Welcome to AP Human Geography

You are about to take a course that will drastically broaden the way that you see and understand the world around you. You will begin to see geographic causes to the major events that take place in our society. You will begin to see geographic connections between what takes place in your life and what takes place thousands of miles away. You will also begin to better understand the geographic context in which your actions take place, and in doing so, have a better understanding of the world as a whole. First, however, you must understand what human geography means.

This course is not about memorizing terms, though that will be part of it. It is not about identifying places on a map, though that will also be part of it. Rather, it is about making logical connections and critically thinking about how issues related to geography influence human behavior - what we eat, where we live, why we fight, and how we can improve society. You will cover issues ranging from agriculture, urban design, population movements, international relations, business and economics, the spread of cultural trends, and more. It will make you, therefore, a more informed and thoughtful citizen.

Here are the units for the year – hopefully they give a better idea of what will be coming your way. Each explains how geography influences some fundamental ideas:

Unit 1: Basic Geographic Concepts – Ideas necessary to understand the course
Unit 2: Agriculture and Industry – What we eat and what we make
Unit 3: Demographics and Development – Who we are and why are we different
Unit 4: Cities, Settlements, and Services – Where we live and why
Unit 5: Migration and Language – What we speak and where we move
Unit 6: Religion and Culture – What we believe and what we do
Unit 7: Political Geography – How we organize ourselves and why we don’t always get along

In order to prepare you for the ideas the course will present, you will be required to complete a summer assignment. The summer assignment falls in three parts, two mandatory and one for extra credit.

**Mandatory Assignment 1: AP Human Summer Selfies**

You must create a collage of selfies in an attempt to better grasp some basic geographic concepts and terms. Your selfies should demonstrate a visible understanding of the geographic concepts you chose. Get out into your environment and start thinking geographically!

You will turn in a typed 1 page paper that clarifies the connection you are making in your selfies to the geographic concepts you chose. All 6 selfies should be explained in your one page paper. Include your picture collage on a second page. These will be submitted to Turnitin.com. You also must print out a copy of your favorite selfie to put on the classroom wall.
An Example Description of a selfie: “The corn chips in this selfie are non-GMO and vegan. GMO crops have become popular and necessary in recent years due to increased use of science to improve food production. Currently, our understanding of altered crops has become a public concern and has led to an increased demand in non-GMO and vegan products. This selfie shows a growing trend among the health conscious consumers. Additionally, this selfie shows popular American culture of overreliance of corn-based products.”

Choose one term from each category (these are the units we will face) throughout the year. You will have to do some basic research online about the terms on this list. I recommend looking at the terms at the beginning of the summer so you can keep your eye out for things you see over the break.

Demographics and Development: Overpopulation, MDC or LDC, Population Composition

Political Geography: Electoral Geography, NGO’s, Supranational Organizations

Agriculture and Industry: Commercial Farming, GMO’s, Infrastructure, Consumer Services

Urbanization: Suburbanization, Urban Sprawl, Gentrification

Migration and Language: Ethnic Neighborhoods, Immigration Policies, Lingua Franca

Culture and Religion: Popular Culture, Sacred Site, Taboo

Mandatory Assignment 2: Country Challenge Presentation

For the second mandatory assignment, you must choose a country that is currently facing some sort of significant challenge. This challenge could be social, demographic, economic, environmental, or political. For your country, you must create a 5 minute digital presentation (Prezi, Google Slides, Powerpoint, etc.) that is intended to persuade donors to provide funding for a solution to that problem, or an organization that is working to address that problem. In your presentation, you must:

a. Identify and explain the nature of the challenge your country is facing.

b. Find one current event article released over the summer about the challenge. You must summarize the main message of the article.

c. Identify a current solution that is being proposed or suggested in response to this challenge.

d. Persuade listeners that your challenge is significant enough and your solution/organization worthy enough to receive funding.

e. Use effective visual elements (such as pictures, charts, very short video clips (under 30 seconds, etc.) that accentuate your argument.
This must be ready when we return to school. You will be participating in a mock conference to generate funding for your solution/organization one day the first week back to school. To ensure that we have little overlap, you must choose a country that begins with the first letter of your last name!

Optional Assignment for Extra Credit: Geographic Film/Show Review

For extra credit to start the year, you must find and watch one of the following films or three episodes from Parts Unknown.

1. **Food Inc.** – “An unflattering look inside America's corporate controlled food industry.”
2. **He Named Me Malala** – “A look at the events leading up to the Taliban's attack on Pakistani schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai, for speaking out on girls' education followed by the aftermath, including her speech to the United Nations.”
3. **Hotel Rwanda** – “Paul Rusesabagina was a hotel manager who housed over a thousand Tutsi refugees during their struggle against the Hutu militia in Rwanda.”
4. **Virunga** – “a gripping exposé of the realities of life in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the incredible true story of a group of brave people risking their lives to build a better future in a part of Africa the world has forgotten.”
5. **Human Flow** – A “breathtaking film journey” covering the “global refugee crisis”
6. **Parts Unknown** (Netflix or CNN) – The Adventures of Travel Writer Anthony Bourdain

For the film or show, write a 400-500 word response that answers the following:

a. What is the main message of the films creators (or Bourdain in the episodes you watched)?
b. What is the challenge or problem explored in the film?
c. What are two specific examples that helped to illustrate the points that the filmmakers wanted to communicate?

This will be submitted to Turnitin.com during the first week of class – it will provide you ten extra credit points (essentially a letter grade on your first exam).