



This study plan supports the assessments for Introduction to Geography. The course covers 5 competencies and represents 3 competency units.

Introduction

Overview

Geography is essential to our understanding of the world. It provides a perspective that uniquely complements the study of the social sciences in general. Contrary to popular belief, the study of geography encompasses much more than memorizing the 50 United States and their capital cities. The study of geography allows us to answer questions about people and places and aids in understanding basic sociocultural, anthropological, and historical questions. Because the goal of geography is to understand the world around us, there are many connections between geography and other disciplines such as anthropology, history and science.

As you complete the assessment, you will not only develop an understanding of traditional “geographic” principles such as location and map reading, but you’ll also come to recognize the ways in which geography can help you understand the world around you.

Getting Started Paragraph

Welcome to Introduction to Geography! To assist you in mastering the material of this course you will use The Visual World Atlas and two Vital Source texts, which include World regional geography: A development approach and Introduction to geography: People, places, & environment. These texts are module-based learning resources that include text to read and questions to help you practice retrieving and applying your knowledge. At the end of each module, you will assess whether you have mastered the material using the [Topical Study Guide](#). It is highly recommended that you complete the modules in the order listed in the pacing guide. Competency will be demonstrated by the successful completion of the Introduction to Geography Objective Assessment. The course also includes a Preassessment, which you can take at any time to assess your understanding of course concepts and to determine if you are ready for the Objective Assessment. The Preassessment will provide you with a Coaching Report that will help you target the topics where you have more to learn. In addition to these resources, Course Instructors are also available to answer questions and discuss concepts of geography.

Watch the following video for an introduction to this course:

Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...": [download video](#).

Competencies

This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 5 competencies:

- **Competency 111.4.01: Fundamental Geographic Concepts**
The graduate will describe and discuss the basic concepts of geography.



- **Competency 111.4.02: Geographic Places and Regions**
The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.
- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

Course Instructor Assistance

As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course instructors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course instructors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course instructor is the key to their success. Course instructors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you're studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don't work out on your first try, course instructors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, and you are encouraged to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!

Preparing for Success

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Study Guides

The [Introduction to Geography Topical Study Guide](#) is designed to help you identify the key concepts as you read through the course material. You should read the questions for each section before you begin the reading, and as you find the answers record them on the study guide.

- [Topical Study Guide for Introduction to Geography](#)

The [Places and Regions Chart](#) is designed to help you organize the major geographic characteristics of the regions of the world covered in the World Regional Geography. As you identify major characteristics in the readings, fill in the chart.

- [Introduction to Geography Places and Regions Study Chart](#)

Learning Resources

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.



Automatically Enrolled Resources

You can access the learning resources listed in this section by clicking on the links provided throughout the course. You may be prompted to log in to the WGU student portal to access the resources.

VitalSource E-Texts

The following textbooks are available to you as e-texts. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the learning environment activities.

- Johnson, D. L.; Haarmann, V.; Johnson, M. L.; and Clawson, D. L. (2010). [*World regional geography: A development approach, 11e.*](#) New York, NY: Prentice Hall. eBook ISBN-10: 0-321-93965-4. ISBN?13: 978-0-321-93965-4.
- Dahlman, C. T. and Renwick, W. H. (2014). [*Introduction to geography: People, places, & environment, 6e.*](#) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 978-0-321-84333-3.

World Atlas

In addition to these textbooks, we have also provided an electronic World Atlas via the WGU e-library for you to use as a reference as you work through the course.

- Fortin, François Ed. (2008). [*The Visual World Atlas.*](#) Montreal, Quebec: QA International. ISBN: 978-2-7644-0889-6.

Note: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase hard copies at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.

WGU Library Articles

This course utilizes resources via the WGU Library, with articles available for you to open and download. For instructions on how to access WGU Library articles, see the "[Accessing WGU Library Articles](#)" page.

Course Community

The geography Course Community keeps you updated with course announcements and tips, cohort schedules, a peer-to-peer chatter feed, and a searchable knowledge base of key course resources.

Pacing Guide

The pacing guide suggests a weekly structure to pace your completion of learning activities. It is provided as a suggestion and does not represent a mandatory schedule. Follow the pacing guide carefully to complete the course in the suggested timeframe.

Week 1

First Steps

- Review the Course Introduction and Welcome Video



- Download the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Geographic Perspective

- Read the [Introduction](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (25 min)
- Read the [book preface \(p. xii\)](#) of Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment to understand how the book is arranged (10 min)
- Read [chapter 1](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (95 min)
- Read "[Five Themes of Geography](#)" (5 min)
- Watch "[Geospatial Revolution](#)" (This video is the trailer. You are encouraged to view the entire video series) (10 min)
- Read "[What is Geographic Education?](#)" (10 min)
- Read "[Geography for Life: National Geography Standards 2e](#)" (10 min)
- Read "[National Geography Standards Index](#)" (30 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Week 2

Physical Geographic Systems

- Read [chapter 2](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (115 min)
- Read [chapter 4](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (65 min)
- Read [chapter 3](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (70 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Human-Environment Interaction

- Read [chapter 5](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (85 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Human Geographic Systems

- Read [chapter 1](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (120 min)
- Read [chapter 6](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (100 min)
- Read [chapter 10](#) in Introduction to Geography: People, Places, & Environment (80 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Week 3

North America

- Read [chapter 2](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (150 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Latin America and the Caribbean



- Read [chapter 3](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (120 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Week 4

Europe

- Read [chapter 4](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (120 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Northern Eurasia

- Read [chapter 5](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (90 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Central Asia and Afghanistan

- Read [chapter 6](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (60 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Week 5

The Middle East and North Africa

- Read [chapter 7](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (150 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Africa South of the Sahara

- Read [chapter 8](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (150 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Week 6

South Asia

- Read [chapter 9](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (90 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

East Asia

- Read [chapter 10](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (120 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Southeast Asia



- Read [chapter 11](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (90 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands

- Read [chapter 12](#) in World Regional Geography: A Development Approach (90 min)
- Assess your knowledge by completing related questions in the [Topical Study Guide](#)

Assessment

- Review [Topical Study Guide](#) in preparation for the Objective Assessment (time commitment is student specific depending on level of understanding)
- Complete Pre-Assessment (120 min)
- Review Coaching Report and review any items that you missed on the Pre-Assessment (time commitment is student specific depending on level of understanding)
- Complete Objective Assessment (120 min)

Note: This pacing guide does not replace the course. Please continue to refer to the course for a comprehensive list of the resources and activities.

The Preassessment

How will you know that you are ready to take the objective assessment exam to complete the course? You may take up to 3 preassessment exams in the course. It's more helpful to look at each of the sub-scores on the Coaching Report for the preassessment, rather than the total score. You want to be scoring **at least 71 on each sub-section**, and **at least 76 overall** on the preassessment before taking the objective assessment. Contact your Course Instructor to help guide your studies and determine your readiness for assessment.

Coaching Report Guide

The [Coaching Report Guide](#) is an **essential** resource that provides you with key course content areas that correspond to the five competencies and related sub-topics shown on all Coaching Reports. Use the guide to help you know what to study based on assessment results given in your coaching report.

Geographic Concepts

In this section, you'll read and study the five themes of Geography, and the newer National Geographic Standards which will help to guide the rest of your work in this assessment. Understanding these themes will help to ensure that you understand the most complex concepts that you will encounter throughout the assessment.

Additionally, to successfully complete this assessment, you'll need to be able to locate a variety of places and landforms on various maps. In this section, you'll study both the various types of maps and practice using them.

Geographic Perspective

This topic will explore the major constructs and perspectives of geography.



This topic addresses the following competency:

- **111.4.01: Concepts of Geography**

The graduate will describe and discuss the basic concepts of geography.

Read and Review

- Read Johnson, [introduction](#).
- Review Dahlman, [book preface \(p. xii\)](#) to understand how the book is arranged.
- Read Dahlman, [chapter 1 \("Introduction to Geography"\)](#).

National Geographic Standards and the Five Themes of Geography

- Read "[Five Themes of Geography](#)".
- Watch PennState Public Broadcasting. 2010. "[Geospatial Revolution](#)" (This video is the trailer. You are encouraged to view the entire video series)
- Read the National Council on Geographic Education, "[What is Geographic Education?](#)"
- Read The National Council on Geographic Education, "[Geography for Life: National Geography Standards 2e.](#)"
- Read National Geographic Education, "[National Geography Standards Index](#)".
- Assess your knowledge by completing the corresponding section in the Introduction to Geography [Topical Study Guide](#)

Defining Regions

- Read *National Geographic Education*, "[National Geographic Standard 5](#)" (use Show All).
- Assess your knowledge by completing the corresponding section in the Introduction to Geography [Topical Study Guide](#).

Reading and Understanding Maps

- Review [Dahlman, pp. 22-25, "Latitude and Longitude"](#) to understand how latitude and longitude works to locate and identify points on the surface of the earth.
- Download and Install [Google Earth](#) for use (you do not need to use the Pro version).
 - [Google Earth tutorials](#)
 - Practice using Google Earth finding various locations
 - Whitehouse
 - Yosemite National Park
 - Your state capital
 - You residence
 - Royal Naval Observatory in Greenwich, England
- Review "[Reference Atlas](#)".
 - How to use this book
 - Locate the seven continents using the atlas

Physical Geographic Systems, Human-Environment Interaction, and Human Geographic Systems

In this section you will be introduced to the basic concepts of the two broad fields of Geography,



Physical Geography and Human Geography.

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

Physical Geographic Systems

Read Dahlman

- [chapter 2 \(“Weather, Climate, and Climate Change”\)](#).
- [chapter 4 \(“Biosphere”\)](#).
- [chapter 3 \(“Landforms”\)](#).

Human-Environment Interaction

Read Dahlman (*Introduction to Geography*)

- [chapter 5 \(“Earth’s Resources and Environmental Protection”\)](#).

Human Geographic Systems

Read Johnson

- [chapter 1 \(“Geography and Development in an Era of Globalization”\)](#).

Read Dahlman

- [chapter 6 \(“Population and Migration”\)](#).
- [chapter 10 \(“Cities and Urbanization”\)](#).

Places and Regions of the World

In this section, you will be introduced to several places and regions on Earth. You will study North and South America, Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands.

North and South America

In this section, you’ll begin your study of the world by focusing on the areas likely to be most familiar to you: North and South America. As you read and study the regions, nations, and physical features of this area, be sure to take careful notes. Take the time to study the maps and other visual aids available in your text and other resources so that you develop a thorough understanding of the places, cultures and features you are reading about.

This topic addresses the following competencies:



- **Competency 111.4.02: Geographic Places and Regions**
The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.
- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

North America

Read Johnson [chapter 2 \(“United States and Canada”\)](#).

Latin America and the Carribean

Read Johnson [chapter 3 \(“Latin America and the Caribbean”\)](#).

Europe and Central Asia

The activities for this section introduce the various populations and places located in Europe and Central Asia. The activities are designed to help you develop and understanding of the people, regions, and other features of this part of the world. As you read and study the nations and physical features of this area, be sure to take careful notes. Take the time to study the maps and other visual aids available in your text and other resources so that you develop a thorough understanding of the places, cultures and features you are reading about.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 111.4.02: Geographic Places and Regions**
The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.
- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

Europe

Read Johnson [chapter 4 \(“Europe”\)](#).

Northern Eurasia

Read Johnson [chapter 5 \(“Northern Eurasia”\)](#).

Central Asia and Afghanistan

Read Johnson [chapter 6 \(“Central Asia and Afghanistan”\)](#).

Middle East and Africa

From news programs to documentary films, this part of the world frequently appears in all forms of media. Understanding the fascinating history, culture, and physical geography of this area is essential to understanding many of the most significant current events that we hear about every



day. As you read and study the regions, nations, and physical features of this area, be sure to take careful notes. Take the time to study the maps and other visual aids available in your text so that you develop a thorough understanding of the places, cultures and features you are reading about.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 111.4.02: Geographic Places and Regions**
The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.
- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

The Middle East and North Africa

Read Johnson [chapter 7 \(“The Middle East and North Africa”\)](#).

Africa South of the Sahara

Read Johnson [chapter 8 \(“Africa South of the Sahara”\)](#).

Asia and the Pacific Islands

Asia is a vast and diverse continent. While the many nations of this part of the world share many similarities, there are also many diverse and interesting cultures and features to study. As you read and study the regions, nations, and physical features of this area, be sure to take careful notes. Take the time to study the maps and other visual aids available in your text so that you develop a thorough understanding of the places, cultures, and features you are reading about.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 111.4.02: Geographic Places and Regions**
The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.
- **Competency 111.4.03: Physical Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss physical systems.
- **Competency 111.4.04: Human Geographic Systems**
The graduate will describe and discuss human systems.
- **Competency 111.4.05: Human-Environment Interaction**
The graduate will describe and discuss the environment.

South Asia

Read Johnson [chapter 9 \(“South Asia”\)](#).

East Asia

Read Johnson [chapter 10 \(“East Asia”\)](#).

Southeast Asia



Read Johnson [chapter 11 \(“Southeast Asia”\).](#)
Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands

Read Johnson [chapter 12 \(“Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands”\).](#)

Assessment Prep

Review the information below before taking your assessment.

Objective Assessment

The Preassessment

How will you know that you are ready to take the objective assessment exam to complete the course? You may take up to 3 Pre-Assessment exams in the course. Your Pre-Assessment should earn both an 81% composite score and at least an 80% on each sub-section prior to taking the Objective Assessment. You are encouraged to remember that the Pre-Assessment is only a sample of the course themes and material you may encounter on the Objective Assessment. Contact your Course Instructor to help guide your studies more completely and to determine your readiness for assessment.

Coaching Report Guide

The [Coaching Report Guide](#) is an **essential** resource that provides you with key course content areas that correspond to the five competencies and related sub-topics shown on all Coaching Reports. Use the guide to help you know what to study based on assessment results given in your coaching report.

Final Steps

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessments associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessments, schedule and complete your assessments now.