Current Events Project

One quarter of your grade will be based on a semester-long project that relates concepts covered in class to a topic of your choosing.

Topics

Topics must center on an issue that involves at least two different world regions. Choose your topic by finding a recent newspaper or magazine article dealing with an issue that interests you and takes place in at least one of the world regions defined in the textbook. If only one region is mentioned in the article, you must be able to relate the issue to another world region. You must also be able to relate the issue to one or more geography topics that are/will be covered in class and/or in your textbook.

Relevant concepts include (but aren't limited to): population patterns, migration, refugee issues, cultural differences, environmental impacts of cultural attitudes/differences, influences of territorial boundaries on identity, interaction, and exchange, consequences of colonialism, consequences of political/economic integration/supranationalism or fragmentation, agricultural systems, land use, environmental impacts of agriculture, processes and consequences of industrialization, globalization, economic development, gender roles, industrial location, environmental impacts of industrialization, urbanization, trade patterns, resource use, resource distribution, effects of natural hazards, settlement patterns, effects of human-induced changes to the environment.

Examples:

- "The Asian century will remap the world" Philadelphia Inquirer, 1/23/05, D3 - discusses the increasing influences of Asian nations on globalization and implications for the United States.
- "Tsunami area wants tourists to come back" Philadelphia Inquirer, 1/23/05, N1, N7 - effects of largest natural disaster in history on tourism industry.
- "U.S. base in Cuba gets wind power" Philadelphia Inquirer, 1/23/05, A15 - implications of converting to a renewable energy source.
- "A hajj ritual goes on after steps for safety" Philadelphia Inquirer, 1/21/05, A12 - how religious traditions are celebrated in different regions.
- "Technology Research Lab in Europe Prepares to Close" New York Times, 1/18/05, C2 - collapse of a joint venture between Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Irish government.
- "Tsunami seawater fatal to crops" Philadelphia Inquirer, 1/24/05, A3 - impact of natural disaster on ecosystem and agriculture.
- "Listening for Atom Blasts, But Hearing Earthquakes" New York Times, 1/18/05, F1, F4 - global monitoring network for seismic activity has applications related to both natural hazards and nuclear testing.
Sources

Sources used in gathering information must include a minimum of:

- 1 newspaper article
- 2 magazine articles
- 1 general interest or print source (e.g., encyclopedia, news outlet, etc.)
- 2 specialized internet or print sources (e.g., CIA World Factbook, Population Reference Bureau data, statistical abstracts, UN documents/data, etc.)
- any other sources as appropriate for the topic (optional)

Deliverables

Projects will have an oral and a written component.

The oral component will comprise a 5-minute overview of your topic accompanied a one-page summary handout for the class.

The written component will comprise a 5-10 page paper plus complete bibliography and graphics. You will also be required to turn in a 1-page topic description with copy of source article in February, as well as a 1-2 page outline and 1-page bibliography in early April.

Alternative projects that involve more creative components (e.g., art, drama, video, computer visualization etc.) are possible with my approval.

Due Dates:

- Feb. 1  Project topics due in class
- April 12 outline/bibliography due in class
- April 26 oral overviews in class
- April 28 final project due in class

What to Turn In on February 1:

- No more than 1 typed page with the following information:
  - Your name
  - Title - a phrase describing the topic (e.g., Impacts of California Mudslide on Pacific Trade)
  - Topic Description - A paragraph that identifies the issue you're researching, the world regions to which it relates, relevant geographic concept(s), and why you've chosen this topic

- a copy of the newspaper or magazine article that forms the basis of your topic

Guidelines for constructing the outline, paper, bibliography, oral presentation, and summary will be addressed in a future handout.