Advanced Placement Human Geography
Course Syllabus 2015-2016
Kate Elliott

Required Text:

Supplemental Readings:

Course Objectives: The purpose of the AP Human Geography course is to introduce students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of the earth’s surface. Students employ spatial concepts and landscape analysis to analyze human social organization and its environmental consequences. Students will also learn about the methods and tools geographers’ use in their science and practice, often through conducting fieldwork.

The aim of this AP course is to provide the student with a learning experience equivalent to that obtained in most college introductory human geography courses. Therefore there is a heavy emphasis on the development of reading, writing, critical thinking and presentation skills. In addition, and as a constant concern, this class will prepare students to take the AP Human Geography exam on **Friday May 13th 2016**. To aid in the preparation of the AP test, the course will be divided into seven four-week long topic areas. The 7 topics are:

1st Nine Weeks:
1. The Nature and Perspectives of Geography
2. Population Demography

2nd Nine Weeks:
3. Cultural Patterns and Processes
4. Political Organization of Space (Geopolitics)

3rd Nine Weeks
5. Agricultural and Rural Land Use
6. Economic Geography (Industrialization/Development)

4th Nine Weeks
7. Cities and Urban Land Use
8. AP Exam Review
Course Themes: Some of the most important themes of the course involve the following:

1. the ability to use and think about maps and spatial data
2. understanding and interpreting associations among phenomena in different places
3. recognizing and interpreting the relationships among patterns and processes
4. defining regions and evaluating the regionalization process
5. characterizing and analyzing changing interconnections among places

1. Using and Thinking About Maps and Spatial Data:
Geography is fundamentally concerned with the ways in which patterns on Earth's surface reflect and influence physical and human processes. As such, maps and spatial data are fundamental to the discipline, and learning to use and think about them is critical to geographical literacy. The goal is achieved when students learn to use maps and spatial data to pose and solve problems, and when they learn to think critically about what is revealed and what is hidden in different maps and spatial arrays.

2. Understanding and Interpreting Associations Among Phenomena in Different Places:
Geography looks at the world from a spatial perspective -- seeking to understand the changing spatial organization and material character of Earth's surface. One of the critical advantages of a spatial perspective is the attention it focuses on how phenomena are related to one another in particular places. Students should thus learn not just to recognize and interpret patterns, but to assess the nature and significance of the relationships among phenomena that occur in the same place and to understand how tastes and values, political regulations, and economic constraints work together to create particular types of cultural landscapes.

3. Recognizing and Interpreting the Relationships Among Patterns and Processes:
Geographical analysis requires a sensitivity to scale -- not just as a spatial category but as a framework for understanding how events and processes at different scales influence one another. Thus, students should understand that the phenomena they are studying at one scale (e.g., local) may well be influenced by developments at other scales (e.g., regional, national, or global). They should then look at processes operating at multiple scales when seeking explanations of geographic patterns and arrangements.

4. Defining Regions and Evaluating the Regionalization Process:
Geography is concerned not simply with describing patterns, but with analyzing how they came about and what they mean. Students should see regions as objects of analysis and exploration and move beyond simply locating and describing regions to considering how and why they come into being -- and what they reveal about the changing character of the world in which we live.

5. Characterizing and Analyzing Changing Interconnections Among Places:
At the heart of a geographical perspective is a concern with the ways in which events and processes operating in one place can influence those operating at other places. Thus, students should view places and patterns not in isolation, but in terms of their spatial and functional relationship with other places and patterns. Moreover, they should strive to be aware that those relationships are constantly changing, and they should understand how and why change occurs.
Course Requirements and Grading Policies:

Examinations: There will be one major exam at the end of each nine-week period, for a total of four exams. The exams will cover two key topic areas (for example, Exam #1 at the end of the first nine-weeks will cover topics one and two; Exam #2 will cover topics three and four; Exam #3 topics five and six; and Mini-Exam #4 at the end of the year will only cover topic seven). Each nine-week exam will model the AP Exam that will be taken by every student in May 2016. The exams will include multiple-choice questions and free response essay questions. Each exam is worth 4 grades, which will count toward your nine-week grade.

Essay Critiques: Every student will prepare a 2-page critique for each of the seven topic areas for a total of seven critiques throughout the year (two critiques each nine-weeks). Each critique is worth 2 grades (4 grades each nine-weeks) and the instructor will assign the critique topic and explain the format and style of the essay.

Map Quizzes: The student will also be responsible for two map quizzes each nine-week period. There will be a total of seven map quizzes throughout the year. The quizzes will be based upon the different world regions and the countries contained within them. Each map quiz is worth 2 grades.

Home Learning and Reading Assignments: Each student is responsible for completing any homework or reading assignment that the instructor has given. All reading and home learning assignments will be completed before you come to class and you will be ready to discuss the reading or homework in class. Pop-quizzes will be periodically given to insure that everyone is keeping up with the readings. Pop-quizzes and home learning assignments will be worth 1 or 2 grades.

Projects, Interactive Student Notebook, and Research Assignments: Students will be held responsible for any assigned projects or research assignments that are given throughout the year. Students will also be responsible for maintaining the interactive student notebook (ISN) throughout the year. Instructions for the ISN can be found on the class website.

Class Participation: "Class participation" refers to the degree to which the student takes part in the class discussions, and the quality of that participation. By reading the appropriate assignments you will be prepared for class. Class participation will count for a portion of each nine-week grade.

Attendance and Make-Up Work: No make-up work will be given for unexcused absences or tardies to class. Each student has 48 hours to bring an excused admit to the instructor and only then will make-up work be administered.

Methods of Assessments:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes and Projects</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classwork, Homelarning, and Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Parents and Students,

Please sign and return this page to Ms. Elliott by August 28th, 2015. It is a required document for student files.

Thank you,

Ms. Elliott

We the parent/guardian(s) and the student, have fully read, understood, and agree to abide by these expectations.

Period ________

________________________  ______________________  ____________
Print Student name  Student’s signature  Date

________________________  ______________________  ____________
Print Parent/Guardian name  Parent/Guardian’s signature  Date

________________________  ______________________
Print Parent/Guardian Phone number  Parent/Guardian’s Email Address