

220 - Human Geography

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Perspectives on Human Geography

GEOG 220

M&W 9:05am-9:55am

273 Williard Building

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Office Hours:

“Geography is the multidisciplinary summary of life”

— Ronald Peret

This course is designed to introduce you to the fundamental concepts human geographers use to understand the world. As such it is not about knowing where things are, memorizing the names of mountain ranges, or rivers, or countries, but instead is focused on understanding why the world is the way it is, for whom it works and why we have decided to organize ourselves spatially in the ways that we have. This course will touch on the main tenants of geographical thought and practice in human geography and over the course of the semester you will be exposed to a range of ways of thinking about the world and our place in it. Major themes of this course include cultural, economic and environmental interactions and their relationship to geographic processes. Contemporary subject matter is inherent to discussions of human geography and issues around race, culture, gender, and/or sexual orientation will come up in many of our discussions. Any course dealing with current events presents an opportunity for politically-charged topics to arise spontaneously in class discussions. However, as an educator, it is not my job to tell you what to think, but to get you to think and as a result this course will also touch on sometimes controversial ideas and issues. At the end of the semester, it is my goal that you will:

Course Objectives:

1) Students will learn the foundational concepts and methodologies of human geography.

2) Students will practice applying human geography concepts and methodologies to their studies of social, political, economic, and environmental systems (PLO 2)

Course Learning Outcomes:

1) Identify how concepts and methodologies of human geography apply to contemporary geographic processes across scales.

2) Demonstrate how these concepts and methodologies can be used to analyze social, economic, political, and human-environment interactions across scales.

Because this class also encompasses discussion sections you will be expected to take part in discussions in a thoughtful and engaged manner. The discussion sections are designed to reinforce concepts learned during lectures and the readings, films and other materials related to the discussion sections are fundamental to both the discussion sections themselves, but also to and for the lecture portion of the course. This class meets twice a week for lectures and once a week for discussion sections. It is your responsibility to complete all reading assignments before class as indicated on the class schedule. Further, you will be expected to thoughtfully take part in class discussions and group work. **Given the sensitive nature of the topics we will cover, students should be prepared to be intellectually and emotionally challenged. If at any point you need to take a few minutes to compose yourself during an intense discussion you are encouraged to do so.** Should you miss a lecture for any reason it is your responsibility to get the notes from a classmate. At no time will the instructor's or t.a.'s notes be made available to you.

This syllabus gives information on the course, important dates, the class schedule, and other relevant information. This course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Finally, I expect you to take responsibility for your own learning. Through your continued enrollment in this course, I assume that you accept this syllabus as a contract of responsibilities and expectations.

Statement on Teaching Philosophy and the Rock Ethics Institute

I am a Professor of Geography at Penn State and I hold a joint academic appointment with the Rock Ethics Institute. The mission of the Rock Ethics Institute is to promote ethical literacy and catalyze ethical leadership throughout the Penn State community and to foster interdisciplinary ethics research designed to address significant social issues and pressing world problems. My teaching and research is informed by this commitment *and* as a result my teaching strives to help students think ethically about the world in which they live and your role in the world. Thus, as an educator and a geographer I am committed to teaching you how to think critically about the world in which you live. I strive to show you, my students, the ways Geography and the making of space and place directly connects with your lives. I provide you with a toolbox of skills that allows you to look critically at the world you live in, and I want to lead you to see that the world is complex, composed of deeply entrenched ideas, groups and interests which construct geographic space. In this way, I want to show you the way the organization of space affects and influences your lives and the lives of others, particularly as it relates to questions of social and economic justice. Given the controversial nature of these topics, I work to facilitate a classroom experience that is open, where students feel free to express their opinions and arguments. I strive to construct an intellectually stimulating class where students understand that they are free to challenge each other and me in an atmosphere of intellectual give and take. In this way, I try to shift the focus away from students as receptacles of knowledge to students as participants

your own learning and thus responsible for your own intellectual growth. *If at any point in the semester you find that I am not living up to this standard I encourage you to come speak with me about your concerns.*

Masking: Face masks are required to be worn indoors on campuses in counties identified by the CDC as having high COVID-19 Community Levels and when entering Student Health Services. Please visit the University Status page for a list of locations that require masking indoors. This class will abide by the Penn State policies regarding masks. Students are welcome to wear masks whenever they feel it is necessary. Please visit the Penn State health information page for more information: <https://virusinfo.psu.edu/health-guidelines/> ↗ (<https://virusinfo.psu.edu/health-guidelines/>).

Expectations:

1. You will always do your best.

This course takes effort and attention to detail in order to do well. At a minimum, this means that you will have completed all reading assignments before class. Further, you will attend class regularly and be prepared to take part in class discussions in a thoughtful and engaged manner, and make an honest effort to do well over the course of the semester. As a result this course will require that you pay attention to our discussions, take notes and to use those notes to help you understand the broader human condition.

Over the course of the semester attendance will regularly be taken. Failure to attend class will negatively impact your grade. *If you miss more than five classes over the course of the semester you will receive one full letter grade reduction regardless of your academic performance over the semester.* This is not negotiable.

This course abides by the Penn State Attendance Policy E-11: <http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/E-11-class-attendance-effective-fall-2016.html> ↗ (<http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/E-11-class-attendance-effective-fall-2016.html>), and Conflict Exam Policy 44-35: <http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/44-00-examinations/#44-35>. Please also see Illness Verification Policy: <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/welcome/illnessVerification/> ↗ (<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/welcome/illnessVerification/>), and Religious Observance Policy: <http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/R-4-religious-observances.html> ↗ (<http://undergrad.psu.edu/aappm/R-4-religious-observances.html>). Students who miss class for legitimate reasons will be given a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work, including exams and quizzes. Students are not required to secure the signature of medical personnel in the case of illness or injury and should use their best judgment on whether they are well enough to attend class or not; the University Health Center will not provide medical verification for minor illnesses or injuries. Other legitimate reasons for missing class include religious observance, military service, family emergencies, regularly scheduled university-approved curricular or extracurricular activities, and post-graduate, career-related interviews when there is no opportunity for students to re-schedule these opportunities (such as employment and graduate school final interviews). Students who encounter serious family, health, or personal situations that result in extended absences should contact the Office of Student and Family Services for help: <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/familyservices/> ↗ (<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/familyservices/>). Whenever possible, students participating in University-approved activities should submit to the instructor a Class Absence Form available from the Registrar's Office: http://www.registrar.psu.edu/student_forms/ ↗ (http://www.registrar.psu.edu/student_forms/), at least one week prior to the activity.

2. You will always do what is right.

An essential feature of Pennsylvania State University is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University and by your continued enrollment in this course, you pledge that you will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming your own personal commitment to honor and integrity. Furthermore as defined by the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences:

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity in the College. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the EMS community and compromise the worth of work completed by others. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- 1.) Plagiarizing someone else's work. If you have questions about the proper way to cite sources please see: <http://psu.libguides.com/apaquickguide>
- 2.) Giving inappropriate help on or during an exam.
- 3.) Not citing your sources
- 4.) Posting the instructors notes or PowerPoints, or your notes or the PowerPoints online for others to view or in study guides that you distribute to classmates, friends or organization.
- 5.) This course follows the EMS academic integrity procedures (<https://www.ems.psu.edu/undergraduate/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-undergraduates> ⇨ <https://www.ems.psu.edu/undergraduate/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-undergraduates>). Penn State defines academic integrity as "the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner." Academic integrity includes "a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception." In particular, the University defines plagiarism as "the fabrication of information and citations; submitting other's work from professional journals, books, articles, and papers; submission of other student's papers, lab results or project reports and representing the work as one's own." Penalties for violations of academic integrity may include course failure. To learn more, see Penn State's "[Academic Integrity Training for Students](https://academicintegrity.psu.edu/) ⇨ (<https://academicintegrity.psu.edu/>)."

All course materials students receive or to which students have online access are protected by copyright laws. Students may use course materials and make copies for their own use as needed, but unauthorized distribution and/or uploading of materials without the instructor's express permission is strictly prohibited. University Policy AD 40, the University Policy Recording of Classroom Activities and Note Taking Services addresses this issue. Students who engage in the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials may be held in violation of the University's Code of Conduct, and/or liable under Federal and State laws.

3. You will follow the *golden rule*.

Over the course of the semester we will cover a range of topics that at times will be controversial. Intellectual disagreements are a normal part of the learning process. I encourage you to take part in these discussions, to express your views openly and honestly, and to even disagree with each other and with the instructor or teaching assistant. However, at no time will personal attacks or inappropriate comments directed at other students or the instructors be tolerated.

Late to class:

I frown on people who continually show up late for class. More than twice will be considered a disruption of class and dealt with accordingly.

Cell Phones

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers before entering the classroom. If it is absolutely necessary to have your cell phones on, put them on vibrate and try to be

inconspicuous if you need to check. Failure to do so constitutes class disruption (See student handbook). If you check your cell phones frequently, I will ask you to leave the class.

Laptop computers

If you use a computer you must sit within the first two rows of class.

Sexual Harassment

Read your Student Handbook for regulations. If a situation is brought to my attention, be

advised that I will act immediately on the complaint. Because of my position in the University and because of Title IX regulations should an incident of sexual assault or violence be brought to my attention I am legally obligated to report the incident to PSU. If something happens and if you do not feel comfortable coming to me or my t.a. you can talk to someone confidentially at CAPS: <http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/> or you can call 1 800 560 1637.

****Please note that these expectations apply equally to students, the instructor and the ta. If at any point over the semester you feel that I or my ta is not fulfilling our expectations, please let me know and I am happy to discuss any concerns you may have. ****

Counseling and Psychological Services:

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation. Services include the following:

[Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park \(CAPS\)](http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/) : 814-863-0395

Counseling and Psychological Services at **[Commonwealth Campuses](http://senate.psu.edu/faculty/counseling-services-at-commonwealth-campuses/)**

Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400

Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

Materials:

Readings have been posted to the university canvas website for this course. You will need a notebook and a writing utensil as well.

Student Disability Resources:

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The Office for Disability Services (ODS) website provides contact information for every Penn State campus: (<http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/disability-coordinator> ↗ <http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/disability-coordinator>). For further information, please visit the Office for Disability Services website (<http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources> ↗ <http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources>).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation based on the documentation guidelines (<http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/guidelines> ↗ <http://equity.psu.edu/student-disability-resources/guidelines>). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Weather Delays

Campus emergencies, including weather delays, are announced on [Penn State News](http://news.psu.edu/) ↗ (<http://news.psu.edu/>) and communicated to cell phones, email, the Penn State Facebook page, and Twitter via PSUAlert ([Sign up at: https://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/](https://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/) ↗ <https://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/>).

Penn State E-mail Accounts

All official communications from Penn State are sent to students' Penn State e-mail accounts. Be sure to check your Penn State account regularly, or forward your Penn State e-mail to your preferred e-mail account, so you don't miss any important information.

Netiquette

The term "Netiquette" refers to the etiquette guidelines for electronic communications, such as e-mail and bulletin board postings. Netiquette covers not only rules to maintain civility in discussions, but also special guidelines unique to the electronic nature of forum messages. Please review some [general Netiquette guidelines](http://facdev.education.psu.edu/node/271) ↗ (<http://facdev.education.psu.edu/node/271>) that should be followed when communicating in this course.

Grading Scale:

A: 100-95

A-: 94.9-90

B+: 89.9-86

B: 85.9-83

B-: 82.9-80

C+: 79.9-75

C: 74.9-70

D: 69.9-60

E: 59.9-0

Assignments Breakdown:

3 Exams worth 20% each for a total of 60%

Discussion Section grade worth 35% of final grade

Class participation 5%

Exams:

Exams in this course will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay style questions. The exams are based off of course lecture and in-class discussion as well as the course reading materials as well as supplemental materials distributed to the class. The final exam is cumulative.

Discussion Sections:

The discussion sections are a critical component of this course. They are designed to let you think deeply about things that matter. Over the course of the semester you will be expected to thoughtfully take part in discussion sections and to attend the discussion section regularly. Attendance will be taken every day and if you miss more than 3 discussion sections will result in one full letter grade reduction. Over the course of the discussion you will be expected to have read or watched the material and you will write up a one page reflection of the week's material. These will be graded and returned to you and will constitute 60% of your discussion grade. The remaining 40% will be determined through your thoughtful and respectful participation in the discussion. More information about the discussion sections will be handed out the first day of your discussion. Please note that failure to treat your t.a. with respect and courtesy will negatively impact your grade and you will have to meet with me to discuss the situation.

Class Participation:

Show up, pay attention and participate in the discussion and you will earn the full 5 percent of this portion of your final grade.

Class Schedule:

Please note that the specifics of this Course Syllabus can be changed at any time, and you will be responsible for abiding by any such changes. Changes to the syllabus shall also be given to the student in written (paper or electronic) form.

Topic One: August 22-Sept 2.

Introduction: What is Human Geography and How is it Related to Our Lives

Read:

O'Dwyer, L. Counter-Mapping: Cartography that Lets the Powerless Speak. *The Guardian* 6 March 2018.

Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R., Bartley, R., and Fuller, D. (2002) *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*. London: Continuum Books.

Chapter 1: Introducing Theory. 21 pages.

September 5: No Class Labor Day.

Topic Two: September 7-16 Thinking Materially.

Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R., Bartley, R., and Fuller, D. (2002) *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*. London: Continuum Books.

Chapter 2: A Brief History of Geographic Thought. 35 pages.

Topic Three: September 19-30: How We Make Space and Place

Read:

Pugh, C. 2018. Is Houston Finally Making a Place for Its Public? *Houston Chronicle* July 20.

Reread: Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R., Bartley, R., and Fuller, D. (2002) *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory and Contemporary Human Geography*. London: Continuum Books.

Chapter 1: Introducing Theory pages: 13-18

October 3: First Exam.

Topic Four: October 5-14: Understanding the Cultural Landscape

Read:

Mitchell, D. (2000) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. London: Blackwell. Chapter 5: Metaphors to Live By: Landscapes as Systems of Social Reproduction. 23 pages

Levin, K. (2017) Why I Changed my Mind About Confederate Monuments. Empty Pedestals Can Offer the Same Lessons About Racism and War That the Statues Do. *Atlantic*. August 19.

Topic Five: October 17-24 Indigenous Geographies and Penn State

Read: <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/> ↗ (<https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>)

<https://www.wesa.fm/arts-sports-culture/2018-12-18/who-lived-here-first-a-look-at-pittsburghs-native-american-history> ↗ (<https://www.wesa.fm/arts-sports-culture/2018-12-18/who-lived-here-first-a-look-at-pittsburghs-native-american-history>)

Topic Six: October 26-November 4 How Urban Geographies Shape our Lives

Read:

Liu, S. and Parilla, J. 2018. Are Large Cities Pulling Away from their Surrounding Regions? *Brookings Institute*, 23 July. 7 pages.

Mumford, L. (1937) What is a City? In: LeGates, R., and Stout, F. (eds) *The City Reader*. London: Routledge. 5 pages

Topic Seven: November 7-11: Geographies of War and Peace

Read:

Inwood, J. and Tyner, J. (2011) Geographies Pro-Peace Agenda. *ACME: International Journal for Critical Geographies*. 10 (3) 442-457.

Raunig, C. (2018) When Nuclear Deterrence is Your Job. *The Atlantic* 30 January. 12 pages.

Topic Eight: November 14-18 Economic Geography

Read and Listen to NPR Story: Attention White Collar Workers: The Robots are Coming for your Jobs:

<https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2015/05/18/407648886/attention-white-collar-workers-the-robots-are-coming-for-your-jobs>

November 14: Second Exam.

Topic Nine: November 16-November 30 Thinking Politically

Read:

Ingraham, C. (2015) This is the Best Explanation of Gerrymandering You Will Ever See. *Washingtonpost.com* 1 March.

Graham, D. (2018) Has the Tide Turned Against Partisan Gerrymandering? *The Atlantic* 23 January 2018. 12 pages.

Explore Website: <https://www.fairdistrictspa.com/the-problem/about-gerrymandering> 
(<https://www.fairdistrictspa.com/the-problem/about-gerrymandering>)


November 21-25 Thanksgiving Holiday.

Topic Ten: December 5-8 Geographies of Race and Identity

Read: Mitchell, D. (2000) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. London: Blackwell. Chapter 9: A Place for Everyone: Cultural Geographies of Race. 25 pages

Final Exam: TBA. Cumulative.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Oct 18, 2022	 Exam 1	due by 9am