

World Geography
Course #197-198
Mr. O'Brien
Room #114

From the Minnesota State Academic Standards:

What is Geography?

Geography is the science of space and place on Earth's surface. It is an integrative discipline that brings together the physical and human dimensions of our world. Geography's subject matter is the spatial arrangement of the physical and human phenomena that make up the world's environments and gives character to places, large and small. Geography describes the changing patterns of places in words, maps, numbers and graphics, explains how these patterns come to be, and unravels their meaning.

Geography captures the imagination. It stimulates curiosity about the world and the world's diverse inhabitants and places as well as about local regions and global issues. It enables us to understand our home by opening windows on the rest of the world.

This two semester course will feature the study of regional areas of the world using the Five Themes of Geography as its premise. This course will feature in depth study of both physical and human geography.

Why study Geography?

To be successful contributors to a democratic society, all individuals need to have an understanding of geography, which means that they need to have an understanding of the spatial context of people, places and environments on Earth.

The geographically literate person knows where important things are, why they are located in those places and the significance of the locational patterns of the world. Furthermore, she comprehends the nature and significance of multiple connections between people and places around the world.

What We Will Accomplish

The ultimate goal is to learn. Good grades are nice, but learning and personal growth are more important. Grades should not be shared with other students- not because Mr. O'Brien is hiding something. Every student's goal should be to gain knowledge.

Expectations

Come prepared, work hard, be respectful, be responsible. Any questions?

Grading

A	94	C	74
A-	90	C-	70
B+	87	D+	67
B	84	D	64
B-	80	D-	60
C+	78	NC	Unacceptable

- 80% of grade- Concepts, Application, and Analysis
 - This includes the ability to identify and differentiate concepts, the ability to make personal connections between course concepts and everyday life, the ability to use critical thinking to further understanding and comprehension of course content.
- 20% of grade- Work Habits
 - This includes homework being turned in on assigned date, respectful and active class participation.
 - I will accept late assignments, but it will affect your grade!
 - In the past year I have had a number of students finish below their expectations because of late assignments. If you miss class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed.
- Expect homework on a regular basis. Students are responsible for checking with me to get makeup work.
- Grades will be updated and posted on a regular basis.
- Thoughtful class participation is expected and can make the difference between an 'A' and an 'A-'.
- Cheating is unacceptable and will earn a zero. School policy will be enforced.

Rules

- All school policies and procedures will be followed.
- No food, pop, energy drinks, etc. in the classroom. Water is fine.
- Absolutely no cell phones, no exceptions.
- Passes are required in the hallways at all times.

Lastly, if there are any questions, don't be afraid to ask. I am usually available before or after school and my semester schedule is posted outside my room and on my website.

THE GAME PLAN

The first half of the school year will focus on geographic skills, North America, Europe and Latin America. Among the academic requirements for semester one: students will be required to know all 50 states and capitals, understand visual representations of the world, complete an in depth study of a Latin American country, and develop a European tour package. As understanding the five themes of Geography is essential to the study of, 5 Themes reports will be due every quarter– don't worry, we'll do the first one together. The second half of the year will focus on Oceania, Southeast Asia, Russia, East Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. Among the academic requirements for semester two: students will study and develop globalization presentations, write a letter to the president on the Middle East, and a little break from the norm with the Geography of Happiness.





The Top 10 Reasons to Study Geography

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____