

Dr. Kate Berry  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Spring Semester 2009

## GEOGRAPHY 418 GEOGRAPHIC THOUGHT

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will explore the philosophy, practices, and potentials of geography. We will examine the thought of professional geographers and the public as well as your own geographic thinking. This course is about:

- the evolution of geography as an academic discipline among the fields of knowledge;
- the ways that different groups (professional geographers, the public, and students like you) think about the significance of space, place and landscape;
- the concepts that motivate geographers and the concerns that shape their work;
- the people who have shaped geographic traditions and those who are shaping its future;
- the ideas, techniques, and solutions that geographers have contributed to current problems and conflicts.

As a major capstone course in the University's Core Curriculum, this course will give you a chance to refine your skills in synthesizing material and critical analysis. You will be reading, researching, writing, evaluating, listening, discussing, and presenting throughout the semester. At the same time, you will reflect upon what you have learned throughout your 'journey through geography' thus far and consider where you will go from here.

### SCHEDULE

This course will meet from 9:30 to 10:45am on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Mackay Science Room 321. I encourage you to visit about any aspect of the course by making an appointment with me. My office is located in Mackay Science Room 201. I can also be reached by phone at 784-1865 or email at [kberry@unr.edu](mailto:kberry@unr.edu).

### OTHER INFORMATION

If you have a disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me or the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building Ste. 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

### CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Grading for this course will utilize the University's grading policy which allows for letter grades with the possibility of a plus or a minus (for example, it is possible to get a C+ or an A-). Your grade for this course will be based on the following items:

200 points	class attendance and participation
250 points	reading journal (turned in 3 times during the semester)
200 points	attending and evaluating presentations at the AAG conference
100 points	class assignments (2-50pts each)
250 points	class project

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1000 points      cumulative total possible

### CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance is expected for each scheduled class period. Bear in mind that missing class will not only affect your attendance grade but also will affect your participation grade. If you are absolutely unable to attend class, you may want to contact your fellow classmates to get notes. Please keep me apprised of your situation. Your active involvement in the class is expected. Feedback and discussion are important to understand and assimilate the materials presented in this course. In addition to participating in class, there will be some activities outside of class time that may count towards your participation score.

### READING

All assigned readings for this course are available electronically through this course on *Web Campus*. Check your access to *Web Campus* and let me know immediately if are having difficulties getting access to the readings or other materials online.

### READING JOURNAL

The idea of this assignment is to write notes from the assigned class readings so that you will process these more thoroughly and recall them better. Each of the assigned class readings should have a typed journal entry of one-half to one page, single-spaced. Prepare a separate journal entries for each assigned class reading.

Your journal entries should both show that you have done the reading and provide your reaction to the writing. Consider what the significant points that are being made with regards to geographic thought and how you respond to the points. Where possible, draw connections between two or more readings and include your analysis of the similarities or differences between articles. Journals will be collected three times during the semester, on **February 19, March 12, and April 30.**

### ATTENDING AND EVALUATING PRESENTATIONS AT AAG CONFERENCE

As mentioned in the footnote for this course in the spring schedule, there will be a class trip to the AAG meeting in Las Vegas in late March. This is a chance of a lifetime to attend the biggest geography conference in the world. Many other students and faculty in the department will also be attending, and some will be presenting there as well. Your class assignment is to select six presentations (or panel sessions, plenary presentations, poster sessions, or specialty group business meetings) to attend and review at the conference. If you need a letter for your other professors letting them know of your absence from their classes during this field trip, please let me know. Your evaluations of the six sessions will be due **Thursday April 16.**

The trip to the AAG conference will most likely leave Monday afternoon March 23 and return Thursday evening March 26. The Geography Department will provide a van to get to Las Vegas but if you prefer to drive yourself or fly you can chose to do that (although we cannot compensate you for this). I am working on finding inexpensive accommodations and will let you know how this works out. To defray the costs of conference registration (as well as get paid), I would urge you to register to work at the conference. Both the signing up for conference registration as well as working as a conference assistant have deadlines coming up in early February, so do not delay. We will be discussing the logistics and details throughout the semester, so stay tuned for more. If for some reason you cannot join us at the conference, please let me know the first week of the semester so you can arrange for an alternative assignment.

### OTHER CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Throughout the semester there will be two other class assignments, each worth 50 points. Detailed written and verbal instructions will be provided for each assignment.

### CLASS PROJECT

Over the course of the semester, you will develop a class project that synthesizes some of your understanding, interests, and skills in the discipline. This project should display a good part of your repertoire of geographic skills, illustrating skills developed in at least three other courses that you have taken as part of your program of study. As examples, you could consider doing a research paper, technical report, funding proposal, scripted video, audio documentary or professional poster. You will need to have your project approved so on **Thursday February 12** turn in a half-page description of your proposed project that includes information about:

- project theme,
- particular project question or focus,
- list of (3 or more) courses that you have taken to develop your skills for this project,
- methods you plan to use to develop your project,
- format of the final project,
- any questions you have about the project.

Your project must be accompanied by a list of sources of information that you used in developing it. You will present your project to the class on **Tuesday May 5 or Friday May 8 (during the finals period)**.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Assigned Readings</u>	<u>Things to Remember</u>
Tues. January 20	Introduction	-----	welcome to class!
Thur. January 22	The Geographic Advantage	Hanson 2004 ( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Tues. January 27	Who are Geographers Today?	Pandit 2004 ( <i>Professional Geographer</i> )	assignment #1 distributed
Thur. January 29	An Interdisciplinary Discipline?	Skole 2004 ( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Tues. February 3	Challenges for Geography	Kitchin 2006 ( <i>Professional Geographer</i> )	
Thur. February 5	Famous Geographers of the Past & Present	-----	assignment #1 due
Tues. February 10	An Outsiders View on American Geography	Kolossov 2004 ( <i>GeoJournal</i> )	
Thur. February 12	Geography in Higher Education	Murphy 2007 ( <i>J. of Geography in Higher Education</i> )	class project proposals due
Tues. February 17	K-12 Geography Education	Bednarz 2004 ( <i>Professional Geographer</i> )	
Thur. February 19	Geography as Science	Colwell 2004 ( <i>Annals of the AAG</i> )	reading journals due (#1)
Tues. February 24	Geography as Humanities & Art	Tuan 2004 ( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Thur. February 26	Geography as Technology	-----	
Tues. March 3	Observing Places & Landscapes	Stilgoe 2005 (2 chapters from <i>Landscape &amp; Images</i> )	
Thur. March 5	Making Maps, Valuing Cartography	Harvey 2000 (from <i>The Island of Lost Maps</i> )	assignment #2 distributed
Tues. March 10	Linking Place & Narratives to Maps	Pearce 2008 ( <i>Cartography &amp; Geog. Info. Science</i> )	
Thur. March 12	Scale & Geographic Inquiry	McMaster 2004 (from <i>Scale &amp; Geographic Inquiry</i> )	reading journals due (#2)
Tues. March 17	No Class - Spring Break	-----	
Thur. March 19	No Class - Spring Break	-----	
Tues. March 24	No Class--AAG conference	-----	
Thur. March 26	No Class--AAG conference	-----	
Tues. March 31	Int. Environmental Governance	Liverman 2004 ( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Thur. April 2	Environmental Change & Globalization	Wood 2004 ( <i>Professional Geographer</i> )	
Tues. April 7	Activating Geographers	Bello 2008 ( <i>Antipode</i> ) & Bonta 2004 ( <i>GeoJournal</i> )	
Thur. April 9	Geography in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	-----	assignment #2 due
Tues. April 14	Working as a Geographer	Crosby 2005 ( <i>Occupational Quarterly</i> )	
Thur. April 16	Lure of the Field	Delyser 2001 ( <i>Geographical Review</i> )	AAG conf. reviews due
Tues. April 21	Physical Geography & Technology	Phillips 2004 ( <i>Professional Geographer</i> )	
Thur. April 23	Tobler's 1 <sup>st</sup> Law & Spatial Analysis	Miller 2004 ( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Tues. April 28	GI Science	Goodchild 2004( <i>Annals of AAG</i> )	
Thur. April 30	Wrap-Up	-----	reading journals due (#3)

Tues. May 5  
FRIDAY MAY 8 (7:30-9:30am)

Begin Class Project Presentations  
Finals Period - Continue Project Presentations

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class projects due