

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TEACHER EDUCATION

ORGANIZING THEME: The School of Education prepares ethical and reflective professionals for service in diverse communities.

EPDSS 905 Geography for Elementary Teaching
One Continuing Education Credit

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A word about the WEST E Elementary Education: Content Knowledge... This course will serve as good background for the content test. The WEST E is focused on the recall of facts; however, this course also is designed to develop conceptual understanding.

TEXTS

Washington State Essential Learning Requirements, Technical Manual:
<http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf>.
Geography Education Standards Project. (1994). *Geography for life: National geography standards*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Research & Exploration. Available on Amazon, and public and university libraries.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: The teacher is an ethical knowledgeable and reflective decision-maker who teaches all learners to function effectively in a global and pluralistic society.

COURSE DESCRIPTION and INTRODUCTION

This course is designed for applicants to the MIT **elementary certification** program at Seattle University who need to deepen their knowledge of geography. The course is intended to provide background knowledge of geography for teaching at the elementary and middle school levels. It is expected that this course will serve as an introduction to geographical understandings and that you will continue to deepen your knowledge once you are in the classroom and responsible for teaching specific topics related to geography.

This course will ask you to create a number of artifacts to demonstrate your understanding of geography—you will not be asked to read books to answer questions; however, you will need to investigate a range of resources including textbooks, the Internet, geography games, maps and globes, *National Geographic* magazines and other resources. These activities are intended to introduce you to a range of resources related to understanding geography.

Often geography is seen as the ability to read maps and globes or answer trivia questions related to place names. Geography is much more than identifying places or reading maps, and yet Americans are often criticized for having very little geographic knowledge. Research underscores the importance of learning geography in context. A unit on maps and globes at the beginning of a social studies textbook has little long-term impact on geographic understanding. Thus, this course will endeavor to have you construct understandings that are personally meaningful to you.

The course requirements are interrelated. In other words, researching and writing for one assignment will inform other assignments and vice versa. Choice making is an important component for learning; thus, this course offers a wide range of learning opportunities as you complete assignments. All assignments are submitted at the same time in one packet. At that time you also register and pay for the course. See http://www2.seattleu.edu/coe/mit/modules_list.aspx for how to enroll in this course. **Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning the assignments.**

It is estimated that to complete these assignments, you will invest about 50 hours. The course is one credit to make it affordable even though you will complete more work than would normally be expected of a one-credit course. It is hoped that you will use this course to your advantage and not simply “go through the hoops” to achieve credit and a grade. You are investing in your preparation for becoming a teacher, I hope these set of experience provide new insights, increased knowledge, and kindles enthusiasm for teaching geography to young people—if that enthusiasm was not already present!

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geography taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
2. Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to geography
(<http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf>)
and *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards*.
4. Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of geography.
5. Consider ethical dimensions of teaching geography.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING (Specific details on assignment sheets attached.)

This syllabus is a contract between you and your instructor of the course. It is hoped that you become actively engaged in making decisions about your learning. Read the syllabus carefully and consider all the assignments then create a plan for your learning **with a timeline**. All assignments must be word-processed (double-spaced) with at least a one-inch margin to allow for comments. All assignments must follow APA guidelines **as appropriate** and reflect correct grammar, spelling and usage. Read each assignment sheet carefully to ensure that you meet all of the requirements for the assignment.

Requirements

1. Read documents that will contribute to your knowledge base for creating the assignments that follow. The state and national standard documents are included to assist you in beginning the learning process.
2. Pictorial glossary: Create a glossary of geographic terms appropriate for use in an elementary or middle school setting.

3. Geography places: Take geography quizzes to determine your knowledge of places in the United States and the world.
4. Plan a trip and create a photo album to one of the following continents: Africa, South America or Asia. Select a place for which you are unfamiliar.
5. Create a student activity of physical systems by selecting one of the K-4 standards on physical systems and completing the activity.
6. Analyze and apply two current events to geographic standards; one related to human systems and one related to environment and society.
7. Reflection paper. After you have completed all the assignments, do a self-assessment of the value of the independent study and what additional work you will need to do to be prepared to teach geography.
8. Time log. Keep a log of the time you spent reading, researching, viewing videotapes/internet sites, or other forms of technology and in the creation of assignments.

Grading: This syllabus serves as a contract between you and your instructor. It is my hope that you will do your very best work and meet my obligation to provide you with feedback in the form of a course grade that reflects the quality of your work. There are aspects of the course that are foundational and where your understanding must be clearly demonstrated. Therefore, I will be looking at the assignments holistically.

Some assignments require a good deal more work than others so I am using a “weighting” system. The Credit / Redo assignments are important; you cannot pass the course without being given “credit” for them. However, they do not figure into your final grade.

Grades on assignments will be as follows: A, A-, B+, B, B, NC (no credit). Any grade for an assignment below a B will be considered unsatisfactory and may result in not receiving a passing grade for the course. Thus, you are expected to do your best work on every assignment. The final grade for the module must be B or better.

Exceptional Evidence (A+)	Clear and Convincing Evidence (A)	Generally Clear and Convincing Evidence (A-)	Acceptable but Uneven Evidence (B)	Insufficient Evidence (N/C)
In addition to clear and convincing evidence: Demonstrates sophisticated levels of integration of concepts and activities.	Addresses all criteria completely; Demonstrates thorough understanding and application in the completion of tasks	Address all criteria; most addressed completely; Occasionally misses minor applications and/or understanding of tasks	Addresses criteria in a minimally acceptable fashion; Demonstrated understanding and/or application are uneven.	Omits key information; Fails to address key criteria; Too general or misapplies responses to activity; Superficial completion of task.

Weight of 4	Weight of 3	Weight of 2	Weight of 1	Credit / Redo
Pictorial glossary	Demonstration of Physical Systems	Current events analysis application	Geography places	Reflection paper
Trip and photo album				Time log

Latest Date for turning in Assignment: August 10. However, I encourage you to turn in the assignments earlier rather than later. Don’t underestimate the time to complete the course!

How to Search for Pictures and Images Online:

The information that follows was submitted by Andrea Baumgarten. She gave permission to use it in this syllabus to support your work.

1. Use **Google Images**. The Google Images search engine is located on the main Google task bar.
2. Often photographs on the websites of nonprofits or governments are freer of copyright concerns or limitations, and of more value (more accurate, more verifiable, and appear with more explanatory information).
2. In order to locate accurate, trustworthy images, do the following: type a search term into the Google Images search box AND at the end of your phrase add any of the following terms:
 - **gov** (get access to government website photos this way)
 - **org** (nonprofits)
 - **national geographic** (for geography photos)
 - **noaa** (weather, sciences)
 - **nasa** (weather, sciences, geography)
 - **edu** (brings up college, university libraries, K-12 systems)
 - **library congress** (or loc, but that often includes results for ‘location’--Library of Congress has a retrieval system that does not get culled easily by Google Images, so if searching for historical images, keep a 2nd tab open to the actual search box on the Library of Congress website, www.loc.gov, and just search there directly)

Thus, to search for a reliable photo of an alluvial fan while weeding out irrelevant photos, use this search language:

alluvial fan gov

3. Once you hit enter, a large set of photographs will appear. **Hover over** each and only click photos with reliable web addresses so as not to get hit by crawling viruses.
4. After clicking a photo of interest, you will be taken to an intermediate page where you can choose the level of resolution you want. Generally the picture will be sharper if you choose “full size.”
5. Click Full Size, then once the photo appears, right-click to copy, then switch screens and paste into your document. View the underlying website by clicking on the Website prompt or clicking the X in the top right corner of the image.
6. Clip Art: Be wary of clip art websites; they are notorious for virus dissemination. Visit the Microsoft Office Clip Art site for thousands of free images not subject to copyright restriction: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/>

Name of Assignment: Reflection

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geography taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to geography.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of geography.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching geography.

Rationale for the assignment: Active reflection on one's learning helps you refine your teaching and grow professionally. Inherent in reflection is a commitment to the ethical dimensions of what we do when we teach. This assignment is intended to help you reflect on what you are learning, and motivate you to grow professionally, and provide feedback to your instructor on your learning experience.

Description of the assignment: After you have completed all the assignments, do a self-assessment of the value of the independent study and what additional work you will need to do to be prepared to teach geography. Please provide feedback on the assignments answering the following questions:

1. Which assignments were particularly helpful to your learning? Explain.
2. What changes would you suggest to make this course better?
3. What additional work will you need to do to be prepared to teach geography?

Write a one- to two-page reflection.

Log: Be sure to attach your time log when you turn in your independent study.

Name of Assignment: Pictorial Glossary

Objective:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geographic terms taught at the elementary and middle school levels.

Rationale for the assignment: To familiarize you with geographic terms and to promote exploration of geography from a variety of sources. Locating visuals makes this assignment more than just a reading of geographic information and allows you to organize information into something that can be used as a classroom teacher.

Description of the assignment: Create a pictorial glossary to illustrate the terms listed below. Write a definition for each term keeping the definition simple and clear. The glossary should be well-organized and suitable for use in your future classroom.

Before you begin review the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to geography:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/pubdocs/SocialStudiesStandardsBW.pdf>.

Also, review the national geography standards: *Geography for life: National geography standards*.

The National Geographic magazine can serve as an excellent resource for finding maps, illustrations, and photographs to represent the terms. Some terms may require a number of illustrations to demonstrate the term. For instance, finding three or four examples of different kinds of pollution can effectively represent pollution. Definitions for geographic terms can be located in *National Geography Standards: Geography for Life* as well as other geography resources. Organize the glossary so that the definition and visual are on the same page, the visual is an appropriate size for easy identification of what it represents, the glossary is arranged alphabetically, and professionally presented. When organizing the glossary, be consistent in the layout and design. All the page headings should be the same size and font and the layout is similar from one page to the next. You have the option of putting this into PowerPoint but you will need to make a hard copy for review and you may want to print in black and white so save ink. This will take considerably more time. In the past students have used the Internet to search for photos/examples and that is fine. However, using *National Geographic* is probably a less time consuming option.

Glossary Terms

aerial photograph	alluvial fan	Antarctic Circle	barrier island	silting
biomes	boundary	cartographer	climate graph	thematic map
contour map	deforestation	demography	desertification	Tropic of Capricorn
topographic map	ecosystem	elevation	continent	satellite image
floodplain	flow map	region	latitude	political map
international date line	landform	landlocked country	moraine	watershed
longitude	meridian	monsoon	ocean currents	South Pole
Pacific Rim	natural hazard	North Pole	plains	time zone
plateau	parallel	physical map	population density	weathering
prevailing winds	plate tectonics	pollution	Landsat image	settlement pattern
relative location	prime meridian	rain shadow	gorge	terrace
continental divide	Mercator projection	Robinson projection	hemisphere	Tropic of Cancer
coulee	isthmus	grasslands		

Criteria for evaluation: The glossary includes all the terms with accurate definitions. The visuals clearly illustrate the term. The glossary is well organized and suitable for classroom use.

Name of Assignment: Places

Objective:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of places.

Rationale for the assignment: To provide knowledge of the location of places in the United States and the world. Americans are frequently criticized for not knowing where places are. Teachers need to be familiar with places in the United States and around the world.

Description of the assignment:

Go to the following web sites and play the games:

- 1) <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/quiz/today/#/start> **both** apprentice and expert
- 2) <http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/usaquiz.html> (for this one identify at least three continents).

Copy the results of your quizzes to include with the assignment.

Write a reflection (no more than one page) addressing the following (number each response):

- 1) Is it important to know where places are in the world? Why or why not?
- 2) How knowledgeable are you about places in the world?
- 3) If you do not know where places are what might you do to increase your knowledge?
- 4) If you found this approach highly effective in increasing your knowledge of location of places, why do you think that is? If you found this approach **not** very effective in increasing your knowledge of location of places, why do you think that is?
- 5) Based on how you answered question 4, what do you need to consider when you plan lessons for your future students to help them learn about the location of places?

Criteria for evaluation: All the information requested is included, thoughtful and insightful reflection.

Name of Assignment: **Plan a trip and create a photo album—as a model for students**

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geography taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to geography.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of geography.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching geography. (One way to think about this objective is to consider how people are viewed within the environment. Is there an effort to understand and appreciate a way of life or are people depicted as exotic or as objects? When choosing photographs consider the kind of message sent through the visual.)

Rationale for the assignment: To understand how individual people are connected to geographical understandings. To personalize the study of geography and to explore the role of geography in understanding our world. To become familiar with the five geographic themes commonly used in teaching elementary and middle school geography. To learn about a region of the world that is unfamiliar to you. To create a model for your students if you were to give such an assignment in the future. Models for learning can be highly effective tools for teaching and thus thinking about this assignment for your future students not only helps you learn about another place but also helps you think about how you would design such an assignment for your students.

Description of the assignment: Plan a trip to Africa, South America, or Asia to use as a model for your future students by creating a PowerPoint that you will use as a model for students. You will submit a hard copy of the PPT. Select a place for which you are unfamiliar. You have 30 days to plan a trip to one of the continents listed above. Outline an itinerary including the following information. Use language that is appropriate for upper elementary or middle school students.

Create an itinerary

- State a purpose for your trip. You could be exploring a particular culture, time in history, economic opportunity, or simply gaining knowledge about another place in the world. Think about what you would want your future students to learn from such a project. However, one of the primary goals of this assignment is to demonstrate your understanding of the five geographic themes so you must account for that aspect as well.
- Rationale for choice of continents that supports your purpose. Why did you select this continent? What do you hope to learn from visiting such a continent?
- Select at least four countries to visit and decide where you will travel in each country. Using a map, trace your route.
- Decide on the time of year—consider climate, festivals, and special events. State why you chose this particular time of year.

- Create a day-to-day itinerary based on the purpose of your trip. Identify where you will go and sites you will see and other experiences you want to have on your trip. The creation of the itinerary will necessitate extensive study of maps, travel guides, searches on the Internet, and research into the geography, economic, and history of the continent of your choice. You may also want to interview people who have lived or traveled to the continent of your choice.

Create a photo album

- Based on the places you have identified on your itinerary, assemble a set of “photographs” if you were to take such a trip. **For each country**, select **three photographs** that best represent **each of the 4 themes listed below**. Remember you want your photos to be excellent models for helping your future students understand the geographic themes in relation to each of the countries you will visit.

There are five themes that are used to organize and understand geography within the school curriculum. The theme of location—place on earth—is not included for this assignment. Thus, include brief captions for the photographs to demonstrate your understanding of the 4 themes and explain the photograph.

Clearly identify the theme for each photo-be specific-e.g. "Movement" followed by a caption that illustrates that theme and is pertinent to that particular photo. Be specific in describing how the theme connects to the photograph. The questions related to each of the theme should help you construct the caption. Note: It is easier to use one photograph to illustrate one theme, not multiple themes. Also include other pertinent information that helps the learner gain an understanding of a particular place. For example, if you included a photograph of a festival, in a sentence of two describe the festival and where it takes place.

Place: What are the environmental characteristics and special cultural features of the people who live in the various places that you visited?

Environmental interactions: How have people modified the physical landscapes to meet their needs? How has the physical environment influenced the range of human activity—economic activity, shelters, food, and way of life?

Movement: What evidence can you find of movement of people, resources, or ideas from place to place? What physical characteristics in the landscape have promoted or inhibited movement of people? How has technology affected movement in the environment?

Region: What common characteristics in the environment could be used to identify the places that you visited as regions? How might “photographs” of the environment communicate a sense of region to the places you visited?

This assignment requires research into the concepts of place, environmental interactions, movement, and region in order to assemble the photograph album. The album photos can be assembled from magazines (*National Geographic* is one of the best sources), photos from the Internet, personal or family photos, or any other sources suitable for demonstrating these concepts. (If you choose the Internet for your search, it will probably be a more time consuming activity.) Note: If you choose to use magazines for assembling this assignment, it is acceptable to do this as a “hard copy” model rather than a PowerPoint presentation. An exemplar is available at: Exemplar-Geography Photo Album Final:

[http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/mmcguire/web/Exemplar-](http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/mmcguire/web/Exemplar-Geography%20Photo%20Album%20Final.pdf)

[Geography%20Photo%20Album%20Final.pdf](http://fac-staff.seattleu.edu/mmcguire/web/Exemplar-Geography%20Photo%20Album%20Final.pdf) **Note:** This exemplar also includes maps showing relative location. This is not a requirement of the assignment.

Criteria for evaluation: The travel route on the map is complete, the purpose of the trip, the time of year—climate and weather considerations are described. The itinerary is doable. Rationale/purpose for the trip is logical to the planned itinerary. The photo album demonstrates understanding of place, environmental interactions, movement, and region. The captions are appropriate to the photographs and geographic themes. The itinerary and photo album are professionally organized and presented and can serve as an effective model for your future students.

Name of Assignment: Student Activity of Physical Systems

Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geography taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the national geographic standards and Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements related to geography.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of geography.
- Consider ethical dimensions of teaching geography.

Rationale for the assignment: To become familiar with the national standards as they apply to what students are able to do. To understand the kind of thinking and instruction that would be necessary to have students meet one of the standards described.

Description of the assignment: Review the national physical systems standards either at the K-4 or 5-8 levels. Select **one** of the standards and do **one** of the “Therefore, the student is able to...”

For example:

*Geography Standard 7, Grades K-4**
Physical Systems

Therefore, the student is able to:

C. Describe how Earth’s position relative to the Sun affects events and conditions on Earth, as exemplified by being able to

Relate seed and garden catalog descriptions of growing seasons to the United States Department of Agriculture hardiness zone maps.

1. You create the item in bold as if you were the student completing this assignment. I will leave it to you to decide what mode this will take. If you create a diorama for example, you can take a photograph of it to submit as evidence.
2. Include the standard and description as shown above in italics with your completed activity.

Note: Some of these tasks are very complex so select something that is relatively easy to do.

Criteria for evaluation: The assignment is complete and demonstrates understanding of the standard.

* Geography Education Standards Project. (1994). *Geography for life: National geography standards*. Washington, DC: National Geographic Research & Exploration, pp.118-119

Name of Assignment: Current events application and analysis
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Objectives:

- Demonstrative knowledge and understanding of geography taught at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Use knowledge of effective verbal and nonverbal communication techniques and make appropriate use of educational technology to foster learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the *Geography for Life: National Geography Standards* related particularly to human systems and environment and society.
- Value professional development by reviewing curriculum and participating in professional opportunities to enhance understanding of geography.

Rationale for the assignment: You have completed previous assignments to develop your knowledge, understanding, and application of geography. This next assignment is designed for you to analyze geographic information. We know that higher order thinking helps one truly understand, remember, and make use of new knowledge.

Description of the assignment:

- Locate **two** current events—one event that illustrates your understanding of **human systems** and one that relates to the **environment and society**.

Human Systems

People are central to geography in that human activities help shape Earth's surface, human settlements and structures are part of Earth's surface, and humans compete for control of Earth's surface.

The geographically informed person knows and understands:

9. *The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface*
10. *The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics*
11. *The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface*
12. *The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement*
13. *How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface*

Environment and Society

The physical environment is modified by human activities, largely as a consequence of the ways in which human societies value and use Earth's natural resources, and human activities are also influenced by Earth's physical features and processes.

The geographically informed person knows and understands:

14. *How human actions modify the physical environment*
15. *How physical systems affect human systems*
16. *The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.*

Boehm, R. and Bednarz, S. (1994). *Geography for life: National geography standards*.

Washington, DC: National Geographic Research & Exploration, p. 35.

- Review these standards in greater depth to be sure you have a solid understanding of the concepts. See in *Geography for Life*, pages 160-178 and 201-218.
- Analyze one article in relation to human systems; analyze a second article in relation to environment and society. Each analysis may focus on one or more of the standards (9-13 for human systems; 14-16 for environment and society) mostly likely not all. Be **explicit** in how the current events relate to the particular standard.

Definition—Analysis: Analyzing is the process of breaking information into parts to explore understanding and relationships. Analysis of elements involves the ability to recognize unstated assumptions and to distinguish fact from hypothesis to gain deeper understanding. Analysis of

relationships includes the ability to recognize the particulars that are relevant to the validation of a judgment, the ability to distinguish cause and effect relationships, and the ability to distinguish relevant from irrelevant statements. Words that characterize analysis: compares, contrasts, diagrams, differentiates, discriminates, infers, and relates.

- Include a copy of each article with the corresponding analysis.
- Limit each analysis to no more than one page. Thus, it is better to focus on one aspect of an event rather than taking a comprehensive approach given the complexity of most current events.

Criteria for evaluation:

For **each** current event the analysis is:

- clear and reflects understanding of the event and the geographic concepts.
- demonstrates evidence that the standards have been reviewed in the analysis and application;
- explicitly connects standard to current event for each example; and
- within the page limit and is professionally presented.
- The article is included.

EPDSS 905 Geography for Elementary Teaching

Before turning in your assignments, please review this checklist of activities and place it as the cover page for your assignments:

Name:

Address:

Email address:

Periodically this syllabus is updated. Please note the date **at the bottom of page** of the syllabus so that both the instructor and the student are using the same syllabus.

Date on syllabus: _____

Have you included all the requested information for each assignment?

- Pictorial Glossary (weight of 4)
- Trip and Photo Album (weight of 4)
- Places/Geography Quizzes (weight of 1)
- Physical systems created activity (weight of 3)
- Current events analysis (weight of 2)
- Reflection paper
- Time log
- Self-addressed, stamped envelope to return all of your assignments. (Note: I frequently travel taking assignments with me to evaluate. Thus, I want to return them by mail when I arrive at my travel destination. I do not usually take a computer so that is another reason for hard copy of assignments.)

After you have completed each assignment, it is a good idea to review the assignment sheet to determine if you included everything requested. Also, review the criteria for evaluation. This provides you with the opportunity to do a self-assessment before you turn in your assignments for grading.