Basic Information:

Class: Geodemographics
Number: GEOG 494M
Place: 416 Brooks
Time: Class—MWF 10:30-11:20
Office hours—TW 1:00-2:00 and by appointment

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At its most basic level, geodemographics is about the application of spatial analysis methods to problems in human geography, essentially using quantitative methods to analyze a place based on the characteristics of the people who live there. It has found a thriving application in the business and marketing community, where it is used to help advertisers decide the best neighborhoods to send fliers and coupons to and to help retailers decide the best places to locate stores. This course will cover the history of geodemographics, applications of geodemographics, and in particular, the methods used in geodemographics, since many of them can be applied outside the narrow confines of business and marketing.

Requirements:

The textbook for this course is *Geodemographics, GIS and Neighbourhood Targeting* by Richard Harris, Peter Sleight and Richard Webber. Most readings will come from this, but I will supplement the book with occasional articles or chapters from other sources. These will most likely come in the analysis methods section of the course (weeks 7-12). The book does not have a dedicated website, but the authors recommend www.geodemographics.info, which provides a set of links to organizations involved in the field of geodemographics.

There will be two exams in this course, both of which will be take home exams. Consistent with WVU guidelines, if you cannot take a regularly scheduled exam because of authorized University activities, you will have the opportunity to take a make-up exam at an alternate time. Make-up exams for absences due to any other reason will be at the discretion of the instructor.

In addition to the exams, there will be a project for you to do. This will involve collecting data, analyzing it using three methods covered in the class, and writing a report. More details are on the last page of this syllabus. Late assignments will be marked down one partial letter grade for every day that they are turned in after the due date. For example, an assignment that would get a B+ but is a day late will only get a B. If it is two days late, it gets a B-. Grading appeals must be submitted to me in writing (e-mail accepted) on the day the assignment or exam is returned.

The contribution of each of these components to the final grade is as follows:

Midterm exam:	25%
Final exam:	25%
Project:	50%

The grading scale will be:

>= 90%	A
80-89.9%	B
70-79.9%	C
60-69.9%	D
< 60%	F

Social Justice: West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class. Please advise me and make appropriate arrangement with Disability Services (293-6700).

Academic Dishonesty. The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at http://www.arc.wvu.edu/rightsa.html. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me *before* the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Contacting me. I strongly encourage you to come to my office hours. As the course instructor, my main goal is to help you learn, so if you have any questions about the material, or the class in general, you are more than welcome to come speak with me during office hours. If you are not available during that time, email me or ask me after class to set up an appointment. In addition, if my office door is open (even just open a few inches), you can stop in without an appointment. I will be checking my email regularly during business hours (M-F 9am-5pm), and will reply as soon as I can. I may check email on evenings and weekends, but not as regularly, and may not have a chance to respond until the next business day.

Schedule:

This schedule is preliminary, and may change depending on the needs of the class, and how fast we go through the material. Since this is a new course, offered for the first time, please be flexible!

Week	Topic	Readings	Important dates	
1	Introduction to geodemographics	ch. 1		
2	History of and predecessors to geodemographics	ch. 2		
3	Uses of geodemographics & overview of methods	ch. 3		
4	Review of GIS	ch. 4		
5	GIS continued	ch. 4		
6	Review of relevant math & statistics	ch. 5	Monday, February 16	project proposal draft due
7	Classification and clustering techniques	ch. 6	Friday, February 27	Midterm exam given out
8	Classification and clustering continued	ch. 6	Monday, March 2	Midterm exam due
9	Classification and clustering continued	ch. 6		
	Spring Break		March 16-20	
10	AAG meeting: probably no class or in-class project work sessions		AAG meeting: March 22-27	
11	Newer analytical approaches	ch. 9.1-9.3		
12	Newer analytical approaches continued	ch. 9.1-9.3		
13	Applications	ch. 7	Monday, April 13	final project proposal due
14	Does it work? & data issues (uncertainty, privacy)	ch. 8, 9.4-9.5		
15	Final push for projects: in class work sessions, and/or overflow of topics leftover from the first 14 weeks.		Friday, May 1	project report due, final exam given out
	Final exam due		Wednesday, May 6	(assumes Spring 09 final exam schedule will follow the Fall 08 exam schedule: exam will be due at the end of the official exam period)

Project:

The project for this course, as stated above, consists of collecting data, using three (or more) methods to analyze that data, and writing a report about what you did.

I recommend that the data be from a human geography context, but this is not an absolute requirement. If you have good data from a physical context, and can apply three methods from the course, please go ahead. It's most important that you pick a topic that interests you.

To help you get started thinking about this, the third week will contain an overview of the methods, but not get into details. Based on this overview, you are to turn in a short (about 1 page) draft proposal on Feb 16th. A final proposal is due April 13th, after we have covered all the analysis methods in class. Don't let this two-month delay slow you down. I suggest you work on applying an analytical method shortly after we cover it in class.

The project report is due on the last day of class, May 1st. The report should (1) describe the data, including the data source and any manipulations or joins you had to do, (2) describe the analytical methods and give details about why you chose those particular methods and how you applied them, including which software package(s) you used, and (3) describe the results of the analysis, giving conclusions about what the methods told you about the data. Be sure to include figures and references. I am anticipating a length of about 8-10 pages, but will accept any length so long as the report fully achieves these three objectives.