

Syllabus

GEOG 121: Geographies of Global Change

Syllabus

Meeting Time: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 10:05-11:20am

Callcott 201

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(*she/her/hers*)

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UofSC Bulletin Description

Introduction to processes of political, economic, social, and environmental change around the world; topics include geopolitical transitions, nationalism, trade, uneven development, conflict, environmental geopolitics, and demographic change, with an emphasis on non-U.S. contexts.

Course Overview

This course analyzes diversity, inequality, and interconnectedness in the contemporary world. In terms of **diversity**, the course highlights how historical and contemporary changes in social, economic, political, and environmental systems — including trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism, conflict, geopolitical transitions, nationalism, and climate change — divergently affect people around the world. In terms of **interconnectedness**, the course addresses how changing circumstances in a variety of local contexts reflect broader global transitions (e.g., demographic shifts). In terms of **inequality**, the course pays special attention to how local, regional, and global processes (e.g., trade, conflict) intersect to produce and reinforce social and geographical disparities and differences.

1. 1. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to speak in an informed manner on key issues and problems relating to historical and contemporary processes of global change. More specifically, you should be able to:

- Identify and evaluate patterns and relationships of change across divergent global contexts using key geographic concepts, including space, place, scale, globalization, trade, development, geopolitics, sustainability, and nationalism;
- Analyze the intersections between global and local processes and how these generate diverse patterns of inequality, resource use, and socio-political conflict;
- Use academic articles, databases, journalistic accounts, films, and online resources to analyze contemporary local-regional-global dynamics;
- Explain how global changes affect particular people and places through geographically-informed communication techniques, including maps

1. 2. Approach: Challenging “Single Stories” About the World

This course aims to debunk the popular perception that geography is dry, static, and primarily entails memorizing maps. Beyond merely knowing *where* things and people are, this course will provide you with the analytical tools and knowledge necessary to understand the historical, economic, political, environmental, and social reasons why *who* and *what* are *where*. Through a series of guides, exams, interactive activities, and mapping exercises, you will also have meaningful opportunities to improve your communication and analytical skills, including your ability to critically engage with information from a variety of sources.

To accomplish these goals, we will take a thematic approach to the geography of our changing world. Rather than learning about parts of the world sequentially (e.g., first Europe, then Africa, etc.), **we will use a topic** (e.g., nationalism) **+ case study** (e.g., Saudi Arabia) **approach** to analyze how diverse people and places are connected through geographic processes occurring across a variety of scales. **You will adopt a similar theory + case study approach in your Google Earth Tour Project** (see evaluation section).

More specifically, each week we will investigate a different **“single story”** (a “common sense” narrative about the world rooted in misguided or incomplete assumptions). These “single stories,” such as “the world economy is flat,” are not necessarily entirely untrue, but they often fail to acknowledge the complexity of our world and, by extension, its inhabitants.

We could cover a multitude of topics this semester. To ensure that we complement the breadth of global affairs with some depth, we will focus on three inter-connected themes:

- 1) Unit 1: Inequality (e.g., maps, development, trade, scale)
- 2) Unit 2: Diversity (e.g., identity, demography, nationalism, place)
- 3) Unit 3: Interconnection (e.g., poverty, resources and climate change, conflict, space)

Through readings, discussions, and films, we will investigate these themes in 12+ countries selected to encompass a variety of global contexts, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan/Armenia), Namibia, Papua New Guinea, and Saudi Arabia. As a result, you can expect to leave this course with both general knowledge about the world and specific knowledge about how global processes play out in particular places.

1. 3. Required Materials

There is no textbook or software to purchase for this course. Instead, we will complete selections from an [open educational resource](#) (OER) textbook (below), news articles, and videos. All materials will be made freely available via Blackboard in accordance with copyright law.

David Dorrell, Joseph Henderson, Todd Lindley, and Georgeta Connor. 2019. *Introduction to Human Geography*. <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=geo-textbooks>

1. 4. Typical Weekly Schedule

Excluding weeks with holidays, most weeks will follow the schedule below:

- **Before Class on Tuesday**
 - Complete required readings and/or films. Answer the questions in the weekly guide as you go.
 - **Tuesday: Attend lecture**
 - **Thursday: Participate in an interactive activity or discussion**
 - Submit your completed weekly guide by **Thurs., 11:59pm**

The course calendar includes a numbered list of tasks for each week of the course. **For best results, complete the tasks in the listed order!**

1. 5. Expectations and Ground Rules

Some clichés are cliché for a reason: you will indeed likely get out of this course what you put into it. I expect you to be up for a challenge and willing to struggle a bit in the name of improvement. I also expect you to be willing to “roll with” the uncertainties and surprises of coursework during this moment in global history. You can expect the same of me.

Namely, **I expect that you** will join our class sessions:

- 1) Prepared to discuss that day’s material, having carefully completed your preparations (e.g., done the reading, started the guide) and monitored course communication (email, Blackboard);
- 2) With a respectful attitude toward all class members;

3) Willing to put away non-course distractions (phones, etc.) for 75 minutes so that you can learn the most from our time together; and

4) With an open mind, ready to reconsider opinions and assumptions that you held when class began.

In turn, **you can expect me** to be enthusiastic about the course material, your ideas, and your role in the course; responsive to your questions and feedback; and respectful of you as learning partners in the classroom *and* as humans with lives that can be rather complicated at times.

1. 6. Evaluation

Your performance will be evaluated in the following areas:

- Small Assignments (5%)
 1. Day One Dispatch (2.5%)
 2. World Knowledge Survey (2.5%)
- Weekly Guides (25%) 5% each x 5 — only highest 5 scores out of 9 opportunities count
- Google Earth Project (35%)
 1. Proposal (5%)
 2. Draft Tour (5%)
 3. Peer Reviews of Draft Tours (5%)
 4. Final Tour (15%)
 5. Peer Feedback on Final Tours (5%)
- Exams (35%) 17.5% each x 2 — only highest 2 scores out of 3 opportunities count

Details

Small Assignments (5%): There will be two small assignments:

- **Day One Dispatch (2.5%):** You will complete a survey about your background/ interests and answer questions about [Chimamanda Adichie's "The Danger of a Single Story,"](#) a video that will be our foundation this semester. Your answers will help me understand your goals so that I can tailor the course to your interests as a class.
- **World Knowledge Survey (2.5%):** This timed survey will assess your knowledge of development indicators and global diversity. It will be graded for completion only. I will use your answers to tailor the content in unit 3 of the course.

Guides (5% x 5 = 25%): I have prepared a "guide" for each week of course content. These guides are designed to help you stay engaged, **learn how to take thoughtful notes on lectures and course materials**, and build connections across themes and topics. Each guide includes questions about the week's readings, lecture, and videos, as well as links to additional resources that might be of interest.

- There are nine guides, of which only your five highest scores count toward your grade. You are welcome to submit more than five guides, particularly if doing so provides you with an accountability mechanism, but only five are required. **Because you have the built-in option to drop nearly 45% of the guides, late or make-up guide submissions will not be accepted.**
- **Pro Tip:** Complete the five required guides as early as possible. This will provide you with flexibility if unforeseen challenges arise. It will also save you time toward the semester's end, when you may have many exams and projects due.

Google Earth Tour Project (35%): You will use the Google Earth platform to design an interactive tour that critically investigates a "single story" of interest to you. We will use [Google Earth's project platform](#) as a digital storytelling tool that foregrounds geography and trans-scalar connections. Preparing your tour will be a multi-step process — from proposal (5%) through draft tour (5%) and peer review (5%) — resulting in a final tour (15%) that you will share with your colleagues (5%) *and* can use to showcase your geographic skills to others (e.g., potential employers). A full project guide will be posted to Blackboard.

Exams (17.5% x 2 = 35%): This class has three units, each with one exam. Each exam will include matching, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. **Only your two highest scores will count toward your final grade (17.5% each).** Because you have a built-in opportunity to drop your lowest score, there will be **no make-up or late exams.** A missed or late exam will simply count as your dropped exam score.

- **Pro Tip:** You may decide whether to take all three exams and drop your lowest score OR take only two exams. I encourage you to take the first two exams and then decide whether to take the third based on your grade. This strategy will ensure that you have an available "freebie" to drop if you experience an emergency or earn a lower-than-expected score.

- Although the second and third exams are not cumulative, each unit builds on earlier content. For example, you will not be tested on details from unit 1 readings on exam 2 or 3, but knowing the unit 1 material well will enhance your exam 2 and 3 performance.

1. 7. **Grading Scale**

Letter grades will be earned based on the scale below.

Note: Grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number (

90-100 D	A	77-79	C+	60-66
87-89 below F	B+	70-76	C	59 and
80-86	B	67-69	D+	

1. 8. **Schedule** (BB=Blackboard)

Deadlines = Red

- Submit all assignments, guides, & exams via BB.

For best results, complete the tasks in the listed order!

Week	"Single Story"	Tasks
Unit 1		Inequality: Maps, Trade, & Development
1	Geography is boring.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read the syllabus. Watch "The Danger of a Single Story" by Chimamanda Adichie (19 min) Complete Day One Dispatch by Thurs., 11:59pm
2	Maps show the world like it is.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read "Introduction to Geography" by Joseph Henderson (13 pages) (Textbook) Read "How to Lie with Maps" by Mark Monmonier (10 pages) Watch "Why All World Maps are Wrong" by Vox (8 min) Submit Guide #1 by Thurs. 11:59pm
3	GDP is the best measure of development.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read "Development and Wealth" by Todd Lindley (23 pages) (Textbook) Watch & Read: "Planet Money Makes a T-Shirt" by NPR (~60 min) Submit Guide #2 by Thurs., 11:59pm
4	The world economy is flat.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Watch <i>Life and Debt</i> by Stephanie Black (85 min) Read "Trade Game Prep" by Prof. DeBoom (4 pages) Play "The Trade Game" in class on Thursday (attendance is particularly important today) Submit Guide #3 by Thurs., 11:59pm
5	Review + Exam 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Join the review session on Tuesday Submit Exam 1 on Thursday
Unit 2		Diversity: Demography, Nationalism, & Place
6	The world is divided into nation-states.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read "Nation-State" by Mary Gilmartin (8 pages) Watch "Places That Don't Exist" by BBC (29 min) Watch "There Once Was an Island (<i>Te Henua e Noho</i>)" by Briar March (81 min) Submit Guide #4 by Thurs., 11:59pm Submit mid-semester course feedback (optional)
7	<i>Google Earth Tour Proposal Week</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read the Google Earth Project Guide (5 pages) Read "Toward a More Sustainable Energy Transition" by Prof. DeBoom (10 pages) (basis for "Sample Tour") Check out the "Sample Tour" by Prof. DeBoom (~20 min) Submit your Google Earth Tour Proposal by Thurs., 11:59pm

8	Nations have always existed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch "Theories of Nationalism and National Identity" (12 min) 2. Read "Nationalism" by Alison Mountz (10 pages) 3. Read "The Changing Face of Saudi Women" by Cynthia Gorney (24 pages) 4. Submit the World Knowledge Quiz by Tues., 11:59pm. 5. Submit Guide #5 by Thurs., 11:59pm
9	There are too many people in the world.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read "Population and Health" by David Dorrell (19 pages) [Textbook] 2. Read "Japan Case Study" pdf (2 articles from Japanese media outlets) (8 pages) 3. Watch "The Great Japanese Retirement" by BBC (52 min) 4. Submit Guide #6 by Thurs., 11:59pm
10	Review + Exam 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join the review session on Tuesday 2. Submit Exam 1 on Thursday
Unit 3	"Single Story"	Interconnection: Poverty, Conflict, & the Environment
11	<i>Google Tour: Draft + Feedback Week</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit your draft tour by Tues., 11:59pm 2. Submit feedback on two of your colleagues' tours (assigned via BB) by Thurs., 11:59pm
12	The world is getting worse.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read "Is Humanity Getting Better?" by Leif Wenar (4 pages) 2. Watch "Don't Panic, End Poverty!" by Hans Rosling (60 min) 3. Revise your tour based on peer feedback 4. Submit Guide #7 by Thurs., 11:59pm
13	Natural resources cause conflict.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read "The Market for Civil War" by Paul Collier (8 pages) 2. Read "The Cobalt Pipeline" by Todd Frankel (15 pages) 3. Watch "Conflicted: The Fight Over Congo's Minerals" by A Jazeera (24 min) 4. Revise your tour based on peer feedback 5. Submit Guide #8 by Thurs., 11:59pm
14	Conflict minerals and drugs should be banned.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch "Afghanistan's Billion Dollar Drug War" by Al Jazeera (27 min) 2. Submit Guide #9 by Thurs., 11:59pm 3. Take the Google tours of at least 2 of your colleagues. 4. Submit feedback on at least 2 of your colleagues' tours by <u>Thurs., 11:59pm</u>
Finals Week	Exam 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit Exam 3

1. 9. Policies and Procedures

Success in this course hinges on four responsibilities: staying engaged in class, keeping up with course materials (readings, videos, activities), doing your best on assignments/guides and exams, and, importantly, seeking help when needed. **Asking for help is a sign of strength.** *I want you to achieve your goals for the course.* If I can be of help, please let me know.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance will be taken in class. I expect students to attend all classes so long as they are healthy and not experiencing extenuating circumstances.
- Excused absences will not be penalized. I define excused absences in accordance with the UofSC [Attendance Policy](#), approved by the Faculty Senate.
- Unexcused absences beyond six classes will negatively affect your participation score. Specifically, each additional unexcused absence will result in a 1% reduction in your course grade. I define unexcused absences in accordance with the UofSC [Attendance Policy](#), approved by the Faculty Senate.

Late Assignments

- Late exams or guides will not be accepted due to the built-in freebie drop system.
- **Late Assignments** (day-one dispatch, world survey, tour, peer feedback) will be penalized **10% per day late** (one day = each 24 hours past a deadline), including weekends and holidays. For example, let's say an assignment is due at 1:00pm on Friday, Sept. 7. You submit it on Saturday, Sept. 8, at 1:01pm. Your grade on that assignment will incur a 20% deduction (two days late). If you would have earned 92% had the assignment been turned in on time, your actual grade will be 72%.

- **The Blackboard clock will be the final authority on timeliness.** If the deadline is 1:00pm, 1:01pm will be counted as late. Blackboard deadlines are based on Eastern time zone.
- **You are accountable for information presented in class.** If you are unable to attend class, be sure to view the slides. If you have questions, ask a colleague or visit office hours.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

- Accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. UofSC provides high-quality services to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities needing accommodations should 1) register with and provide documentation to the [Disability Resource Center](#) (1523 Greene Street, LeConte Room 112A; sadrc@mailbox.sc.edu; 803-777-6142) and 2) notify me about academic or physical accommodation needs as soon as possible. All accommodations must be approved through the Disability Resource Center.

Academic Integrity

- Every student has a role in maintaining the academic reputation of the university. It is imperative that you refrain from engaging in plagiarism, cheating, falsifying your work and/or assisting other students in violating the Honor Code and other UofSC policies. Two important components of the Honor Code include:
- You are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with these standards, including the [Honor Code](#) and [Student Conduct & Academic Integrity](#) policies. You may also wish to consult the following resources:
 - [Carolinian Creed](#)
 - [Academic Responsibility](#)
 - [Network Guidelines for Responsible Computing](#)
 - [University Libraries: Citation Basics](#)
 - Types of Honor Code violations include plagiarism, cheating, falsification, and complicity.
 - Your enrollment in this course signifies your willingness to accept these responsibilities and to uphold the Honor Code. Any deviation from these expectations can result in academic penalties and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.
 - Details on several academic integrity issues are included below, but familiarizing yourself with and following these policies (including those not listed below) remains your responsibility.
 - **Collaboration:** A student's grades are to represent the extent to which an individual student has mastered the course content. You should assume that you are to complete course work individually unless otherwise explicitly indicated by the professor. It is your responsibility to seek clarification if you are unsure about what constitutes proper or improper collaboration.
 - **Intellectual Property:** As a general rule, the course syllabus, lectures, exams, assignments, and presentations are the professor's intellectual property. Distributing, posting or sharing intellectual property without written permission is a violation of the Honor Code Complicity Policy. Do not post course documents to any digital platform (e.g., Course Hero, Note Swap, Chegg, etc.) or share course documents with others without permission.
 - **Plagiarism** refers to the use of work or ideas without proper acknowledgement of source(s). You can learn more about what constitutes plagiarism [at this website](#). Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Partial or incomplete citation of work or ideas
 - Improper paraphrasing by acknowledging the source but failing to present the material in one's own words
 - Paraphrasing without acknowledgment of the source
 - Multiple submissions of substantially the same academic work for academic credit.
 - Copying (partially or entirely) any material without acknowledgement of the source.
 - Faculty members are [required](#) to report potential violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.
 - When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate the Honor Code, it is [the student's responsibility](#) to seek clarification from the professor.

Communication and Email

- It is imperative that you check your email regularly. **Be sure that Blackboard is set to your preferred email address.** [Here is how to change your primary email address.](#)
- You are welcome to email me. Here is how:
 - Please include "GEOG 121" in the subject line.
 - I understand the importance of swift email replies. Barring unforeseen circumstances, I will respond to emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. You should not generally expect to receive replies after 5pm or on weekends.
 - Detailed questions about content (e.g., exam questions) are difficult to answer well via email. Instead, seek clarification during class or office hours so that I can give your question the time it deserves.

Grades

- I aim to make grading as transparent as possible, and I am happy to answer questions about grades. These discussions [must occur by Blackboard Collaborate, phone, or in person](#) (not via email) due to privacy concerns and the potential for miscommunication.
- Grades will be regularly updated on Blackboard to help you monitor your performance.

Technology

- **I encourage you take notes by hand, but the choice is yours.** Research suggests that handwritten notes improve understanding and retention. For more, see this NPR story: ["Attention Students: Put Your Laptops Away."](#) Excerpt: "When people type their notes, they have this tendency to try to take verbatim notes and write down as much of the lecture as they can. The students who were taking longhand notes in our studies were forced to be more selective — because you can't write as fast as you can type. And that extra processing of the material that they were doing benefited them."
- You may not record or distribute any classroom activities (e.g., lectures, discussions, presentations, exams), including to external websites, without my explicit written permission. Violating this policy is a breach of the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Diversity, Respect, and Inclusion

- **Names & Pronouns:** I will gladly address you by the name and pronouns you designate on the Day One Dispatch survey. I am a [Safe Zone Ally](#).
- I expect you to apply the highest academic standards to this course and to treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- We will discuss contentious topics in this course. Courtesy and sensitivity are required with respect to differences of race, culture, religion, socioeconomic status, educational background, politics, family background, sexual orientation, gender, gender presentation, and nationality, among other forms of diversity.
- If you are aware of **triggers** that could disrupt your learning experience, please let me know in your Day One Dispatch so that I can warn you accordingly about course content.
- I am committed to providing a classroom environment that is respectful of both visible and invisible diversity. If I can improve your experience, please let me know.

1. 10. Additional Resources

Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

- Stress, anxiety, depression, substance use, concern for a family/friend, and feelings of hopelessness or alienation, among other challenges, can interfere with learning and interpersonal functioning. Please pay attention to your wellbeing and to the wellbeing of your fellow students. There are numerous campus resources available to students including [University Counseling & Psychiatry Service](#), [University Student Health Services](#), [Gamecock Recovery](#), and the [Office of Multicultural Student Affairs](#).
- If you are struggling and need immediate please call Student Health Services at 803-777-5223 (24/7). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255) also offers 24/7 support.
- Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact the [Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support](#). You can also contact the [Gamecock Pantry](#), which provides food to students in need.
 - The [Victim/Witness Assistance Program](#) assists victims with navigating the criminal justice system, including preparation for court, court transportation and escorts, and law enforcement liaison services. It also assists victims with safety plans, counseling referrals, no contact orders through the Office of Student Conduct, and Orders of Protection or Restraining Orders. They can be reached at 803-777-4215 or victimhelp@sc.edu.
 - The [Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention and Prevention \(SAVIP\)](#) program offers free, accessible, inclusive, and confidential support to survivors of interpersonal violence and educates members of the Carolina community on how to prevent and respond to violence. You can reach SAVIP at 803-777-8248 or by asking the USC Police Dispatch (803-777-4215) for the SAVIP advocate. You do not have to reveal your name to access SAVIP resources.

Technical Assistance, Blackboard, and Software

- You will need to use Microsoft Word to submit the guides in this course. [All UofSC students are entitled to a free subscription to Microsoft 365.](#)
- Thomas Cooper Library has laptops with webcams available if you have computer problems and/or need laptop access. **Some of these laptops are available for semester-long check out.** They also have a **hotspot loan program** for students with inadequate internet access. [Contact the Tech Lounge Help Desk via email, phone, or in person for more details.](#)
- If you have problems with your computer, technology, Blackboard, etc., contact the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) Service Desk at (803) 777-1800, submit an online request through the [Self-Service Portal](#) (<https://scprod.service-now.com/sp/>), or visit the [Carolina Tech Zone](#). The Service Desk is open Monday – Friday from 8AM – 6PM.

Writing

- The **Writing Center** (<http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/write/university-writing-center/>) and **Lab** (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_success_center/tutoring/writing_lab.php) offer writers of all skill levels the opportunity to improve their writing. They can help from brainstorming through revision, and they even offer drop-in hours. **You can find them at Byrnes 703 (Writing Center) or Sims Hall, S109 (Writing Lab).**
 - Reputable online guides for citation styles (three of many) include: **University of South Carolina Library:** <http://guides.library.sc.edu/citation/>; University of Colorado: <http://libguides.colorado.edu/strategies/citations>; Purdue University (my personal favorite): <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

Student Success Center

- The Student Success Center (SSC) offers programs to aid your success in partnership with UofSC faculty. SSC programs are facilitated by professional staff, graduate students, and trained undergraduate peer leaders who have previously excelled in their courses. SSC services are offered to all UofSC undergraduates at no additional cost. You can call the SSC Hotline at (803) 777-1000, visit the [SSC website](#), or stop by the SSC in the Thomas Cooper Library.
- SSC Resources available to you in this course may include:
 - **Peer Tutoring:** Improve your college-level writing skills by bringing writing assignments from any of your classes to a Peer Tutor. Visit the website to make an appointment and to view the schedule of drop-in hours and locations.
 - **Supplemental Instruction (SI):** SI Leaders are assigned to specific sections of courses and hold weekly study sessions. Sessions focus on the most difficult content being covered in class. The SI Session schedule is posted through the SSC website.
 - **Success Consultations:** In Success Consultations, SSC staff assist you in developing study skills, setting goals, and connecting to a variety of campus resources. If I think you could benefit from this service, I may communicate with the SSC via Success Connect, an online referral system, regarding your progress in the course. If contacted by the SSC, please schedule a Success Consultation. Success Connect referrals are not punitive; they are designed to help you achieve your goals. Any information I share with the SSC is confidential and subject to FERPA regulations.