Geography 3985: Senior Project Seminar

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Course Website: Access through http://myu.umn.edu

Course Type: Meets CLE requirement of Writing Intensive; one option for satisfying Senior Project requirement for the Geography major; 4 cr.

Required Texts:


Additional readings will be available through the course website.

Course Objectives:

The goal of this course is for each student to take a geographical research idea and develop it into a polished senior project. Students will complete a series of assignments that build on one another and culminate in the final project. The sequenced assignments will help you not only learn to write, but also write to learn. In class, students will critique samples of writing, present preliminary ideas and final projects, provide feedback to others, and undertake peer review. Students also will develop their ideas and make their writing more effective by meeting one-on-one with the instructor and with consultants at the Center for Writing.

Class Meetings:

You are expected to attend each class fully prepared for that day. Please respect your fellow students by arriving on time. You are encouraged to ask questions; please answer the questions that your classmates and the instructor pose to you during the class. Please participate actively when we complete group exercises designed to help you develop your research. Some days we will not meet as a class. Use those days to research, write, and revise your senior project. Notify the instructor in advance if you will be absent. Your course grade will drop by 5 points for each unexcused absence.

Writing Assignments:
Throughout the semester you will complete sequenced assignments that will help you prepare to write your senior project. Keep all of these sequenced assignments with comments from the instructor, and submit them as a portfolio at the end of the semester with your final draft. Turning in each assignment on time, and submitting the portfolio are both required for satisfactory completion of the course! Work submitted after the time and date it is due will drop a full letter grade for each day it is late.

Grade Basis

Assignments for Geog 3985:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active in-class participation, peer review, and group work</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face meeting with consultant at Center for Writing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of problem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed outline and working title</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial draft</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penultimate draft</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract and title</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final draft</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio of all completed work (no points, but required)</td>
<td>+____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course total 100

Academic Workload Expectations:

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a four-credit course that meets for
four hours of lecture per week should expect to spend at least an additional eight hours per week on coursework outside the classroom.

Incompletes:

A grade of I will be assigned only under unusual circumstances and with a written agreement form signed by the instructor and the student that states the terms for completion. An I grade requires that: (1) the instructor has a reasonable expectation that the student can successfully complete the unfinished course on his/her own no later than the end of the next semester, and (2) legitimate reasons exist to justify extending the deadline for course completion. An I grade automatically lapses to an F grade at the end of a student's next semester of registration.

Statement on Class Conduct:

Students who disrupt the positive learning environment will be asked to leave. Students whose behavior suggests the need for counseling or other assistance may be referred to their college office or University Counseling Services. Students whose behavior may violate the University Student Conduct Code may be referred to the University Counseling Office.

Course Grades:

Grade

Percentage of Total Points

Description of achievement level

A

A-

94-100

90-93.9

Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B+

B

B-
87-89.9
83-86.9
80-82.9

Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C+

C

C-

77-79.9
73-76.9
70-72.9

Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D+

D

67-69.9
60-66.9

Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

F

< 60

Represents failure and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

S

70-100
Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better; all lab assignments must be submitted.

N
< 70

Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

What is Expected of Students:

1.

Students are responsible for being prepared to take the courses for which they register. Students are responsible for all class meetings, including any information contained in the syllabus and disseminated in class. Students are expected to attend all meetings of their courses. They may be excused from class, however, to participate in religious observances and for approved University activities. Instructors should be notified at the beginning of the semester about such planned absences.

Students must attend the first class meeting of every course in which they are registered, unless they obtain approval from the instructor before the first meeting. Otherwise, they may lose their places in class to other students.

1.

Students are expected to do their own assigned work. If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. (See http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html, Subd 1, Scholastic Dishonesty, and http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/policies/gradingpolicy.html, Section II (2).)

2.
Students are responsible for arriving on time and being prepared for all class sessions.

3.

Students are responsible for meeting all course requirements, observing all deadlines, examination times, and other course procedures.

4.

Students are responsible for seeking academic help in a timely fashion. See Resources for Student Writers in the next section.

5.

Students who need special accommodations are responsible for working first with the relevant University offices and then with the instructor at the beginning of the course.

6.

Students may not make commercial use of their notes of lectures or University-provided materials without the express written consent of the instructor.

7.

Students may be responsible for helping straighten up a classroom at the end of a class period, if requested to do so by the instructor. Keeping a classroom in good order includes taking away or disposing of everything one came in with, such as cans, bottles, food containers/wrappers, newspapers, etc. Students shall not deface or damage classrooms or classroom furniture or equipment.

Resources for Student Writers:

The instructor is available during office hours and by appointment.

The Center for Writing in 15 Nicholson Hall (on the East Bank) is another valuable resource. Student Writing Support (SWS) at the Center for Writing offers face-to-face and online consulting for all University of Minnesota students working on any writing project. Student Writing Support does not proofread students' papers; rather, consultants teach students how to overcome writer's block, how to develop and organize ideas for papers, and how to revise their own work effectively. To schedule appointments for SWS, use the web reservation system at http://writing.umn.edu/sws/ , call 612-625-1893, or stop by 15 Nicholson Hall.
The ultimate resource for research, the University Library http://www.lib.umn.edu/ has five major facilities and eleven branch sites with a wealth of reference materials, online resources, books, articles, newspapers, microforms, government documents, maps and more. Librarians are available and happy to help orient students to all aspects of the library system. You can find research assistance at http://tutorial.lib.umn.edu. The library tutorial, QuickStudy, is a self-paced tutorial covering the research process at the University of Minnesota Libraries. It starts with selecting a topic for a paper and ends with citing sources for a bibliography. Through this tutorial, students can also learn how to use RefWorks (www.lib.umn.edu/site/refworks.phtml). RefWorks is a web-based citation manager that allows you to create your own databases of citations by importing references from MNCAT (the library catalog) and other databases or by entering them using a template. RefWorks automatically generates bibliographies in all major styles (MLA, APA, Turabian, Chicago, etc.) in seconds, and then exports them as several document types (Word, RTF, HTML, etc.). Hands-on research tutorials with a research librarian are also available. Sign up at http://www.lib.umn.edu/registration. These workshops focus on effectively using MNCAT, the library catalogs, the Expanded Academic Index, and more.

The library website also has an assignment calculator at http://www.lib.umn.edu/help/calculator/. This tool allows students to break down any assignment for any course into manageable steps. After entering a due date and the academic department in which the course is being offered, students are given a series of suggested stages and deadlines to follow as they complete the assignment—the newest version of this tool will even provide email reminders if students request it.

Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty:

Academic misconduct is not acceptable in this or any course. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please ask your instructor. Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.
Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment, ask the instructor.

Students are expected to express themselves in their own prose. Do not submit written work that does not properly acknowledge transcription or quotation of the work of others. To quote from a published work, you must put the passage in quotation marks and cite the reference. To express an author’s thought in your own words, you should cite the author you paraphrase to indicate that the ideas are someone else’s and not yours. If you are not clear about the differences between scholarly citation, collaboration, and paraphrase—or about any other aspect of your assignments for this class—please consult the instructor during office hours or by appointment. The following websites are also helpful resources:

http://writing.umn.edu/sws/webresources.htm#plagiarism

http://education.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/

Statement Regarding Sexual Harassment:

University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the University policy adopted December 11, 1998. Copies of this statement are available from the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 419 Morrill Hall, 612-624-9547. Complaints about sexual harassment should be reported to that office.

Accommodation of Students with Disabilities:

It is a University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disabilities (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services and then their instructors at the beginning of the semester to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located on the East Bank of the Minneapolis Campus at 180 McNamara Alumni Center Gateway Building, 200 Oak Street at University Avenue, 612-626-1333 TTY/voice, http://ds.umn.edu/. This syllabus will be made available in alternative formats upon request.

Student Privacy and Teaching with WebCT Vista:

In this class, our use of technology might sometimes make students' names and U of M Internet IDs visible within the course website, but only to other students in the same class. Because we are using a secure, password-protected course website, this will not increase the risk of identity
theft or spamming for anyone in the class. If you have concerns about the visibility of your Internet ID, please contact the instructor for further information.

Throughout the semester, details will be added to the assignments listed in the class schedule on p. 7. This flexibility will allow the instructor to tailor the course to the students’ needs. Due dates of the sequenced assignments toward to final senior project will not change.

Here’s to a productive semester of exploring and writing!