

Geography 22100: Economic Geography
Spring 2018
Tuesday/Friday 2:10 – 3:25
Hunter North 1022

Instructor: Ekaterina Bezborodko

Office: HN1032

E-mail: eb926@hunter.cuny.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Description: This course introduces economic geography, a way to examine economic processes as they occur at a variety of scales, from global, to national, to household. The unique contribution of economic geography is to consider economic, historical, cultural, and political developments occurring in distinct but connected places as they contribute to the formation of economic systems spanning the globe. The main topic of the course will be the development and current trends in global capitalism, with case studies from around the world.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will:

- have an understanding of the goals, methods, subject, principles and theories of economic geography and be better informed about the spatial characteristics of economic processes;
- have an understanding of the close links between local events and global phenomena;
- have an understanding of contemporary trends in the global economy and their impacts on individual livelihoods in diverse places; and
- be able to apply newly-acquired knowledge to think sensibly and critically about important real-world problems and be able to make better sense of academic, government and journalistic accounts of the global economy.

Learning Outcomes

- describe the main characteristics and geographic patterns of global capitalism
- recognize the role of space and place in the workings of economic systems
- use scalar reasoning to discuss economic activities
- consider the interdependence of political and social power, environment, and history in economic development
- write clearly and succinctly about economic geography concepts, using relevant examples, well-developed arguments, and correct citations

Textbook

Coe, Neil, Philip Kelly, and Henry W. C. Yeung. 2013. *Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction*. Second Edition. Blackwell: Malden, MA. ISBN: 978-0470943380

You can get used paperback copies for \$30 or under with many online vendors.

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard, unless other online access is specified.

Evaluation

- Class Participation: 15%
- Presentations: 10%
- Written Exercises: 20%
- Mid-Term Exam: 25%
- Final Exam: 30%

Class Participation

Everyone will be expected to have read the textbook prior to the first class of the week and the case study readings by the second class. This will allow everyone to contribute to class discussions. Students who are often absent, late, or distracted, or whose comments consistently stray far from the broad topics under discussion, will not receive full credit. On the other hand, everyone can feel free to ask clarifying questions and to bring up related subjects. No one will be penalized for lacking prior knowledge of these topics during discussions, as long as it is clear that students have taken the time to read and think to the best of their ability.

**Please note – being late to class impacts on participation; for every three late arrivals, a point is taken off your final grade.

Presentations and Class Discussions

You will be required to present twice on the supplementary/case study readings. The presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes and will conclude with thought-provoking discussion questions that we will use to start our class discussions.

Written Exercises

Four times this semester, you will answer several questions related to the week's reading. Three of the weeks when you are required to do this are marked with an ** on the syllabus. You can choose any other week as your fourth exercise. Questions/instructions will be provided a week ahead of time and will be due through Blackboard by 10 pm the day before class, usually **Thursday**.

Mid-Term Exam

The exam will consist of an in-class component of short responses plus an out-of-class component of one or two essay questions assigned at least a week before the exam. Answers to essay questions will be handed in on the day of the mid-term. A guide to expected essay structure will be provided, and students are expected to refer to the reading and provide citations.

Final Exam

The final exam will be a set of take-home essay questions assigned by the final class at the latest. Students will need to hand in the essays in person on the day of the final exam (**Tuesday, May 22 between 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM**), when we will have a wrap-up discussion. Essays must include citations.

For students with a strong interest in a particular topic or who would like to read an additional academic book relevant to their interests, it *may* be possible to replace part of the essays on the final exam with a

research paper or book review. You need to talk to me about this option *no later than Week 6*. I will approve this option only if it is a topic I am able to offer competent advice on. I'll be glad to recommend relevant books.

Note on late exams: You will only be able to make up the mid-term exam if you have a documented reason. If you have an emergency, try to contact me within 48 hours of the exam. However, if your reason involves religious holidays or other events known to you in advance, I will not accept any make-up exams unless you have gotten in touch with me *at the start of the semester*.

Policy on Incomplete (IN) and Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grades: A final grade of IN (incomplete) will not be given except under the most extraordinary, and documented, circumstances. Only students who have regular attendance and completed ALL course requirements including all writing assignments, midterm and final exams will be eligible for a final grade of CR/NC. The Credit/No Credit form must be submitted **no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the scheduled final exam period**. For more information on the college's CR/NC policy please consult <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/advising/how-to/file-credit-no-credit-cr-nc>. This page also includes a link to the form.

Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity: Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

***Please note, copying even a single sentence or phrase directly from another text without providing citations is considered a form of plagiarism. Don't hesitate to ask citation questions to avoid unintentional plagiarism.

Hunter College ADA Compliance: In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (emotional, medical, physical, and/or learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct: In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College affirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationship. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

- a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, on contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444)
- b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) of Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link: <http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf>

Note: Readings and class schedule may change from what is listed in this syllabus depending on the needs of the class and in unforeseen events such as school closures. I will give ample warning of any changes. Students will be responsible keeping up with announcements.

Course Schedule

Most weeks will contain one or two case study readings in addition to the textbook chapters. All readings will be available at least one week ahead, and many will be available at the start of the semester

Week 1 - January 30 and February 2

Introduction: The Economy, economics and economic geography

Please carefully read the entire syllabus no later than before the second class.

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapters 1, 2, and 16 (only through p. 512)

Week 2 - February 6 and February 9

Capitalism, uneven geography, and geography's role in the economy

**** Response due Thursday, February 8, 10 pm**

Finish: Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapters 1, 2, and 16 (only through p. 512)

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapter 3

Week 3 – February 13 and February 16

Environment and Economy: Nature as stage, input, commodity and place

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapter 5

Excerpts from Cindi Katz (2004) – we will revisit the selection from Week 3.

Week 4 – February 23 (Tuesday, February 20th – Monday Schedule, NO CLASS)

****Who runs the economy? State power in a globalizing world?**

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapter 4

Week 5 – February 27 and March 2

****Who runs the economy? State power in a globalizing world (continued)**

Responses due Thursday, March 1 at 10 pm

Week 6 – March 6 and March 9.

Who runs the economy? Corporations

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapters 10

Week 7 – March 13 and March 16

Who runs the economy? Labor power: global and local divisions of labor

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapters 6 and 13 (especially 13.1, 13.2, 13.4 – all other sections optional)

Week 8 – March 20 and March 23

****Who runs the economy? Financialization - the rise of finance?**

Responses due Thursday, March 22 at 10 pm

MID-TERM ESSAYS QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED BY MARCH 20

Special Topics vote due by March 20

Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapter 7

Week 9 – March 27 (Friday, March 30 is start of spring recess)

In-Class Midterm, Tuesday March 27

Mid-Term Essay Questions Due Tuesday, March 27

Week 10 – April 10, April 11, April 13 (April 11 classes follow a Friday schedule, and then we have a real Friday, too – thus, 3 classes in one week)

Economic Alterity: What else is going on besides capitalism? What else is possible? What else has been tried?

Week 11: April 17 and April 20

Technological change and clusters: Why hasn't the internet made Wall Street obsolete? Coe, Kelly, Yeung (2013) Chapter 9

Week 12 –April 24 and April 27

Commodity Chains – a brief introduction

Week 13 – May 1 and May 4

Special Topics: TBD

Week 14 - May 8 and May 11

Special Topics: TBD

Week 15 – May 22

Final Exam period – 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Special Topics weeks are an opportunity to look at recent case studies of the topics addressed so far, to cover a certain process or geographic area in more depth, or to address a topic of student interest. We will select them by a Blackboard poll. Students can also submit their own idea for a Special Topics theme no later than March 23, and we can add it to the ballot.

Environment and Economy II: Green Capitalism and New Frontiers of Resource Extraction

Interested in the rising importance of biotechnology, wondering about market-oriented solutions to climate change (carbon markets, REDD+), or want to learn more about the most recent expansion of industrial agriculture?

Financialization II: Frontiers of Finance and Development

Want to understand the history, spread, and current impacts of microfinance lending to poor people in developing countries? Micro-lending or microfinance is being described as a solution to global poverty and an innovative form of development, but it has also faced significant criticism. How does it work, and what are its successes and drawbacks?

The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa): The rise of the developing world?

Depending on student interest, we can address the BRICS as a general force in the world economy, or look at post-socialist, post-apartheid, and neo-socialist transitions in one or two of these countries.

Urban Economics: Informal economies, land markets, and the global urban future

Are there similar economic processes going on in cities around the world? How is global urbanization connected to economic globalization? How and why is “gentrification” a global phenomenon? And what’s going on right now, right here in NYC?

Racial and Gendered Capitalism

What is the relationship between race, racism, patriarchy capitalism? Are racism and sexism unconnected leftovers from prior economic formations or pre-requisites for capitalist economies? One of the greatest debates in economic geography, with special relevance to us in the U.S.

Inside the World Bank, WTO, and IMF

Continuation of discussion of state power, with specific case studies of these global institutions and their impact on local economic and social landscapes. What do these powerful institutions actually do, can they actually force countries to change their economic policies, and what kinds of results are typical of IMF/WB interventions? How does the rise of major powers of the developing world affect the reach of these institutions?

Week 15 – May 15, Review

Final Exam Essays assigned by May 15 at the latest.

LAST DAY TO REQUEST CREDIT/NO CREDIT IS MAY 15. Please remember you need to have decent attendance and to complete all assignments and exams (including final exam) to qualify for this option.

Final Exam Date – Tuesday, May 22 11:30 – 1:30 pm (same room, *different time*)

You will need to submit a hard copy of your final exam essays at the start of this last class. We will also have a final discussion in lieu of an in-class exam.