

# GEOG-1510: REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

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## Cuyahoga Community College

**Viewing: GEOG-1510 : Regional Geography of the United States and Canada**

**Board of Trustees:**

June 2023

**Academic Term:**

Fall 2023

**Subject Code**

GEOG - Geography

**Course Number:**

1510

**Title:**

Regional Geography of the United States and Canada

**Catalog Description:**

Regional geography of the United States and Canada noting significant characteristics of each region. Physical setting, economic activities, cultural diversity, social conditions, and political identity of each region studied.

**Credit Hour(s):**

3

**Lecture Hour(s):**

3

**Lab Hour(s):**

0

**Other Hour(s):**

0

## Requisites

**Prerequisite and Corequisite**

None.

## Outcomes

**Course Outcome(s):**

Relate how the geographic concepts of physical setting, economics, demographics, culture, geopolitics, and globalization are represented in the regional geography of the U.S. and Canada.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Written Communication: Demonstrate effective written communication for an intended audience that follows genre/disciplinary conventions that reflect clarity, organization, and editing skills.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Explain how actions on earth happen in a spatial context.
- b. Explain how division of the earth into regions is a mental construct.
- c. Define how the interplay of physical landscape and cultural/social systems have influenced the U.S. and Canada.
- d. Determine the spatial variables in economic patterns such as trade routes in North America.
- e. Describe how globalization and the technology of space/time convergence change economic, geopolitical and demographic systems.
- f. Identify geopolitical impacts on space and place with resulting conflicts and achievements.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Describe the relationship and interdependence of the regions and sub-regions of the U.S. and Canada through the geographical concept of physical setting, including environmental impacts and climate change.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Explain the three geographic influences on climate: (1) latitude, (2) water/land differences of absorbing solar energy, and (3) topography (elevation).
- b. Compare the climate patterns of the East and West coasts of North America.
- c. Evaluate the environmental impact of the removal of natural resources versus their value to a prosperous society.
- d. Demonstrate how energy supply and demand are shown on North America's landscapes.
- e. Identify the ways higher gross national income leads to higher consumption and increased environmental damage.
- f. Discuss how the results of industrialization and urbanization changed physical settings and environments in the U.S. and Canada.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Evaluate how the economic prosperity of the U.S. and Canada is related to the physical setting, climate, and natural resources from per-European contact to the present.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Discuss the advantages of spatial proximity to the trade routes to European markets.
- b. Identify how the discovery of an abundance of fuel minerals, along with the availability of metallic minerals, brought early prosperity to the economic development of North America.
- c. Evaluate the richness of soils and the adequate length of growing seasons in the various regions of North America.
- d. Describe the impact of access to two oceans on the development of agriculture, industry, and trade.
- e. Explore the further discovery and locations of fuel and metallic minerals (i.e. oil, gas, nickel, cobalt, zinc and uranium), and explain their impact on growing industrial economies.

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**Course Outcome(s):**

Describe how demographics and culture have developed in the United States and Canada by using examples of early settlement, treatment of indigenous populations, importation of enslaved peoples, immigration data and impacts, common ethnicities, and transportation patterns.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Cultural Sensitivity: Demonstrate sensitivity to the beliefs, views, values, and practices of cultures within and beyond the United States.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Identify the social and ethical issues resulting from the forced displacement of the indigenous populations of the U.S. and Canada.
  - b. Relate the impact of forced immigration of enslaved African on the development of early economies and social values.
  - c. Describe the spatial movement of enslaved peoples in the Underground Railroad to free states in the U. S and into Canada.
  - d. Explain how the 20<sup>th</sup> century movement of African Americans in the Great Migration changed industrial cities in southern Canada and the northern United States.
  - e. Examine the shift in immigration patterns into North America and how this resulted in immigration restrictions that were enacted in the 1920s and 1930s in both the U.S. and Canada.
  - f. Explore the tri-cultures of the American Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo people of the Southwest United States and their influences on American society and economics.
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**Course Outcome(s):**

Demonstrate how geographic patterns of economics and culture were changed by the application of invention, research, and digital technology in global, urban, suburban, and rural areas.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Explain how mechanical inventions of the Nineteenth Century spurred the growth of industry in urban areas near transportation systems and resulted in the demand for labor.
- b. Explore the growth of rural extractive activities, such as agriculture and mining, through invention of more productive methods and the continued need for labor.
- c. Investigate data to evaluate population shifts that followed economic opportunities.
- d. Examine maps to show the demographics of westward movement in the United States and Canada through the nineteenth and twentieth Centuries.
- e. Determine the change to light industry, tertiary, and quaternary activities that are not location specific.

**Course Outcome(s):**

Examine the spatial movement, demographics, and economic consequences of the regional settlement of the U.S. and Canada utilizing various tools including Geographic Information Systems (GIS), databases, maps, sketches, photographs, paintings, oral histories, museum artifacts and primary documents.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Information Literacy: Acquire, evaluate, and use information from credible sources in order to meet information needs for a specific research purpose.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Analyze databases to collect and evaluate information on the environment, government activities, economics and business, marketing, and demographics.
- b. Compare and evaluate maps to determine the agendas of the mapmakers.
- c. Compare and evaluate maps to identify patterns of spatial movement and topography.
- d. Analyze photographs and paintings for their historical content and emotional impact.
- e. Explore museum websites and other information sources to find oral histories, primary documents, and artifacts that illustrate and give details of the regional settlement, cultures, and physical settings of the U.S. and Canada.

**Course Outcome(s):**

Evaluate the geopolitics of the U.S. and Canadian governments in terms of their social and economic impacts on national, regional, and local administrative systems.

**Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:**

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

**Objective(s):**

- a. Analyze how jurisdiction over an activity or territory is divided among many different and frequently overlapping decision-making and governmental bodies.
- b. Describe how structural complexity presents major problems in effective and efficient distribution of governmental services.
- c. Discuss how governmental services may underserve minority populations.
- d. Explain the difference between the representative democracy in the United States and the parliamentary system in Canada.
- e. Discuss how society's goals shift with changes in government.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

- a. Written critical thinking assignments based on websites and news articles
- b. Research assignments using primary sources and secondary sources
- c. Map interpretations

- d. Class discussions
- e. Exams

**Course Content Outline:**

- a. Introduction to Regions and Themes
  - i. Similarities and differences of perceived regions of the U.S. and Canada
  - ii. Themes of abundance of natural resources, westward movement, industrialization, and urbanization
  - iii. Demographic diversity of Indigenous populations, enslaved Africans, European immigrants, and Asians
  - iv. How habits of high income and high consumption populations impact the environment
  - v. National governments of U.S. and Canada as representative of concerns from big business or citizens in questions concerning the environment and the economy
- b. Geographic Patterns of the Physical Environment
  - i. Extensive topographic landforms
  - ii. How climate is influenced by
    - 1. latitude
    - 2. water/land differences of absorbing solar energy
    - 3. topography (elevation)
  - iii. Precipitation and vegetation, properties of soil
  - iv. Mineral fuels of coal, oil, and gas; metallic minerals
  - v. Water supply
- c. Human Activity
  - i. Social and ethical issues of treatment of Indigenous populations in U.S. and Canada
  - ii. European immigration and settlement
  - iii. African slave trade bringing 450,000 enslaved persons to U.S.
  - iv. Restrictions on non-European immigrants in the 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - v. Pattern of simultaneous westward movement (Manifest Destiny) and urbanization
  - vi. Hispanic population and southern border with Mexico
- d. Megalopolis
  - i. Area from Boston to Washington D.C. along east coast conurbation
  - ii. Characterized by good harbors, river accessibility, and natural resources
  - iii. Excellent position relative to Europe for trade routes
  - iv. Shift in agricultural emphasis to urban sprawl
  - v. Great Migration of African Americans to cities and influx of European immigrants for labor
  - vi. Changes from industry to tertiary and quaternary services
- e. North American Manufacturing Core
  - i. Location south to Ohio River and north of Great Lakes; west to Illinois and east through the megalopolis
  - ii. Economic complexity requires transportation systems and raw materials for finished products
  - iii. Flow of coal and iron ore leads to steelmaking in Cleveland, Youngstown, Pittsburgh
  - iv. Demographics and ethnic diversity
  - v. Struggling economies in post-industrial society
- f. Canada's National Core
  - i. Located in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario—60% of the population
  - ii. Cultural conflict between English speaking (Ontario) and French speaking (Quebec) populations; provincial versus national government
  - iii. Part of North America's larger core
  - iv. Early exports of fish, lumber, and furs
  - v. Good soil for farming; now developing green house agriculture
  - vi. Constrained to the north by the Canadian Shield area of poor soils, harsh climate, poor drainage, and absence of good rivers
  - vii. Strong trading partner with U.S. with infusions of U.S. capital and building of branch plants
- g. The Bypassed East
  - i. Location south of the St. Lawrence River, north of Massachusetts, east to Newfoundland, west to Adirondacks of New York including Atlantic provinces of Canada, and New England
  - ii. In a transportation shadow without trade routes
  - iii. Mountainous topography, thin, rocky soil, pine forests
  - iv. Cold Labrador current meets Gulf Stream and causes fog
  - v. Agricultural production of wild blue berries and trade in fish and timber
  - vi. Offshore oil and gas
  - vii. Poverty from lack of economic opportunity
  - viii. Potential future of tourism and 2<sup>nd</sup> homes

- h. Appalachia and the Ozarks
  - i. Location of Appalachian Mountains from Canada, southwest through Georgia; Ozarks in south Missouri and Arkansas
  - ii. Topography of mountains, rugged terrain with settlements in narrow stream valleys
  - iii. Poverty, lack of economic opportunities
  - iv. Agriculture of small farms; corn; moonshine
  - v. Settled by Scots-Irish, English, early Germans in geographic isolation, distinctive culture; overlooked by national government
  - vi. Mechanized coal mining, acid mine drainage, lead mining in Ozarks
  - vii. Tennessee Valley Authority of 29 hydroelectric dams
- i. The Changing South
  - i. Formerly agrarian slave-based economy
  - ii. Culturally distinctive
  - iii. Racism in past and present, government intervention
  - iv. Growth of manufacturing textiles, furniture, cigarettes, paper, pulp
  - v. Dramatic growth of cities now has changed rural character
  - vi. Demographics of growth as people move from north for better weather
- j. The Southern Coastlands
  - i. Location Virginia to Texas border
  - ii. Subtropical climate, rice, citrus, sugar cane; long growing season
  - iii. Economy of tourism, recreation, retirement
  - iv. Latino culture in Florida and Texas
  - v. Problem of rising oceans and sinking fresh-water table
  - vi. Oil and gas off coast on continental shelf in Gulf of Mexico
  - vii. Industry of petrochemical plants, sulfur
- k. The Agricultural Core
  - i. Location Ohio and Southern Ontario west to mid Kansas and Nebraska
  - ii. Agriculture: advantageous climate, growing season, precipitation
  - iii. Small town rural America: politically and socially conservative, resistant to change and to Federal Government interference
  - iv. River systems contribute to the development of the large cities of Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis
  - v. Landscape flattened by glaciers
  - vi. Technological innovations in agriculture; mechanization, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, irrigation, new seeds, and irrigation
  - vii. Demographics predominantly European heritage
- l. The Great Plains and Prairies
  - i. Location from Alberta in north through Texas in south
  - ii. Dry climate with hot summers, cold winter and violent storms
  - iii. Grasses with thick root systems
  - iv. Wheat production of hard winter wheat from Ukraine, also sorghum from Africa
  - v. Irrigation from Ogallala aquifer (fossil water) which is depleting
  - vi. Energy production of oil and gas
  - vii. Future energy of wind turbine clusters
  - viii. Controversy of pipelines over American Indian lands vs large corporations and involving federal government
- m. The Empty Interior
  - i. Alaska through Canada to Mexico including plateaus between mountain ranges and deserts
  - ii. Water conflicts: Colorado River, basin and range topography, Great Salt Lake, hydroelectric dams, irrigation, and Snake River
  - iii. Negative impact on local economies and resentment of local governments due to federal government ownership of most of the land
  - iv. Mining, timber, ranching, oil shale
  - v. Tourism and National Parks
  - vi. Mormon religion in Utah
- n. The Southwest Border Area Tri-Cultural Development
  - i. Location from northern California southeast through Texas to Gulf of Mexico
  - ii. American Indians, then Spanish in 1500s, then Europeans
  - iii. American Indian's way of life on the reservation
  - iv. Early Spanish now in U.S. territory after Mexican War 1848, immigration from Mexico and Central America, problem of federal law on local borders
  - v. Great economic disparity among ethnic groups; temporary workers for farms
  - vi. Large population growth of retirees, corporations moving there, growing urban areas, problems of water
- o. California

- i. Location on Pacific Coast, part of Ring of Fire of earthquakes and volcanoes
  - ii. Mediterranean climate in south
  - iii. Greatest agricultural production of all the states: fruits, vegetables, and almond crops of the Central Valley use one quarter of all irrigation water in the U.S.
  - iv. Water a problem for urban sprawl, Los Angeles megalopolis, California Water Project
  - v. Military bases, Navy, aircraft industry
  - vi. San Francisco, Silicon Valley
  - vii. Diverse population of Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese and Anglo
  - viii. Politically liberal and environmentally conscious beyond rest of United States
- p. The North Pacific Coast
- i. Location northern Pacific coast of U.S. and Pacific coast of Canada
  - ii. Separated from rest of the country to the east by topography of mountain-valley- mountain plateaus system
  - iii. Sense of isolation, independence; land travel along coast nearly impossible
  - iv. Natural beauty, high precipitation, Olympic Rain Forest
  - v. Low population
  - vi. Three major cities: Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland
  - vii. Turn to Asia for markets
  - viii. Hydropower on Columbia River
  - ix. Microsoft, Amazon, Boeing, aluminum smelting, fishing, redwood timber
- q. The Northlands
- i. Location Alaska eastward through Canada to Atlantic Ocean
  - ii. Canadian Shield, taiga, tundra, permafrost
  - iii. Approximately 90 days of frost-free weather
  - iv. First Nation peoples of Canada, Inuit culture, province of Nunavut created recently as Canadian government begins to recognize rights of indigenous population
  - v. Furs, logging in Taiga, mining of gold, uranium, nickel, copper, zinc, iron, Athabasca oil sands
  - vi. Permafrost prohibits roads and railroads necessitating travel by plane or snowmobile
  - vii. Effects of global warming melting permafrost destabilizing buildings, roads and pipelines, and rotting vegetation releases methane gas which exacerbates the issue.
- r. Hawaii
- i. Series of volcanic islands over a 2000-mile arc in mid-Pacific Ocean of which the eastern 400 miles are main Hawaiian Islands
  - ii. Mountainous tropical location with unique native plants and birds
  - iii. Settled by Polynesians
  - iv. Europeans brought diseases
  - v. U.S. Territory in 1898 and statehood in 1959
  - vi. A few private owners control most of the land which they lease to the cities
  - vii. Early sugar plantations worked by Asian contract labor
  - viii. Military bases
  - ix. Tourism is 20% of all income and 25% of jobs

## Resources

Birdsal, Stephen S., Jon C. Malinowski, and Wiley C. Thompson. *Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada*. Eighth ed. Wiley Publisher, 2017.

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Short, Lisa Benton, Short, John Rennie and Chris Mayden. *A Regional Geography of the United States and Canada: Toward a Sustainable Future*. 2nd ed. 2018.

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Hudson, John C. *Across This Land: A Regional Geography of the United States and Canada (Creating the North American Landscape)*. 2nd ed. John Hopkins University Press, 2020.

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## Resources Other

<https://americangeo.org/>

American Geographical Society for up to date information and events

<https://www.cfr.org/background/what-canadas-immigration-policy> (<https://www.cfr.org/background/what-canadas-immigration-policy/>)

Council on Foreign Relations report on Immigration in Canada

<https://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/>

NASA Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC)

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/united-states-regions> (<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/united-states-regions/>)

National Geographic Society

<https://neo.gsfc.nasa.gov/>

NASA Earth Observations

<https://www.ohioruralwater.org/gis-mapping.html>

Ohio Rural Water Association GIS Mapping Assistance

<https://amp.osu.edu/collaboration/gis-mapping-services> (<https://amp.osu.edu/collaboration/gis-mapping-services/>)

Ohio State University Agroecosystem Management Program GIS Mapping Services

## **Instructional Services**

### **OAN Number:**

Ohio Transfer 36 TMSBS

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