

GEOG 221
ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY
Tuesday/Friday 12:45 – 2:00
Hunter North, Room 1022
Fall 2012

Instructor: Prof. Annie Spencer
Office location: Hunter North, Room 1032
Email: aspencer@gc.cuny.edu (Include “GEOG221” in the subject line)
Office hours: Tuesdays 4:30 – 5:30 pm or by appointment

Brief description/purpose of course: This course serves as an introduction to the study of economic geography. Economic geography, as a subfield of human geography, emphasizes the spatial, social and environmental aspects of economic livelihoods, production, and social reproduction on scales ranging from the household to the nation-state and beyond. The course will examine social and economic processes in an international context and will explore questions of food production, the global supply chain in manufacturing, labor, migration, urbanization, deindustrialization, uneven development, debt and inequality. Geography 101 is a prerequisite for the course. The course is a 3-credit course and satisfies GER B/3.

Required textbook: The one required text for the course is:

Coe, Neil, Philip Kelly, and Henry W. C. Yeung. 2007. *Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction*. Blackwell: Malden, MA. ISBN: 978-1-4051-3219-0 (available new for approx. \$40 and used for approx. \$20-30).

The text has been ordered through Shakespeare and Company and can be found online in new and used editions. If you buy online, be sure to buy the (much less expensive) paperback edition.

Supplementary readings will be found on the course EReserve page through the Hunter College Library. To access EReserves, search for Geog221 on the EReserves site and use the password Spencer221.

Course 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.

Course evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the following criteria.

Class participation:	15 points
Midterm exam:	25 points
Opinion Editorials:	30 points (3 @ 10 points each)
Final exam:	30 points

Class Preparation and Participation: Students are required to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and any discussion assignments given in the previous class. Readings should be completed before the class period in which they will be discussed. Plan on **printing** the reading always, and marking the text (highlighter, pen, post-its) as well as taking notes. This will help you effectively participate in in-class discussions and group work. Students who regularly demonstrate failure to effectively prepare for class will have points deducted from the participation portion of their grade (15% of the total grade). Attendance will be taken at each class, and students with poor attendance records will have points deducted from their class participation grade.

Midterm Exam: In-class exam; topics covered will be addressed before the exam.

Opinion Editorials: Students will be responsible for three brief (3 - 4 typed page) OpEds throughout the course of the semester. These assignments are given in the body of the syllabus in the date on which they are due (**September 21, November 9, December 7**). If students are unfamiliar with the Opinion Editorial format, examples are available in the New York Times and other major newspapers.

Final Exam: Take-home, essay exam; the exam will be handed out during the last class period on May 14. The exam must be turned in in-person during the class's scheduled exam period as determined by the Hunter College Registrar's Office. The date will be announced in class.

Standards for written work: Your written work (the final exam) should conform to the following standards:

- Papers should be typed, double spaced with one-inch margins, using a Times Roman or other similar serif font. (Courier style fonts are not to be used.) Papers should be stapled in the upper left hand corner. Plastic report covers should not be used.
- Papers should cite sources and use the author-date style of referencing commonly used in the discipline of geography. See a copy of the Annals of the Association of American Geographers for examples.
- Papers should make use of sources from the World Wide Web only when the source is a government agency or other reliable institution, and online version of a print resource (i.e. article databases), or when it is the online source itself that is the subject of the research. See me concerning the appropriateness of using sources from the Web. You should not use Wikipedia or other online encyclopedic references in a college level paper.

Writing help

Students who need help with writing are encouraged to take advantage of the Hunter College Writing center. The Reading/Writing Center is located in Room 416, Thomas Hunter Building.

Drop-in hours and more information can be found here: <http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/index.html>

Classroom policies: Participation is 15 percent of the class grade. Students should not expect to receive full credit for participation if they are habitually absent, late, sleeping, using electronic devices or are otherwise visibly not engaged in or disruptive of the class discussion. Full participation credit will require students to regularly attend class with printed copies of the assigned reading. Students will be expected to demonstrate that they have read and engaged critically with the week's readings.

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.

Hunter College Policy on Academic Integrity: 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.

Note on late assignments/missed exams: If you will not be able to complete an assignment on time, please inform me of this at least one day prior to the due date. Late assignments will ONLY be accepted if a prior arrangement has been made with me and appropriate circumstances warrant additional time. Late assignments without appropriate circumstance/documentation will be penalized (5 points off per day late).

Students should make every effort not to miss the in-class midterm exam. If you miss the exam, you must (1) contact me within 48 hours of the missed exam, (2) present acceptable documentation for your absence, and (3) be available for the make-up exam (there will be one make-up exam day held outside of class for those eligible). A make-up exam will cover the same material as the regular exam but will not be the same exam.

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 completed ALL course requirements including all writing assignments, midterm and final exams will be eligible for a final grade of CR/NC.

Disclaimer: Assignment due dates and readings 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 for staying abreast of any such revisions.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Tuesday, August 28: Introduction and course overview

- No assigned readings

Friday, August 31: Conceptual Foundations & Setting the Stage for Our Inquiry

- "How the U.S. Lost Out on iPhone Work," *New York Times*, January 21, 2012
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/22/business/apple-america-and-a-squeezed-middle-class.html?_r=1&src=me&ref=general

Tuesday, September 4: History of Economic Geography

- Barnes, Trevor. 2000. "Inventing Anglo-American Economic Geography," pp. 11 – 26 in *A Companion to Economic Geography*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Friday, September 7: The Global Economy: The Long View

- Dicken, P. 2011. "Introduction: Questioning 'Globalization,'" and "Part One: The Shifting Contours of the Global Economy," pp. 1 - 48 in *Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*, Sage: Los Angeles.

Tuesday, September 11: An Economic Geography Approach to the World Economy

- Coe, Chapters 1 & 2

Friday, September 14: Uneven Development

- Coe, Chapter 3

Tuesday, September 18: NO CLASS

Friday, September 21: Uneven Development, cont. **OPED 1 Due.**

- Solnit, Rebecca. 2007. "Detroit Arcadia: Exploring the Post-American Landscape," pp. 64 – 73 in *Harpers*, July 2007.
- Hylton, Wil S. "Broken Heartland: The Looming Collapse of Agriculture on the Great Plains." *Harpers*, July 2012.
- Reginato, James. "The Talk of Mumbai." *Vanity Fair*, June 6, 2012.
<http://www.vanityfair.com/society/2012/06/ambani-residence-photos-inside-architecture>.

OpEd 1: Write about some aspect of uneven development in New York City or elsewhere that is having a negative social impact. What is that impact and what should be done about it?

Tuesday, September 25: NO CLASS

Friday, September 28: Critical Thought and Practice in Economic Geography

- Harvey, David. 1973. "Revolutionary and Counter Revolutionary Theory in Geography and the Problem of Ghetto Formation," *Antipode* 4(2), pp. 1 – 13.
- Swyngedouw, Eric. 2000. "The Marxian Alternative: Historical-Geographical Materialism and the Political Economy of Capitalism," pp. 41 – 59 in *A Companion to Economic Geography*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Tuesday, October 2: Commodity Chains

- Coe, Chapter 4
- Ogodo, Ochieng and John Vidal, "Drained of Life," *The Guardian* February 13, 2007. Available online at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2007/feb/14/kenya.conservation>

Monday, October 5: Commodity Chains, cont.

- Dicken, Peter. 2011. "'Fabric-ating Fashion': The Clothing Industries," pp. 301 – 330' in *Global Shift: Mapping The Changing Contours of the World Economy*. Guilford: New York.
- Read the website for United Students Against Sweatshops: <http://usas.org/campaigns/anti-sweatshop/>

Tuesday, October 9: Technology and Agglomeration

- Coe, Chapter 5
- Friedman, Thomas. “It’s a Flat World After All,” in *The New York Times Magazine*, April 3, 2005.
- Cox, K. 2008. “Globalization, uneven development and capital: reflections on reading Thomas Friedman’s the World is Flat.” *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 1: 389–410.

Friday, October 12: The State

- Coe, Chapter 7

Tuesday, October 16: The Transnational Corporation

- Coe, Chapter 8

Friday, October 19: Midterm Review

- No assigned readings

Tuesday, October 23: In-Class Midterm

- No assigned readings

Friday, October 26: Geographies of ‘Development’

- MacKinnon, Danny & Andrew Cumbers. 2007. “Geographies of Development” pp. 252 – 276, in, *An Introduction to Economic Geography: Globalization, Uneven Development and Place*, Prentice Hall: New York.
- Finnegan, William. 2003. “The Economics of Empire: Notes on the Washington Consensus,” pp. 41 – 54 in *Harpers Magazine*, May, 2003.

Tuesday, October 30: Development, cont.

- David Harvey, 2001. “The Geopolitics of Capital,” pp. 312-344 in *Spaces of Capital*. Routledge: London.

Friday, November 2: Economic Geography of the Global Food System

- Dicken, Peter. 2011. “‘We Are What We Eat’: The Agro-Food Industries,” pp. 271 – 300’ in *Global Shift: Mapping The Changing Contours of the World Economy*. Guilford: New York.
- Additional, TBD.

Tuesday, November 6: Global Food, cont.

- McMichael, Phillip. 2009. “The World Food Crisis in Historical Perspective,” *Monthly Review* 61(3), pp. 32-47.
- Patel, Raj. 2011. “Can the World Feed 10 Billion People?” in *Foreign Affairs*, May 4, 2011.
- Lacey, Marc. “Across Globe, Empty Bellies Bring Rising Anger,” *New York Times*, April 18, 2008.

Friday, November 9: Transnational Food Movements

- Martínez-Torres, María Elena and Peter Rosset. 2010. “La Vía Campesina: The Birth and Evolution of a Transnational Social Movement,” *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 37: 149 – 175.
- La Via Campesina Declaration at Durbin:
http://viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1174:la-via-campesina-declaration-in-durban&catid=48:-climate-change-and-agrofuels&Itemid=75
- Coalition of Immokolee Workers, “About” page: <http://ciw-online.org/about.html>

OpEd 2 Due: With reference to the topics addressed during our Global Food section, write an op ed addressing one issue of concern to you with regard to global food and agriculture issues.

Tuesday, November 13: Financialization & Financial Crises I

- Pike, Andy and Jane Pollard. 2010. “Economic Geographies of Financialization,” in *Economic Geogrphahy*, V. 85, No.1.
- “The Giant Pool of Money,” Radio Program. This American Life. 2010. (listen or read transcript)
 - <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/355/the-giant-pool-of-money>

Friday, November 16: Financialization & Financial Crises II

- McNally, David. 2010. Introduction and Chapter 1: “The Great Panic of 2008” in *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance*, pp. 1 – 24, Oakland, PM Press.

Tuesday, November 20: Financial Crises, cont.

- Film & In-class Discussion: *The Inside Job*

Friday, November 23: THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS

///Break///

Tuesday, November 27: Labor

- Coe, Chapter 9
- Additional, TBA.

Friday, November 30: Topographies of Race and Gender in Economic Geography

- Coe, Chapter 12
- Wyly, Elvin, Markus Moos, Daniel Hammel, and Emanuel Kabahizi. “Cartographies of Race and Class: Mapping the Class-Monopoly Rents of American Subprime Mortgage Capital.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 2 (June 2009): 332–354.

Tuesday, December 4: Topographies of Race and Gender in Economic Geography

- Wright, Melissa. 1999. “The Dialectics of Still Life: Murder, Women, and Maquiladoras,” in *Public Culture*, 11(3) pp. 453 – 474. Duke University Press, Durham.
- Woods, Clyde. 2010. *In the Wake of Hurricane Katrina*. (selections, TBD)

Friday, December 7: The Economic Geography of Debt

- Williams, Jeffrey. 2006. “The pedagogy of debt,” in *College Literature* Volume 33, 4.
- Harris, Malcom. 2011. “Bad Education,” from N+1. <http://nplusonemag.com/bad-education>
- Strike Debt Declaration and Invisible Army Defaulter’s Manual (2012)

OpEd 3 Due: Reflect on the week’s readings and earlier readings on the housing crisis and others, share your concerns about some aspect of debt and what you think should be done about the problem.

Tuesday, December 11: Wrap Up / Final Exam Handed Out

- No required reading.

Tuesday, December 18: FINAL EXAM DUE – Turn in through Blackboard

Reading & Presentation Guidelines (A Guide to “Generous Reading”)

1. What is the setting of the work? Consider both the “internal” and “external” dimensions of the setting.
 - a. “external”:
 - i. What are the conditions under which the work was produced?
 - ii. Why—for what use—was the work produced?
 - iii. What’s different now, if anything?
 - b. “internal”:
 - i. Where does the work sit in a body or bodies of literature?
 - ii. What or where in time-space is the study’s object?
2. Who is the announced or implied audience of the work?
3. What is the work’s structure and style?
4. What is/are the work’s key questions?
5. How does the intervention of place/geography figure in the work’s central argument about economic and social processes? How does it articulate that the reason this happens in a space/place (“somewhere”) **matters** for understanding that it happens at all? That to answer what and why something is, you need to know and consider **where** and when (in relative time/history) it is?
6. What is the work’s spatial scale and scope?
7. What theory serves as the writer’s guide to action?
8. What method(s) does the writer use?
9. What evidence does the writer use?
10. What are the arguments? In other words, how does the writer use the theory, method(s), and evidence to propose answers (or make claims)?
11. What is the role of the state and/or other institutions?
12. What works for you?