GCU 194
Geography of the United States and Arizona for Elementary Educators
Course Syllabus
For Lower Division Elementary Education

Draft 1

ASU Semester Registration information

Course Meets

Instructor Name

Academic Institution

Academic Unit Hosting the Course

Prerequisites

Requirements met by this course

Catalog Description

This section of the course has the five digit course number identifier as:

Days and Time

Location

Name

Affiliation

e-mail:

Office location, Office hours and how to make an appointment:

Instructor website:

Institutional information

Academic Unit Information

There are no prerequisites for this course

This course is designed to fulfill the C and SB general studies requirements.

Introduces discipline of geography to elementary educators through the geographic regions of the United States and Arizona

INTRODUCTION: Elementary school teachers must know basic college-level information about the geography of the United States and also the state in which they teach, in this case Arizona. Fourth grade typically focuses on Arizona, and fifth grade usually concentrates on the United States. However, geography is sprinkled throughout all grades from K to 8. This class provides you the detailed background you will need to teach geography in Arizona's elementary and middle schools.

CLASS GOAL: To learn the power of geography and a geographical approach to understanding the United States and Arizona.
**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:** Students are expected to learn basic information about geography of the United States and Arizona through the lens of geography standards and through a regional geography perspective. In addition, students are expected to go far beyond learning the basics. You will apply your acquired knowledge in ways that will help prepare you to become a master teacher. For example, will not only be reading about course content, you are expected to learn to identify and read high quality content related new geography content. In another example, you will carry out assignments that will connect geography to other disciplines, such as the other areas of social studies and to other areas of learning such as language arts and science. Ultimately, students are expected to embrace the content of this course as a step in becoming life-long learners about the geography of the United States and Arizona, because as an elementary teacher -- this is what you must become if you are to thrive as a professional.

**OUTCOMES LINKED TO EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS:** This is not a course in how to teach. It is a content-rich course about the geography of the United States and Arizona. This content does, however, relate to a number of different standards. The content of this course is part of a sequence of four courses that will prepare you to master these standards:

- The United States and Arizona 1 (SB, C) - first course in the required sequence
- The World 1 (SB, G) - second course in the sequence
- The United States and Arizona 2 (upper division) - third course in the sequence
- The World 2 (upper division) - fourth course in the sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Standard</th>
<th>How this course connects</th>
<th>Course Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The AEPA Test for Middle School Grades Social Studies.</td>
<td>This course helps prepare students for the <a href="http://alliance.la.asu.edu/consortium/geography1/GeogAZUS_SylDraft3.html">AEPA Field 40: Middle Grades Social Studies Test</a> Objectives 20 through 24 on subarea IV. Geography: Objective 0020: Understand the world in spatial terms Objective 0021: Understand places and regions Objective 0022: Understand physical systems Objective 0023: Understand human systems Objective 0024: Understand environment and society</td>
<td>Those elementary students interested in taking the AEPA Middle Grades Social Studies Test will be prepared after taking this course and the following courses in the social studies sequence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: even if you do not plan to teach in middle school, having deeper knowledge of what is taught in slightly higher grade levels is important in...
### Arizona State Teacher Standards

This is a course rich in academic knowledge and does not have any focus on pedagogy. Thus, the standards addressed are 7 and 8:

**Standard 7:** The teacher has general academic knowledge as demonstrated by the attainment of a bachelor’s degree. The teacher also has specific academic knowledge in his or her subject area or areas sufficient to develop student knowledge and performance to meet Arizona academic standards.

**Standard 8:** The teacher demonstrates current professional knowledge sufficient to effectively design and plan instruction, implement and manage instruction, create and maintain an appropriate learning environment, and assess student learning.

### 4. Arizona Student Content Standards Addressed in this Course

This course uses explicit examples from Strand 4: Geography of the Social Studies Standard: [https://www.ade.state.az.us/standards/sstudies/articulated/strand4.pdf](https://www.ade.state.az.us/standards/sstudies/articulated/strand4.pdf)

The course does not provide material at the level of students. Rather, different performance objectives in Grades K-8 are explained at the college level. For example, although Kindergarten students are to construct maps of familiar places (e.g. classroom), college students will have assignments using online GIS software to learn about GIS and some basic cartographic principles.

### 5. Other National or Core Standards Addressed in this Course

The first part of this course articulates fully to the National Geography Standards. The National Geography Standards are illustrated with examples and assignments from the Arizona Student Content strand in Geography.

Elementary teachers completing this course and the subsequent courses in the social studies sequence will have a college-level detailed understanding of the knowledge behind these standards.
**READINGS:** There is no formal hardcopy textbook required for this course. You will be reading material from an older text. ([Alternative link](#)) Although the data in this text are out of date, the concepts are still pertinent. You will also be given hyperlinks to readings of the type that you will need to find in your class assignments.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED:** All of the geospatial assignments require that you use Google based software. This includes Google Earth, Google Sketchup, Google Wave, Google Documents, and other Google tools. Thus, you must have a Google Account, and your software must be able to run these tools.

**GRADING/ASSIGNMENTS:**
There are several different types of assignments that you will complete. These assignments are intended to help you master the content of this class and also learn the skills you will need as a teacher. The total value of all of the assignments totals 100%.

Your grade for the class will be assigned as follows:

- 98% and above  A+
- 90% and above  A
- 80% and above  B
- 65% and above  C
- 50% and above  D
- less than 50%  E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Grade Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture Quizzes</td>
<td>The basic information provided in lectures is very important. You knowing about the geography of the United States and Arizona is a critical part of being a competent elementary teacher. The traditional classroom assessment of a big test is done for the convenience of the classroom instructor. It is not the best way to find out if you learned the basic information. Quizzes that you take after each lecture is a better way to assess your learning. These quizzes will also help you. You get immediate feedback</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
on whether you need to focus more on the lectures, and you can try different learning techniques (e.g. taking notes during the lecture in different ways).

However, you will have to do more than take quizzes on the lectures. You will have to write quiz questions. We will explain to you how multiple choice questions are written, and you will be provided examples from the AEPA middle school social studies test. However, the job will be yours to make great and thoughtful questions. Then, you will post up your questions for other students to discuss and analyze.

NOTE: The colored links to TFP rubric explanations will not be a part of the student syllabus. This information is presented for the purpose of evaluating the syllabus.

LINKS TO TFP RUBRIC:
(a) The quiz questions that students will write is an exercise designed to help them learn about AEPA middle school Social Studies test. This is not a part of the TFP rubric, but it is a part of the "Supplemental Instructor Materials Checklist" for course approval. "Supplemental Instructor Materials includes at least one 10 question sample test that aligns material in the course to the applicable AEPA assessment".
(b) The instruction, delivered online through Adobe Presenter, will be designed to meet the "Instruction" component of the TFP rubric to be engaging at a high level.

Map Exercises

Youtube is filled with funny videos of people not knowing basic place names (example 1, example 2) and of little children knowing more about place names than adults (example). Place names are just the start of geography. Place names are to geography like the alphabet is to interpreting Shakespeare. Thus, you will do map exercises to learn the geography alphabet of the United States and Arizona. This is important to your career; knowing place names will help prevent embarassments in dealing with parents and administrators. You do not want them making fun of you because of your place name ignorance!

LINK TO TFP RUBRIC:
This assessment requires that students apply knowledge learned. Although map exercises are at a very basic level learned in middle school and high school grades in such educational systems as the U.K., our students do not have this basic background information. This knowledge is equivalent to knowing your multiplication tables.

Finding

Teachers and future teachers do not have a lot of cash to spend
good reading material to learn more about a subject on expensive texts. Instead, you must become competent in finding information online. Wikipedia, blogs and .com sources can be amusing to read, but these sources of information are often unreliable. The readings linked below to specific topics will show you examples of good sources of information (e.g. from the government or colleges). However, teachers must learn to dig up reliable information for themselves. Thus, you will complete assignments where you to find a good source of information using criteria explained in the Find Reading Assignment Instructions.

LINK TO TFP RUBRIC:
(a) The Reading/thinking/acting aspect of this assignment type requires that students take the lecture material to the next level. Students must analyze the original lecture material, discuss in class areas of interest to expand their knowledge base, and then carry out the research. Students must demonstrate why the selected reading is of high quality (at the college level; this is NOT selecting readings for elementary students) and how it links with the information presented in lectures.
(b) Ultimately, research fluency empowers future teachers to become life-long learners through finding new information related to teaching standards and in the development of filters to critically evaluate the quality of different information sources.

Google Earth, Google Wave, Google Sketchups, and other Technology Activities You will undertake GIS activities that will provide you experience in using a 21st century technology to learn about geography. These activities will also give you the confidence to incorporate technology to promote learning in your classroom.

LINK TO TFP RUBRIC:
These assignments are sequenced to build basic skills and to learn geography. The sequence of assignments relate to
(a) The first GIS assignment will involved distance collaboration through Google Wave, communicating about where students live to other students. Students must complete a viewshed analysis of a picture of the view from where they live or a place they visit regularly. This viewshed analysis requires that students analyzed Google Earth imagery, annotate that imagery, load up that imagery to Google Wave, and discuss the imagery. The idea is to build a community amongst the various students through explaining the geographic context of where they live. This first assignment lays the collaborative foundation used in other GIS assignments.
(b) The second GIS assignment will involve research & information fluency through Google Earth. Students will participate in the creation of a GIS whereby they analyze spatial
(c) **The third GIS assignment will involve research & information fluency** through Google Earth. Students will turn their basic GIS information into a professional looking cartographic product. They must collaborate and critique each others' maps. Have you ever looked at GIS maps online of traffic flow patterns? These are typically horrible maps. They display few of the basic cartographic principles of a good map. Thus, students will learn the basics of cartography and will need to use digital tools to create good-looking maps of the data they analyzed for the second assignment.

(d) **The fourth GIS assignment will involve enriched communication**, through incorporation of Google Sketchups. This assignment will ask students to present the research they carried out for the second assignment in alternative ways. Static maps are not the only tool for communicating geographic knowledge. The hope is that this assignment will be modified over time to link to learning in other consortia (fine art, language arts).

**Remote Sensing Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography comes alive when you look at aerial photographs of your school site or satellite images of famous landmarks. You will learn geography through learning how to interpret remotely sensed images. These activities will give you the confidence to use aerial photographs and satellite images in your classroom.</th>
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**LINK TO TFP RUBRIC:**

These assignments are sequenced to build basic skills and to learn geography. The sequence of assignments relate to

(a) **Enriched communication** through presenting different perspectives of a favorite geographic location in the United States and Arizona. Students will find satellite imagery and take screenshots, will use Google Earth screenshots, and will use topographic information in terrain data to make a digital presentation of a favorite location.

(b) **Oral Presentation** whereby students combine ground images and remotely sensed imagery to present the physical geography and human geography characteristics of a place of interest. The region could be a neighborhood in a city (such as "Downtown Phoenix"). or it could be a broader geographical area such as the Colorado Plateau.

**Parent Letters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nothing is worse than a parent complaining to a principal about a teacher who cannot write professionally in a letter to home. Thus, you will learn how to write professional letters about content you will be teaching. In this course, you will be writing letters explaining the content of each unit in this class.</th>
</tr>
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</table>
These assignments are sequenced to build basic skills and to learn geography. The sequence of assignments relate to **Writing to learn** through this authentic writing task. So many college writing assignments make no direct linkage to professional activities. In this case, first-year students will practice synthesizing the content of an academic unit at the college level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book review or Movie Review</td>
<td>Book reviews are an important learning tool, forcing students to think critically. Unfortunately, the Internet has disabled this tool because of the ease of plagiarism. We have a solution. This assignment will model for you how to make the Internet useless in a book review, forcing you and your students to think critically and independently. You will be given examples of books that you can review in class, and you can also suggest a book for review. Your review will be structured along the lines of the National Geography Standards. You must cover each standard in your review, with <a href="#">this note-taking guide</a> to assist you. This is an example of a book review completed using the national standards. This is an example of a movie review. Although this example is not about the United States or Arizona, your book or movie must relate to the United States or Arizona.</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest Assignments</td>
<td>You will take a pretest about the knowledge you currently have about American and Arizona geography. The results will have no relationship to your grade in this class. However, you will be doing graded assignments that relate to the results. The results of the pretest will be used by you in three assignments. First, this will be a chance for you to think about what you need to learn to be a knowledgeable elementary teacher. Thus, you will be asked to analyze that you think you need to learn.</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second, there is a portion of the grade where you select lectures (out of a selection of supplemental lectures). Your selection of supplemental lectures will be influenced by your analysis of knowledge deficiencies.

Third, at the end of the course, you will be asked to look back and reflect on the knowledge that you gained and the knowledge that you think you still need to learn to be a top-flight elementary teacher.

Synthesis Experience

A good course synthesis should not be about regurgitation of knowledge that you will forget in 6 months. A good synthesis assignment gives you the confidence that you have learned course material and can now apply this material. In your life as a teacher, you will encounter good and bad content related to the geography of the United States and Arizona.

Your synthesis experience is to attend a geography conference hosted by the Arizona Geographic Alliance. These conferences occur every semester and their times and locations can be found at this website. You will attend a minimum of 3 presentations about lessons on United States or Arizona.

Your synthesis experience is to evaluate critically these presentations for content. You are not to focus on pedagogy. Your methods courses, taken later, will help you learn how to teach social studies. The focus must rest completely on a critical analysis of content of these presentations.

This assignment sheet provides you detailed instructions.

This link provides you an example final exam, completed by analyzing these online lesson presentations (Lesson 1 - watch all presentations, Lesson 2 - watch all presentations, Lesson 3 - watch all presentations, Lesson 4 (presentation, lesson).

If you are unable to attend a geography conference, please see the instructor about an alternative online synthesis assignment.

LINK TO TFP RUBRIC:
This assignment relates to Reading/thinking/acting. Far too many 'in-services' provide information that is wrong, out-dated, and poorly researched. The students completing this course will need think critically about the content that is provided throughout their professional lives. After attending an educational conference, students will be guided through undertaking a critique of the content of lessons related to the United States and Arizona.
geography. The course instructor will start out by showing an online presentation and then go through the process of dissecting the content -- and not the pedagogy. In fact, the online presentation will have outstanding pedagogy -- but it will be poorly researched in terms of academic content. The modeling will then go through processes by which information can be evaluated at a high level

CLASS SCHEDULE

of online presentations, quizzes, readings, and assignments

Unit 1: Understanding United States and Arizona from the Perspective of Geography Standard

NOTE: UNIT 1 IS THE MATERIAL THAT WILL BE 'IMPORTED' INTO THE COMBINATION COURSE ON "THE UNITED STATES AND ARIZONA"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Short Online Presentations to be watched before date of class</th>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Brief Quizzes Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Readings on Teaching Tolerance</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td><a href="#">Introduction to the structure of geography</a></td>
<td><a href="#">National Standard 1</a></td>
<td><a href="#">Quiz link</a></td>
<td><a href="#">The emotion map</a></td>
<td>You will discuss these presentations in the first class session. Your instructor may give a quiz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online presentations explaining national geography standards and Arizona social studies standard and the Arizona geography strand.</td>
<td><a href="#">National Standard 2</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 2</td>
<td>Maps of the US and Arizona <a href="#">Mental Mapping of the US and Arizona</a></td>
<td><a href="#">National Standard 3</a></td>
<td><a href="#">Quiz link</a></td>
<td><a href="#">The emotion map</a></td>
<td>Due Class 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">Spatial Organization of the US and Arizona</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where do I fit in? (presentation material)</td>
<td>Find reading relevant to the topics for class 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 3</td>
<td>Physical and Human Characteristics of the US and Arizona <a href="#">Mental Mapping of the US and Arizona</a></td>
<td><a href="#">National Standard 4</a></td>
<td><a href="#">Quiz link</a></td>
<td><a href="#">The tractor and the taxi</a></td>
<td>Due Class 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Google Earth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

http://alliance.la.asu.edu/consortium/geography1/GeogAZUS_SylDraft3.html
| Class 5 and 6 | Physical Processes and Patterns of the US and Arizona | National Standard 7 | Quiz link | Due Class 6 
Remote Sensing 
activity 1 |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| Class 7 and 8 | Population Distribution, Characteristics and Migration in the US and Arizona | National Standard 9 | Quiz link | Due Class 8 
Find 1 reading 
relevant to the 
topics for class 5 |
| Class 9 and 10 | Human Modification of Earth's Surface in the US and Arizona | National Standard 14 | Quiz link | Due Class 10 
Google Earth 
Activity 2 |
| Class 11 and 12 | Applying Geography to Interpret The Past in the US and Arizona | National Standard 17 | Quiz link | Due Class 12 
Map Exercise 1 |
### Unit 2: Concept of regional geography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Online Presentations to be watched before date of class</th>
<th>Powerpoint</th>
<th>Quizzes Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Assignment Turned in before class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 13</td>
<td>Regions</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Themes and Regions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 14</td>
<td>Environmental Landscapes</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Physical Environment</td>
<td>Google Earth Activity 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 15</td>
<td>Human Landscapes</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Human Activity</td>
<td>Find reading relevant to the topics for class 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit 3: The Eastern USA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Online Presentations to be watched before date of class</th>
<th>Powerpoint</th>
<th>Quizzes Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Assignment Turned in before class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 16</td>
<td>Atlantic Periphery</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Bypassed East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 17</td>
<td>Megalopois</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Megalopolis</td>
<td>Remote Sensing Activity 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 18</td>
<td>Inland South</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Deep South</td>
<td>Find reading relevant to the topics for class 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 19</td>
<td>Heartland</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Manufacturing Core Agriculture Core</td>
<td>Map Exercise 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 20</td>
<td>Coastal South</td>
<td>ppt file</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>Southern Coastlands</td>
<td>Parent letter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unit 4: The Western USA

http://alliance.la.asu.edu/consortium/geography1/GeogAZUS_SylDraft3.html
### Unit 5: Focus on Arizona

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Online Presentations to be watched before date of class</th>
<th>Powerpoint</th>
<th>Quizzes Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Assignment Turned in before class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 27</td>
<td>The Physical Geography of Arizona</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 28</td>
<td>Human Geography of Arizona</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Map Exercise 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 29</td>
<td>Environmental Geography and Arizona</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Google Earth Activity 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 30</td>
<td>Using Geography to Interpret Arizona's Past</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Book Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 31</td>
<td>Using Geography to Analyze Arizona's Present</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Parent letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 32</td>
<td>Using Geography to Help the Future of Arizona</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>Quiz link</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unit 6: Linking this class to your career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Class</th>
<th>Online Presentations to be watched before date of class</th>
<th>Powerpoint Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Quizzes Taken Before The Class</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Turned in before class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class 33</td>
<td>Critical Analysis of Lesson Materials</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>in class discussion</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Synthesis experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 34</td>
<td>Linking Material Across the Curriculum: Language Arts and Fine Arts</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>in class discussion</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>Movie Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class 35</td>
<td>Linking Material Across the Curriculum: Science and Math</td>
<td>no draft yet</td>
<td>in class discussion</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>