

# Syllabus

Spring 2018



## Cuba: Communication, Geography, and Wellness

**3 Credit Hours in either:  
COMM 495, COMM 595, GEOG 496, GEOG 596**

Spring 2017

Mondays 7:10 pm - 9:50



### Instructor Information

#### Instructors

Dr. Thomas J. Socha,  
Professor of Communication,  
ODU University Professor of  
Distinguished Teaching, and  
Graduate Program Director  
Dept. of Communication & Theatre  
Arts

#### Email and Phone

[tsocha@odu.edu](mailto:tsocha@odu.edu)  
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#### Office Location & Hours

BAL 3054  
ROOM 205 (VBHEC)  
Mondays: 3 - 5 pm VB  
Tuesdays: 12- 5 pm Main  
Wednesdays: 9 - 11:00 VB  
Thursdays: 10- 3 pm Main  
Fridays: By Appointment

Dr. Michael Allen  
Assistant Professor of Geography  
Political Science & Geography  
BAL 7035  
[mallen@odu.edu](mailto:mallen@odu.edu)  
757-683-3845  
Office Hours: TBD

## General Information

### Description

This course examines the intersections of communication, geography, and wellness from lifespan and global perspectives in the context of Cuba. Topics to be covered include the history/evolution of health and wellness in Cuban culture: wellness includes healthcare systems, food/nutrition systems, as well as recreation/sports systems.

## Course Materials

### Readings

Required: Undergraduate and Graduate (ordered at bookstore and links provided)

- Whiteford, L., & Branch, L. G. (2008). Primary health care in Cuba: The other revolution. ISBN-13: 978-0742566354 {A short volume that reviews the Cuban health care revolution including maternal infant care, infectious diseases, public health, and lessons learned from Cuba's system}
- Staten, C. (2003). [\*The History of Cuba\*. New York: St. Martin's Press ISBN: 978-1403962591](#)  
[A short volume of the story of Cuba (pre- and post- Revolution) with special attention to the important role of agriculture]
- McDonald =, M., & Maddicks, R. (2016) [\*Cuba - Culture Smart: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture\*. ISBN: 978-1857338485](#)  
[A basic travel guide that includes communication customs, food customs, and more]

Required: Graduate

- Cooke, J. (2014). [\*The Other Side of Paradise: Life in the New Cuba\*. New York Seal Press. ISBN: 978-1580055314](#)  
[An ethnography of Cubans' everyday life that considers food ways. Should be used as background reading for the course and incorporated into paper project]

## Assignments

Undergraduate (COMM/GEOG 495):

1. Cuban Wellness and Communication Journal/Podcast/Video (35%)  
[A personal account of the Cuban travel experience from the standpoint communication and wellness]
2. Cuban Food/Nutrition Communication Observation paper (25%)  
[Detailed observation and reporting about a food/nutrition experience while in Cuba]
3. Good Course Citizenship (20%)
4. Positive Travel Experience (20%)

Graduate (COMM/GEOG 595):

1. Cuban Food-Communication Observation paper (25%)  
[Detailed observation and reporting about a single meal or food experience while in Cuba]
2. Research paper on a topic related to course topics in the context of Cuba (35%)
3. Lead a discussion that covers that covers at least one chapter in Whiteford & Branch Book and the Staten book (20%)
4. Good Course Citizenship and Positive Travel Experience (20%)



## Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1	Introduction to course  Overview of Health/Wellness Communication (as applied to Cuba)	Whiteford & Branch Ch1	
2	Class will not meet MLK Observance		
3	Overview of Geography Theory (GEOG) of Health/Wellness/Medicine (as applied to Cuba)		
4	History of Cuba	Staten; CH 1-4	
5	History of Cuba	Staten: CH 5-8	
6	Cuban Health Care 1:  Cuban health care system Primary care Maternal-child care Infectious disease	Whiteford & Branch CH 2- 5	
7	Cuban Health Care 2: Chronic Illness	Whiteford & Branch CH 6- 8	

	Public Health Lesson learned		
8	Pre-Trip Meeting with Study Abroad Office Staff		
9	Travel to Havana, Cuba		
10	Post-Trip Meeting		
11	Post trip class 1		495 Assignment 1
12	Post trip class 2		495 Assignment 1
13	Post trip class 3		495 Assignment 2 595 Assignment 1
14	Post trip class 4		495 Assignment 2 595 Assignment 1
15	Post trip class 5		595 Assignment 2
16	Last class		

### Additional Information

Further course information, additional readings, and slides will be delivered via Blackboard.