

Geography 400 – Geography of North America

Department of Geography
The Ohio State University

Winter, 2011

Course Number: 22923

T/R 11:30pm - 1:18pm

Arps Hall, Room 0383

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Course web page: on Carmen (<https://carmen.osu.edu/>)

- Log in with your OSU internet user name and password and click on “GEOG 400”

Course Description: Geography 400 provides an introduction to geographic issues covering North America. This course is concerned with the many ways that culture, politics, economics, and social difference are manifested in and through spatial relations and processes. Our case studies will emphasize that North America is a contested and ever-changing configuration of ideas, institutions, people, and objects. This course aims to develop conceptual tools for critical thinking, rather than an encyclopedic knowledge of North America’s “geographic” features.

GEC Category: Social Diversity in the United States

Goals: Courses in social diversity will foster students’ understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

Students with disabilities:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall) at 614-292-3307, TDD 292-0901 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus with adequate notice to the class.

Course Website: The course syllabus, announcements, readings, lecture outlines, exam study guides and other useful resources will be available at <https://carmen.osu.edu>. In order to access these materials log in to Carmen using your OSU internet user name and password and select GEOG 400 from the list of courses for which you are currently enrolled. You should check Carmen regularly for updates, news, and assignments.

How to Succeed in this Class: You are responsible for the content of readings, lectures, *and* class discussions. Please be aware that the material covered in class will often differ from, and may extend well beyond, the content of the readings. *Every student* can excel in this class by doing the following: 1) keep up with the reading and take notes as you read; 2) attend *every class* and take notes; 3) ask questions when you don't understand something. **If you have a personal problem that is getting in the way of your school work please see the instructor immediately – don't wait until it's too late!**

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76.99
A-	90-92.99	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D+	67-69.99
B	83-86.99	D	60-66.99
B-	80-82.99	E	Below 60%
C+	77-79.99	EN	Too many absences to permit a passing grade

Course Grade and Due Dates:

- Carmen Mini-Exams (weekly, to be completed by Tuesday at 9AM) 30%
The lowest grade for each half of the quarter will be dropped.
- Written Commentaries (weekly, due in class on Thursdays)..... 30%
The lowest grade for each half of the quarter will be dropped.
- In-Class Assignments (as assigned)..... 10%
- Final (Wednesday, March 16th at 11:30AM)..... 30%

Carmen Mini-Exams (Must be completed by Tuesday at 9AM): The instructor will post these mini-exams to Carmen each week by Friday at 5PM and they will be available until Tuesday at 9AM. To access the mini-exam click the “Quiz” button on Carmen. Mini-exams will cover all lectures and readings *through the assigned reading for the following class*. The format of these exams will vary. They may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. *If you have any trouble accessing the mini-exam you should notify the instructor immediately by e-mail (copy yourself on the e-mail for verification purposes)*. In determining your final grade the lowest score from each half of the quarter will be dropped. If you anticipate difficulty in accessing or using a computer to take these exams please contact the instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Commentaries (Weekly, due in class on Thursdays): Thirty percent of your grade will be earned through written commentaries on readings and class discussions. In many cases, you will be asked to comment on the assigned reading for Thursday’s class. In other words – you will have to keep up with the reading! I do not expect brilliant commentaries, just thoughtful responses which indicate that you have given the relevant issues serious consideration.

In-class Assignments: There will be frequent in-class assignments during the course of the quarter. The dates of these assignments will not be announced in advance. The in-class assignments will be worth 10% of your final grade. *Assignments may relate to the reading scheduled for that class or to that day’s lecture*. Alternate assignments will be available for students with legitimate absences, and who notify me of their absence in a timely manner (in most cases, *prior to* the class meeting).

Final Exam: If you miss the final exam and wish to write a make-up you must have an original doctor’s note demonstrating that you sought medical attention for an unavoidable reason. The note must include the doctor’s name and a telephone number where I can contact him/her. If you miss the final exam and do not write a make-up prior to the grades being posted (this may be sooner than one week), you will be awarded an “INC” grade which I will later change based on your final exam grade. An absence related to either the mid-term or the final must be explained to me directly, not communicated via e-mail.

Class Protocols: No laptops, texting, electronics of any kind (sorry!), unless they are being used for an in-class assignment. Please... turn off your cell phone; be on time; be prepared to discuss challenging issues and treat your fellow students with respect.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required. This class will be participatory. You should bring a printed copy of the assigned reading to each class so that you can refer to it in discussions. I *will* call upon you randomly. I will NOT expect brilliant comments. I *will* expect you to stay tuned in and demonstrate that you are thinking about the class material. The mini-exams and the final are designed explicitly for students who attend class regularly. I will post a condensed outline of the class sessions each week. Careful note-taking during lectures and class discussions is vital to your success.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writing, etc. of another. You are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own. You are also committing plagiarism if you use another person's ideas without giving them credit for the ideas with a citation. If you have questions about citations the instructor is happy to talk with you about it. OSU Faculty Rule 3335-5-54 states "Each instructor shall report to the committee on academic misconduct all instances of what he or she believes may be academic misconduct."

Readings: You should expect an average of 50 to 60 pages of reading per week. In general, the longer and more difficult readings will be assigned for Tuesdays in order to give you plenty of time to digest them prior to taking each week's mini-exam on Carmen.

Geography 400 Tentative Schedule

This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

MODULE 1. INTRODUCTION TO THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

Meeting 1: Tuesday, January 4th

Introduction

Meeting 2: Thursday, January 6th

Winning and Losing: Thinking About Geographically Uneven Development through Cleveland

Strong, HM (1925) A city of contacts. *Economic Geography* 1: 198-205

Kotlowitz, A "All Boarded Up" 8 March 2009, *New York Times*

MODULE 2. LOCAL LIVELIHOODS AND CAPITALIST GLOBALIZATION

Meeting 3: Tuesday, January 11th

Nature/Economy: What are Natural Resources? What is Development?

Burns, SS "Mountaintop Removal in Central Appalachia." *Southern Spaces*. 30 September 2009, <http://www.southernspaces.org/2009/mountaintop-removal-central-appalachia>

Ganzel, B (2007) Shrinking Farm Numbers and Harvest Technology. *Wessel's Living History Farm Website*. Lincoln, NE: Ganzel Group, <http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org>

Meeting 4: Thursday, January 13th

Mexico: Land, Labor, and Revolution

La Botz, D (2010) The Mexican Revolution, Part I -1910 -1920 ¡Viva la Revolución! *Against the Current* 25: 25-30

La Botz, D (2010) Viva la Revolución! Part 2 The New Bonapartism, 1910-1940. *Against the Current* 25: 9-14

Meeting 5: Tuesday, January 18th*Midwest Agro-Industrialization: The Rise of Capitalism in the Northern United States*

- Post, C (1997) The "agricultural revolution" in the United States: The development of capitalism and the adoption of the reaper in the antebellum US North. *Science & Society* 61: 216-228 (Excerpts)
- Post, C (2009) Agrarian class structure and economic development in colonial British North America: The place of the American Revolution in the Origins of US capitalism. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9: 453-483 (Excerpts)
- Page, B and Walker, R (1991) From Settlement to Fordism: The Agro-Industrial Revolution in the American Midwest. *Economic Geography* 67: 281-315 (Excerpts)

Meeting 6: Thursday, January 20th*The Cotton South: Distinctive Trajectories, Global Connections, and the Origins of Racism*

- Post, C (2009) Agrarian class structure and economic development in colonial British North America: The place of the American Revolution in the Origins of US capitalism. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9: 453-483 (Excerpts)
- Eltis, D (2000) *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas*. Cambridge, U.K. ; New York :Cambridge University Press (Excerpts)

Meeting 7: Tuesday, January 25th*The Global Reach of Industrial Capital*

- Levinson, M (2006) *The Box: How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*, N.J.: Princeton University Press, pp. 1-7
- Tucker, RP (2007) *Insatiable Appetite: the United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World*. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, pp. 151-170

Meeting 8: Thursday, January 27th*Canada: Nation-building in the Shadow of Uncle Sam*

- Wynn, G (2001) Realizing the Idea of Canada. In McIlwrath, TF and Muller, EK (eds) *North America: The Historical Geography of a Changing Continent*. 2nd ed. (pp 357-378). Lanham; Boulder; New York; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc. (Excerpts)

MODULE 3. NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM IN NORTH AMERICA

Meeting 9: Tuesday, February 1stth*Deep Integration: Debating Continentalism in Canada*

- Gabriel, C and Macdonald, L (2004) Of borders and business: Canadian corporate proposals for North American ""Deep Integration"" *Studies in Political Economy*: 79-100
- Stanford, J "Back to the Hinterland." 17 December 2003,
<http://www.caw.ca/en/4884.htm>

Meeting 10: Thursday, February 3rd

Film: *Maquilapolis*

Munoz, CB (2004) Mobile capital, immobile labor: Inequality and opportunity in the tortilla industry. *Social Justice* 31: 21-39 (Excerpts)

Meeting 11: Tuesday, February 8th

Mexico: From National Development to Neoliberal Globalization

Fernandez-Kelly, P and Massey, DS (2007) Borders for Whom? The Role of NAFTA in Mexico-U.S. Migration. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610: 98-118

MODULE 4. THE UNITED STATES: GLOBAL POWER / LOCAL PROJECTS

Meeting 12: Thursday, February 13th

The United States in the World: Visionary Globalism

Bowman, I (1924) *The New World: Problems in Political Geography*. Yonkers-on-Hudson: World Book Company (Excerpts)

Rosen, SP (2002) The future of war and the American military. *Harvard Magazine*. (pp 29-31).

Sheppard, E, Porter, PW, Faust, DR and Nagar, R (2009) *A world of difference: encountering and contesting development*. New York: Guilford Press, tables and figures on pp. 442-451

Meeting 13: Tuesday, February 15th

The Mexico Indigena Controversy I

Herlihy, PH, Dobson, J, Robledo, MA, Smith, DA, Kelly, JH, Viera, AR and Hilburn, AH (2008) The AGS Bowman Expeditions Prototype: Digital Geography of Indigenous Mexico. Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office; NRCC-Leavenworth

Mychalenko, C and Ryan, R (2009) U.S. military funded mapping project in Oaxaca. *Z Magazine*: 17-22

Wilcox, J (2007) "Precision Engagement - Strategic Context for the Long War". *Precision Strike Winter Roundtable*. United States Department of Defense (Excerpts)

MODULE 5. CLIMATE CHANGE, GEOPOLITICS, AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

Meeting 14: Thursday, February 17th

Climate Change, Resource Peripheries, and Deep Integration

Barlow, M (2010) Escape from Mordor. *New Internationalist*: 11

Conference Board of Canada (2010) Getting the Balance Right: The Oil Sands, Exporting and Sustainability. Ottawa: Conference Board of Canada

Cormier, Z (2010) 'I'll die doing this'. *New Internationalist*: 12-15

Worth, J (2010) Taking on Tarnmageddon. *New Internationalist*: 4-7

Meeting 15: Tuesday, February 22nd

Climate Change, Green Economy, and Rural Livelihoods

Davies, J (2010) "Growing fuel instead of food: Agro-fuels in Chiapas."

<http://upsidedownworld.org/main/mexico-archives-79/2657-growing-fuel-instead-of-food-agro-fuels-in-chiapas> Accessed 19 December 2010

Dowie, M (2009) "Nuclear Caribou."

<http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/4247/> Accessed 22 September 2010

MODULE 6. MAKING SPACE / MAKING RAC(ISM)

Meeting 16: Thursday, February 24th

Racism and Urban Space in the United States

Gotham, KF (2002) Beyond invasion and succession: School segregation, real estate blockbusting, and the political economy of neighborhood racial transition. *City & Community* 1: 83-107

Meeting 17: Tuesday, March 1st

Jurisdictional Fragmentation and Metropolitan Inequality

powell, ja and Graham, KM (2002) Urban Fragmentation as a Barrier to Equal Opportunity. In CCCR (ed) *Rights at Risk: Equality in an Age of Terrorism*. (pp 79-97). Washington, DC: Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights

Meeting 18: Thursday, March 3rd

The Subprime Crisis: Geographies of Financial Crisis

Rogers, C (2008) Subprime Loans, Foreclosure, and the Credit Crisis: What Happened and Why? - A Primer. (16 pp). Columbus, Ohio: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

MODULE 7. NORTH AMERICA: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

Meeting 19: Tuesday, March 8th

The Rise and Fall of Detroit

Sugrue, TJ (1996) *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (Excerpts)

Meeting 20: Thursday, March 10th

Conclusions and Questions