

**Geography of North America**  
**Department of Geography**

**Office Phone:** 301-687-4724, **Administrative Assistant:** 301-687-4369

**Office Location:** GU 234

**Office Hours:** 1:00-1:50 pm MW, 2:00-2.50 pm M, 8:00-8.50 am TR or by appointment.

**Lecture Hours:** TR 8:00 a.m.-9:15 a.m.

**Lecture Room:** GU 204

**Email:** [jsaku@frostburg.edu](mailto:jsaku@frostburg.edu)

**Course Description**

Major national and geographic regions of the United States, Canada and Mexico.  
Relationship between natural and economic factors.

**Institutional Learning Goals**

1. Liberal knowledge and skills of inquiry, critical thinking and synthesis: Students will be required to use different methods in gathering and evaluating important issues on Canada, Mexico and the United States.
2. Core Skills: Assignments on current event will provide students the opportunity to comprehend and interpret written and oral information on Canada, Mexico and the United States.
3. Acquisition and application of specialized knowledge: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the economic, historical, and cultural factors affecting changes in North America.
4. Values and Social Responsibilities: Students will demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the differences in political institutions in Canada, Mexico and the United States.
5. Appreciation of cultural identities: Students will demonstrate respect and tolerance for cultural differences in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

**Learning Objectives**

1. Students should demonstrate their understanding of the historical evolution of the United States, Canada and Mexico.
2. Provide an understanding of the physical and cultural landscapes of North America.
3. Compare and analyze the political systems of Canada, United States and Mexico.
4. Identify regional economic and social problems within North America.
5. Write a term paper on any aspect of the Geography of North America.

## **Required Text**

Harwick, Susan W; Shelley, Fred M; Holtgrieve, Donald, G. 2013. **The Geography of North America: Environment, Culture and Economy**. Upper saddle River: Pearson.

Please note that there is no current textbook that covers the entire North America. While materials on Canada and United States are covered extensively in the textbook, materials on Mexico will be derived from several sources. Hand outs will be provided in class.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty is defined to include any form of cheating and/or plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Stealing or altering testing instruments;
- Falsifying the identity of persons for any academic purpose;
- Offering, giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on an examination, quiz or other written or oral material in a course;
- Falsifying information on any type of academic record

Plagiarism is:

- The presentation of written or oral material in a manner which conceals the true source of documentary material; or
- The presentation of materials which uses hypotheses, conclusions, evidence, data, or the like, in a way that the student appears to have done work which s/he did not, in fact, do.

In cases involving academic dishonesty, a failing grade or a grade of zero (0) for an assignment and/or a course may be administered. “Students expelled or suspended for reasons of academic dishonesty... shall not be admissible to any other University of Maryland System institution if expelled, or during any period of suspension” (*Bylaws, Policies & Procedures of the University System of Maryland*, Section III).

## **Disruptive Behavior**

The University will not tolerate disorderly conduct which substantially threatens, harms, or interferes with university personnel or orderly university processes and functions. All students are expected to be reasonable and respectful to fellow students, guest speakers, and me. See *The Pathfinder* at <http://www.frostburg.edu/clife/ses/pathfinder.pdf> for a description of disruptive student behavior and its consequences.

Note: Your instructor has the right to require a student to leave the classroom when his/her behavior disrupts the learning environment of the class. A student found responsible for disruptive behavior in the classroom may be administratively withdrawn from the course.

## **Students with Learning or Physical Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability, please contact the Director of Disability Support Services, Rhiannon Morgret, at 301-687-4483, [remorgret@frostburg.edu](mailto:remorgret@frostburg.edu), or stop by 150 Pullen Hall to set an appointment. We want to be sure you receive appropriate accommodations as soon as possible.

## **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse**

Frostburg State University and its faculty are committed to maintaining a safe learning environment and supporting survivors of violence. To meet this commitment and comply with federal and state law, FSU requires all faculty and staff (other than the confidential employees in CAPS and Brady Health) to report any instances of gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking against students. This means if you share your or another FSU student's experience with gender-based harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or, stalking, I have a duty to report the information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exception to my reporting obligation is when such incidents are communicated during class discussion, as part of an assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project.

Faculty and staff are also obligated to report allegations of child abuse and neglect to University Police and to Child Protective Services. This obligation extends to disclosures of past abuse even if the victim is now an adult and the abuser is deceased. My duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect extends to disclosures that are made as part of classroom discussions and in writing assignments.

If you or someone you know has experienced an incident of harassment or violence, please go to [www.frostburg.edu/titleix](http://www.frostburg.edu/titleix) to find information on reporting options and the resources and services available for support.

## **Blackboard**

To facilitate effective communication between the instructor and students, course materials are posted on Blackboard. You are encouraged to visit the site regularly to check on announcements and deadlines. Course outline and assignments are also posted on the site. You need to contact me during the first week of class if you are unable to use Blackboard.

## **Policy**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and participate actively during class discussions. To participate actively in class, students are required to read their assigned chapter pages prior to class. Attendance will be recorded for administrative purpose. You are responsible for any missed work the day you are absent. Students are responsible for

informing the instructor about their presence when they arrive in class after attendance has been taken.

Course assignments should be submitted promptly on the due day. Late submission of assignments carries a penalty of 20% per day for a maximum of 5 days. Assignments will be accepted after the 5th day without a reasonable cause. A reasonable cause is defined as serious illness (doctor's report required) or tragedy within the family (a note from family member required).

### **Cell phones and pagers**

Cell phones and pagers should be turned off when you come to class. Answering cell phones or checking text messages in class is disrespectful to me and your fellow students. Exception is given to a certified EMT or fire responder. Please inform me ahead of time if you need to have your beeper active all the time because of your profession or special circumstances.

### **Grading**

All texts including the final examination will consist of multiple choice, short questions and answers and essays. Prior approval is required for missing an examination. No make-up examination will be granted if you fail to seek prior approval.

**The final grade will consist of the following** (Please note that except the final exams, the dates are tentative and subject to change)

Class participation through current event presentation (10 points each)	= 40 points
Map quiz (September 5 <sup>th</sup> )	= 50 points
Annotated Bibliography (October 17 <sup>th</sup> )	= 50 points
Paper Review (September 19 <sup>th</sup> )	= 50 points
Research Paper (November 26 <sup>th</sup> )	= 100 points
Class test 1 (September 26 <sup>th</sup> )	= 100 points
Class test 2 (October 31 <sup>st</sup> )	= 100 points
Final examination (Friday Dec. 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2.30 pm-5:00 p.m.)	= 100 points

Your final grade will be determined based on the total points accumulated over 590. The scale is as follows:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F < 60%

### **Important Dates to remember:**

**Map Quiz: September 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Assignment 1 - Paper Review: September 19**

**Annotated bibliography: October 17**

**Research Paper: November 26**

**Test 1: September 26**

**Test 2: October 31**

**Dates of Current Events: 9/12, 10/3, 11/7, 12/5**

**Final Exams**

**Friday December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2:30 pm -5:00 pm**

**Paper review**

All students are required to review and provide critical comments on the following article. Your review should be limited to four pages. Personal comments about the article are strongly recommended. The award of marks for the review will be determined by the quality of the review.

**James C. Saku (2006) A comparative analysis of the Alaskan Native Claim Settlement Act and the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, Australasian Canadian Studies, 97-117.**

**The article can be obtained from the following link.**

**[www.acsanz.org.au/archives/acs24-1-2006.pdf](http://www.acsanz.org.au/archives/acs24-1-2006.pdf)**

**Course outline and reading (subject to change)**

1. Introduction: Why study North America? The North American continent - characteristics, historical evolution of Canada, Mexico and the United States (**Reading: Chapter 1) 8/27 and 8/29**

2. North America's Environmental Setting: Landforms, Hydrology, Soils, North America's Physiographic Provinces, Weather and Climate, Biogeography and Ecology, Ecosystems and Watersheds (**Reading: Chapter 2) 9/3 and 09/5**

3. Historical Settlements of North America: Exploration, Discovery, Settlement, and Exploration, Ongoing Migration, Expansion and Settlement, Evolving Economic Development and Urbanization, Evolving Immigration Patterns and Issues (**Reading: Chapter 3) 09/10 and 09/12**

4. Population geography of Mexico: Ethnicity and language, social structure, religion and education, political system in Mexico **09/17 and 09/19**

**Examination 1: 9/26**

5. The North American Political Economy: The Contemporary North American Economy, the Changing Urban System of North America, North America and the World Economy, Political Institutions of North America (**Reading: Chapter 4**) **10/1 and 10/3**

7. The Atlantic Periphery: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples, and Places (**Reading: Chapter 5**) **10/8 and 10/10**

8. Quebec: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples, and Places, the Future of Quebec (**Reading: Chapter 6**) **10/15 and 10/17**

9. Megalopolis: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples, and Places (**Reading: Chapter 7**) **10/22 and 10/24**

**Examination 2: 10/31 (Tentative)**

10. The Coastal South: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples and Places (**Reading: Chapter 9**) **11/5 and 11/7**

11. California: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples and Places (**Reading: Chapter 15**) **11/12 and 11/14**

12. The Far North: Historical Settlement, Regional Economies and Politics, Culture, Peoples and Places (**Reading: Chapter 18**) **11/19 and 11/21**

13. The Future of North America: Environmental Issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Demography and Population Patterns, Culture, Race and Ethnicity (**Reading: Chapter 19**) **12/3 and 12/5**

## Map Quiz

The following list forms the basis of an in-class map quiz. As a preparation towards the quiz, use the attached maps to locate the land forms and other geographic locations.

- |                                |                           |                            |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. South-eastern Coastal Plain | 28. Los Angeles           | 55. Rocky Mountains        |
| 2. Appalachian Uplands         | 29. Kotzeblue Sound       | 56. Cape Breton Island     |
| 3. Interior Plains             | 30. Pittsburgh            | 57. Hudson River           |
| 4. Hudson Bay Low Lands        | 31. Oklahoma City         | 58. Rio Grande             |
| 5. Canadian Shield             | 32. Yukon River           | 59. Gila River             |
| 6. Great Salt Lake             | 33. Norton Sound          | 60. Bay of Fundy           |
| 7. Lake Michigan               | 34. Philadelphia          | 61. Pecos River            |
| 8. Lake Superior               | 35. Atlanta               | 62. Sierra Nevada          |
| 9. Lake Winnipeg               | 36. James Bay             | 63. Cascades               |
| 10. Great Bear Lake            | 37. Kodiak Island         | 64. Platt River            |
| 11. Columbia River             | 38. San Antonio           | 65. Lake Manitoba          |
| 12. Sacramento River           | 39. St. Louis             | 66. Gulf of California     |
| 13. Colorado River             | 40. Victoria (Canada)     | 67. Gulf of Mexico         |
| 14. Mississippi River          | 41. Winnipeg              | 68. Mexico City            |
| 15. St. Lawrence River         | 42. Edmonton              | 69. Sierra Madre Del Sur   |
| 16. Missouri River             | 43. Quebec City           | 70. Bahia de Campeche      |
| 17. Athabasca River            | 44. Saskatoon             | 71. Mesa Central           |
| 18. Hudson Bay                 | 45. Nunavut               | 72. Sonora                 |
| 19. Vancouver                  | 46. British Columbia      | 73. Sierra Madre Oriental  |
| 20. Mackenzie River            | 47. Ontario               | 74. Baja California Sur    |
| 21. Toronto                    | 48. Quebec                | 75. Baja California Norte  |
| 22. Ellesmere Island           | 49. Maine                 | 76. Chiapas                |
| 23. Gulf of St. Lawrence       | 50. Alberta               | 77. Yucatan Peninsula      |
| 24. Arctic Archipelago         | 51. Nova Scotia           | 78. Veracruz               |
| 25. Salt Lake City             | 52. High Arctic Mountains | 79. Northwestern Highlands |
| 26. Pacific Coastal Region     | 53. Newfoundland          | 80. Matamoros              |
| 27. Atlantic Drainage Basin    | 54. Nelson River (Canada) | 81. Ohio River             |