

# Geography 400 – Geography of North America

Department of Geography  
The Ohio State University

Autumn Quarter, 2009  
Course Number: 12232-1  
T/R 12:30pm - 2:18pm  
Orton Hall, Room 0110

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## **Instructor: Marc Auerbach**

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**Office Hours:** Thursdays 10:00-12:00  
*and by appointment*

## **Teaching Assistant: Caleb Gallemore**

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**Office Hours:** Mondays 1:45-3:45  
*and by appointment*

## **Department of Geography:**

Main Office: 1036 Derby Hall  
Phone: (614) 292-2514  
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Course web page: on Carmen (<https://carmen.osu.edu/>)

- Log in with your OSU internet user name and password and click on “GEOG 400”
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**Course Description:** Geography 400 provides an introduction to geographic issues covering North America. This course is concerned with spatial patterns and processes associated with culture, politics, economy, and social difference at international, national, and urban scales. We will employ a historical-geographic perspective to explore issues of significant public concern, including racism, immigration, and deindustrialization. This necessarily entails a critical perspective and a willingness to question our assumptions about why things are the way they are.

### **GEC Category: Social Diversity in the United States**

**Goals:** Courses in social diversity will foster students’ understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States.

#### **Expected Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

## **Students with disabilities:**

**Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services (150 Pomerene Hall) at 614-292-3307, TDD 292-0901 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.**

**Course Website:** The course syllabus, announcements, readings, lecture notes, exam review guides and other useful resources will be available at <https://carmen.osu.edu>. In order to access these materials log in to Carmen using your OSU internet user name and password and select GEOG 400 from the list of courses for which you are currently enrolled. You should check Carmen regularly for updates, news, and assignments.

**How to Succeed in this Class:** Every student can succeed in this class. There are a few things you can do to ensure it: 1) keep up with the reading; 2) attend *every class* and take notes; 3) ask questions when you need clarification – if you don't understand something there is a good chance that other students don't either; 4) if you have an academic or personal problem that is getting in the way of your success come see me immediately – don't wait until it is too late!

**Required Reading:** All required reading will be made available through the class website on Carmen (at [www.carmen.osu.edu](http://www.carmen.osu.edu)) or in handouts.

## **Grading Scale:**

A	93-100	C	73-76.99
A-	90-92.99	C-	70-72.99
B+	87-89.99	D+	67-69.99
B	83-86.99	D	60-66.99
B-	80-82.99	E	Below 60%
C+	77-79.99	EN	Too many absences to permit a passing grade

## **Course Grade and Due Dates:**

• Midterm (October 27 <sup>th</sup> )	20%
• Final ( <u>Wednesday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 AM</u> )	30%
• In-class assignments, group and individual	20%
• Reading journal I (Due Oct. 27 <sup>th</sup> , at midterm)	15%
• Reading journal II (Due Dec. 3 <sup>rd</sup> , last day of classes)	15%

**Exams:** There are two exams for the course. These will be composed primarily of short and long answer essay questions. If you miss an exam and wish to write a make-up you must have an original doctor's note demonstrating that you sought medical attention for an unavoidable reason. The note must include the doctor's name and a telephone number where I can contact him/her. If you miss an exam due to a medical emergency, the make-up exam must be written within one week (seven days) of the originally scheduled exam. If you miss the final exam and do not write a make-up prior to the grades being posted (this may be sooner than one week), you will be awarded an "INC" grade which I will later change based on your final exam grade. An absence related to either the mid-term or the final must be explained directly in person to me, not communicated via e-mail.

**In-class assignments:** There will be frequent in-class assignments during the course of the quarter, worth a total of 20% of your grade. Students will either work individually or in teams of three to complete these assignments. Assignments may relate to the reading scheduled for that class. The dates of these assignments will not be announced in advance.

**Double-Entry Reading Journal:** Each student will keep a double-entry reading journal with written responses to eight of the assigned readings, as indicated in the syllabus (see the *Double Entry Reading Journal Guidelines* handout for more details).

**Class Protocols:** Please... turn off your cell phone; be on time; be prepared to discuss challenging issues and treat your fellow students with respect.

**Attendance:** Attendance is *required*. In-class assignments are an important part of your grade. The exams are designed explicitly for students who attend class regularly. I will post a condensed outline of the class sessions each week. Careful note-taking on lectures and class discussions is vital to your success.

**The Flu Situation:** Based on the Office of the Provost recommendations on the flu situation I encourage students that feel ill to stay home and isolate themselves from others. In addition I will accept the "Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class" self-reporting form available online (<http://shc.osu.edu/posts/documents/absence-excuse-form.pdf>) from the Wilce Student Health Center as documentation of medical absence, *and make reasonable efforts to provide for make-up work opportunities.*

**Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated.**

Plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writing, etc. of another. You are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own. You are also committing plagiarism if you use another person's ideas without giving them credit for the ideas with a citation. If you have questions about citations the instructor is happy to talk with you about it. OSU Faculty Rule 3335-5-54 states "Each instructor shall report to the committee on academic misconduct all instances of what he or she believes may be academic misconduct."

## Geography 400 Tentative Schedule

This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Journal
1	Sept. 24 (R)	Introduction	—	
2	Sept. 29 (T)	Land and labor: colonial transformations	Harris 2004	
	Oct. 1 (R)	The Cotton South after the Civil War	Wiener 1979	YES
3	Oct. 6 (T)	Agro-industrialization and the rise of the Midwest	Bayley 1925; Markham 1926	
	Oct. 8 (R)	California: capitalism in the countryside	Walker 2004	YES
4	Oct. 13 (T)	Mexico: rural livelihoods under pressure	Hellman 1999: 113-139	
	Oct. 15 (R)	The U.S.-Mexico border at work	Gouveia and Juska 2002*	YES
5	Oct. 20 (T)	Film: <i>Crossing Arizona</i>	—	
	Oct. 22 (R)	Canada: nation-building and geographic imaginaries	Harris 2008; MacGregor 2003	YES
<b>6</b>	<b>Oct. 27 (T)</b>	<b>Midterm</b>		<b>Journal Due</b>
	Oct. 29 (R)	The American Century	Denby 1898; Hay 1899; Kolko and Kolko 1992	
7	Nov. 3 (T)	The politics of free trade	Chang 2008	YES
	Nov. 5 (R)	Contesting North America	Council on Foreign Relations 2005; Council of Canadians 2006	
8	Nov. 10 (T)	Film: <i>Maquilapolis</i>		
	Nov. 12 (R)	The reproduction of Ciudad Juarez	Wright 2001	YES
9	Nov. 17 (T)	The subprime meltdown	Rogers 2008	
	Nov. 19 (R)	The racialization of urban space	Gotham 2000	YES
10	Nov. 24 (T)	Detroit: industrial restructuring	Sugrue 1996	
	Nov. 26 (R)	Thanksgiving – NO CLASS	—	
11	Dec. 1 (T)	Carceral geographies and the discourse of urban decline	Gilmore 1998/9	YES
	Dec. 3 (R)	Conclusions	TBA	<b>Journal Due</b>
<b>Final Exam – Wednesday, Dec. 9th at 11:30AM</b>				

## Reading List

- Bayley, W.S. 1925. Effects of the proposed Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Waterway. *Economic Geography* 1 (2): 236-246
- Chang, H-J. 2008. *Bad Samaritans: The Myth of Free Trade and the Secret History of Capitalism*. New York; Berlin; London: Bloomsbury Press.
- Council of Canadians. 2006. *Integrate This! A Citizen's Guide to Fighting Deep Integration*.
- Council on Foreign Relations. 2005. *Building a North American Community: Report of an Independent Task Force*. Washington DC: Council on Foreign Relations.
- Denby, C. 1898. America's opportunity in Asia. *North American Review* 166 (494): 32-40
- Gilmore, R. W. 1998/99. Globalisation and US prison growth: from military Keynesianism to post-Keynesian militarism. *Race & Class* 40 (2/3):171-188.
- Gotham, K. F. 2000. Urban space, restrictive covenants and the origins of racial residential segregation in a US city, 1900-50. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24 (3): 616-633
- Gouveia, L., and A. Juska. 2002. Taming Nature, Taming Workers: Constructing the Separation Between Meat Consumption and Meat Production in the U.S. *Sociologia Ruralis* 42 (4):370-390.
- Harris, C. 2004. How did colonialism dispossess? Comments from an edge of empire. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94 (1):165-182.
- Harris, C. 2008. Historical geography and early Canada: a life and an interpretation. *The Canadian Geographer* 52 (4) 409-426
- Hay, J. 1899. The Open Door Note.
- Hellman, J.A. 1999. *Mexican Lives*. New York: The New Press.
- Kolko, G. and J. Kolko. 1992. Making the world safe for American capitalism. In *Major Problems in American History since 1945*, ed. R. Griffith. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company.
- MacGregor, R.M. 2003. I am Canadian: national identity in beer commercials. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 37 (2) 276-286
- Markham, C.H. 1926. Strategy and traffic of the Illinois Central system. *Economic Geography* 2 (1): 1-18
- Rogers, K. 2008. *Subprime Loans, Foreclosure, and the Credit Crisis: What Happened and Why? – A Primer*. Columbus, OH. Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.
- Sugrue, T. 1996. "The damning mark of false promises": The deindustrialization of Detroit. In *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, 124-152. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Walker, R. A. 2004. *The Conquest of Bread: 150 Years of Agribusiness in California*. New York; London: The New Press, pp. 48-75
- Wiener, J. M. 1979. Class Structure and Economic Development in the American South, 1865-1955. *The American Historical Review* 84 (4):970-992. [EXCERPTS]
- Wright, M. 2001. Feminine villains, masculine heroes, and the reproduction of Ciudad Juarez. *Social Text* 69 (4): 93-113.