental processes and their spatial patterns as they are associated with changes in landscapes, climatic change, water regimes, and biotic interactions)
- Human-environment interactions (examining dynamics between social actions and the interpretation, use, quality and change of physical environments)