WORLD CULTURAL REGIONS

Dr. Tisha Bender

Tillett Hall 246

Tues/Thurs 5.00 - 6.20 pm

Contact Information:
E-Mail: tibender@english.rutgers.edu
Office hours and location: Before class

Course Description:
This is an interdisciplinary course designed to broaden and strengthen knowledge and understanding of our
world by considering the cultural forces that shape it. We will focus on the major world regions, both in terms
of their uniqueness and their similarities, as well as how they interact with each other. By gaining this global
literacy, students should be better equipped to appreciate cultural differences around the world and
empathize with others from regions different from their own.

Course Goals:
This course satisfies both a Social (SCL) and Historical (HST) Analysis requirement in the
SAS Core Curriculum. Upon completion, students will understand the bases and
development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.

Students will also be able to explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture
over time, including the history of ideas or history of science, and understand different
theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and
other forms of social organization.

Reading:
These are as marked throughout the syllabus

Requirements and Evaluation:
• You are required to attend every class. After 6 absences a student cannot pass the course. You are
also encouraged to participate in class discussions.
• Participation in Discussion = 10%
• Group Project = 45%
• Optional presentation for extra credit of up to 5% on international event outside of class
• Final Paper = 45%

Information about the Group Project:
You and your group members will select a cultural region of the world and will apply it to the global theme
assigned. You should give information on how this region has changed and what it is like now in
contemporary times, in terms of your assigned theme. You will then present this information to the class at
the scheduled time.

All group members are required to equally pull their weight. Each group member must share in the research
and preparation of the group presentation, and must also contribute to the presentation given to the class. In
your presentation, you are encouraged to use photos, film clips, PowerPoint, or any other multimedia
resource that assists you in clearly presenting your findings to your classmates. Each group member must
use at least three credible sources to gather accurate and timely information about your region. You must
cite your sources at the end of the presentation, and then post your presentation to our class Sakai site.
Presentations should last 10-15 minutes, with extra time at the end for questions and answers.

Even though this is a group project, each student will receive an individual grade.

Here are some sources that might assist you in your research:

World Press Review: www.worldpress.org/wprw.htm
Information about the Extra Credit Optional Presentation:
If you attend any international events outside of class, such as viewing an international film; attending a public lecture; being part of a community, religious or ethnic festival; or seeing an international art exhibit, then you can give a short presentation to the class describing this event, and demonstrating its relevance to our course.

Schedule: *(There may be some flexibility in this schedule)*

**September 4th:** Introduction to the course and each other

**September 6th:** What is meant by the term Region? What is meant by Culture? What are Cultural Regions?

**September 11th:** Introduction to the idea of World Cultural Regions
Watch TED discussions of Hans and Ola Rosling: “How not to be ignorant about the world” at https://www.ted.com/talks/hans_and_ola_rosling_how_not_to_be_ignorant_about_the_world

**September 13th:** Globalization:
Watch discussions of Thomas Friedman at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kTXwwO8hY

**September 18th:** No Class because eve of Yom Kippur

**September 20th:** Globalization (continued):
Watch TED talk of Pakaj Ghemawat at https://www.ted.com/talks/pankaj_ghemawat_actually_the_world_isn_t_flat on whether the “World is Flat.”
Hold debate as to which side we agree with

**September 25th and 27th:** Unit 1: Food
Watch and discuss TED talk: Pamela Ronald, “The Case for Engineering our own Food” at https://www.ted.com/talks/pamela_ronald_the_case_for_engineering_our_food

**October 2nd and 4th:** Food (continued):
Watch and discuss excerpts from the film, *Fed Up*
Student Presentations on International Food Issues in Different Cultural Regions

**October 9th and 11th:** Unit 2: Education:
Watch and discuss TED talk: Schleicher, “Use Data to Build Better Schools” at https://www.ted.com/talks/andreas_schleicher_use_data_to_build_better_schools

**October 16th and 18th:** Education (continued):
Watch and discuss TED talk: Ken Robinson, “Do Schools Kill Creativity?” at https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity
Student Presentations on International Education in Different Cultural Regions
October 23rd and 25th: Education (continued):
Watch excerpts from the film, “Most Likely to Succeed”
Student Presentations on International Education in Different Cultural Regions

October 30th and November 2nd: Unit 3: Naming Conventions:
Read “Mispronouncing Students’ Names: A Slight that can Cut Deep” at https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/05/11/mispronouncing-students-names-a-slight-that-can.html?cmp=soc-twitter-shr
Student Presentations on Naming Conventions in Different Cultural Regions

November 6th and 8th: Naming Conventions (continued):
Naming traditions in Ghana
George Costanza (Seinfeld) naming a child Seven
Watch excerpt from film, The Namesake (based on the novel by Jhumpa Lahiri)
Student Presentations on Naming Conventions in Different Cultural Regions

November 13th and 15th: Unit 4: Architecture:
Lecture on Architecture in New York City
Student Presentations on Architectural Norms in Different Cultural Regions

November 15th and 20th: Architecture:
Watch and discuss TED talk, Daniel Libeskind’s “17 Words of Architectural Inspiration” at https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_libeskind_s_17_words_of_architectural_inspiration
Student Presentations on Architectural Norms in Different Cultural Regions

November 22nd: Thanksgiving Break

November 27th and 29th: Unit 5: Language:
Watch and discuss TED talk, Mark Pagel, “How Language Transformed Humanity” at http://www.ted.com/talks/mark_pagel_how_language_transformed_humanity#t-1122179
Student Presentations on Language in Different Cultural Regions

December 4th and 6th: Language (continued):
Student Presentations on Language in Different Cultural Regions

December 11th: Wrap Up: What do we now Understand about World Cultural Regions?
Final Paper Due

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App
http://codu.co/cee05e
Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ rhscaps.rutgers.edu/
CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug
assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / vpva.rutgers.edu/
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / https://ods.rutgers.edu/
The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

Scarlet Listeners
(732) 247-5555 / http://www.scarletlisteners.com/
Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.