



Course information 2011–12

GY1009 Human geography

This is the level 100 course on which subsequent, more specialised geography courses are based.

Prerequisite

None apply.

Aims and objectives

This course is designed to:

- introduce students to key current debates in geography and to position these debates within the history of geographical ideas
- enable students to obtain a broad knowledge of a range of contemporary geographical issues and to understand how these have developed over time
- provide a basic understanding of economic, social, cultural and political concerns from a global and local perspective.

Essential reading

For full details please refer to the reading list.
Clope, P., P. Crang and M. Goodwin (eds)
Introducing Human Geographies. (London: Hodder Arnold).

Johnston, R.J., P.J. Taylor and M.J. Watts
Geographies of Global Change: Remapping the World in the Late Twentieth Century. (Oxford: Blackwell)

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three hour unseen written examination.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should be able to:

- ✓ outline the theoretical contribution and development of geography to the social sciences
- ✓ critically analyse processes of contemporary economic, social, cultural and political change from a geographical perspective
- ✓ describe and discuss the importance of understanding both diversity and homogeneity to the process of geographical enquiry
- ✓ discuss alternative understandings of how the global and the local human environment are connected.

Students should consult the *Programme Regulations for degrees and diplomas in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences* that are reviewed annually. The Prerequisites, Exclusions, and Syllabus are subject to confirmation in the *Regulations*. Notice is also given in the *Regulations* of any courses which are being phased out and students are advised to check course availability.

Syllabus

This is a description of the material to be examined, as published in the *Regulations*. On registration, students will receive a detailed subject guide which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading.

Human geography is designed to develop student understanding of important theories and debates within contemporary geography. It begins with a consideration of the major paradigm shifts that have occurred since the subject became a serious university discipline. Focus will be on the main ideas or movements that have formed and the principal methods that have been deployed. The evolving geographical view of the world will form a specific theme. It continues with an attempt to review the basic social, cultural, economic and political postulates that underpin contemporary geographical inquiry and to understand these from a global to a local perspective.

The first theme is a treatment of geographical views of world economies where the economics of global production and trade, including an understanding of the forces influencing the location of economic activities, are considered alongside different structures of world polity. The second theme examines fundamental debates around resources, population and sustainability; important issues here are those of population growth and migration, resource depletion, environmental despoliation and the meaning of sustainability. The third focus is an urban one of the geography of cities. Here models of urban growth and decline are considered together with issues of cultural difference and social justice in both developed and developing world urban contexts. The last component is specifically about theorising processes of development and globalisation in North-South interactions. Additionally global commodity chains, global consumerism, cultural imperialism, as well as travel and tourism, form important topics.

Section 1: Human geography as a discipline

The history of geographical ideas: Travel writing and exploration, discussion of the development of key sub-disciplines in geography from regional geography, behavioural and humanist approaches, radical geography, locality and 'place', new economic geography, postmodernism and new cultural geography.

The history of geographical methods: Quantitative methods, qualitative methods, synthetic approaches, data sources.

Different views of the world: How 'maps' are used in the presentation of geographical knowledge; examples from, Mackinder's *Pivot of History*, Apollo space photographs, the London Underground.

Section 2: Geographical views of world economies

Different structures of the world economy: Global capital – financial circulation, offshore banking, debt. Global labour – international division of labour, export processing zones, feminisation of labour. Global trade – Free Trade Areas, World Trade Organization.

Different structures of world polity: Nation state – definition, rise and decline. The Cold War – development, authoritarianism, democracy. Post-Cold War – New World Order, rogue states, humanitarianism.

Location of economic activities: Legacy of classical location theory. Global shifts in economic activity. Economic policies for market intervention.

Section 3: Resources, population and sustainability

Resources and Sustainability: Nature of resources. Resource depletion debates. Pollution and economic development.

Population and Sustainability: Population profiles; ageing and youth societies. Population trap and resource depletion. Sustainable growth, Rio Summit, Brown versus Green agendas.

Population Movements: Theories of rural-urban and international migration. Examples of population mobility and Diaspora. Introduction to issues of assimilation and integration.

Section 4: The geography of cities

Models of urban growth, organisation and change: Anti-urbanism and Chicago School, morphology and urban systems, planning and management, new towns, suburbs and edge cities. Inner city decline and gentrification.

An urbanizing world: Mega-cities in the South, urban poverty, squatter settlements, contemporary images.

Global cities: Definitions of global and world cities, 'new' or just New York? Inequality, segregation and enclaves.

Section 5: North-South interactions

Development: Cold War and Bretton Woods, modernisation and achievements, democracy, non-aligned movement post-development.

Commodity Chain: How commodities move from production in the South to consumption in the North (use examples of coffee, bananas, 'exotics').

Global Consumerism and Cultural Imperialism: Relationship between consumerism and development, dangers of cultural imperialism, hybridity, critique of the cultural dupe.

Travel and Tourism: Explain how tourists see the South differently as enclaves, colonial heritage, sex tourism, opporcourseies for tourism development.