

Geography 500: The History and Methodology of Modern Geography Fall Semester

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COURSE INTRODUCTION:

Geography 500 is intended to introduce entry-level graduate students to; a) the history of the discipline and its relevance to modern geography, b) methods of inquiry in modern geography, c) tools of inquiry in modern geography, and d) standards of research and practice in modern geography. In doing so, the students will work towards answers to these basic questions;

What is Geography? What isn't Geography? What are its roots and how has it evolved? How has that evolution paralleled that of the social sciences? How does that evolution shape modern geographic thought? Who have been the leaders of the discipline? How have they left their marks on it? How is the discipline different today at the end of the century than at its beginning? How is Geography's development reflected in the CCSU Geography Department faculty? What are the methods of modern Geography? Do they differ by sub-field? If so, how? What are the methodological tools of Geography and its sub-fields? What does it mean to say that you are a Geographer?

COURSE INTENTION:

Through this course we intend that our graduate students develop knowledge of some of the core literature, key figures, and modern methods of Geography. Through the course students will also become familiar with the basic standards for advance geographic research. Beyond its primary intentions, we envision this course:

- a) Introducing graduate students to the geography and geographers at CCSU,
- b) Helping the entering students to direct their interests early enough so as to speed progress through the masters program, and
- c) Building a sense of camaraderie among our graduate students (even if it is through group suffering).

COURSE FORMAT:

Geography 500 will be a seminar course in two parts. The first part of the course, comprising about two-thirds of the semester, will be a review of the history and development of geographic study. This will include readings related to the development of Geography as a discipline, and additional work designed to get students "up to speed" in the science of geographic research. The second part of the course will introduce students to the core literature, current trends, and research techniques of some of the sub-fields of modern Geography. This will also involve visits by other Geography faculty members. Each week they will provide 2-3 core articles and 2-3 research readings from their respective sub-fields. The faculty members will also assign 5-6 research questions related to the readings as a basis for class discussions.

The class will be administered as a true seminar. Students will be prepared for class so that they can discuss the materials in an authoritative manner. Lecturing will only be done as a means of introducing the reading materials. This reliance on student input is reflected in the value placed on class participation.

COURSE MATERIALS:

All items required for the course will be made available to the students. Some readings will be provided in the Geography 500 mailbox (outside my office) and one is attached to this syllabus. However, the vast majority of readings will be available on line through the electronic versions of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *Geographical Review* (appears under different names going back to 1859!), and *Economic Geography*. To access these readings, go to the CCSU web site and click on the 'library' link. Once there, go to 'electronic journals' (right hand side), select the first letter of the journal title, select the journal, and then 'browse' to the right year, volume, and number. Due to access restrictions, this may not work from home.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The grade for Geography 500 will be based on three equally weighted components. These are course participation (1/3 of total), the research paper (1/3 of total), and the exam (1/3 of total).

Participation: The participation grade will be based on the student's preparation for and participation in class discussions. This means that the grade will be based not just on the degree of participation, but also on its quality and how well it reflects an informed understanding of the course readings.

Research Paper: Each student will be required to prepare and submit a reasonably extensive research paper. Several options are available and students should give serious consideration to a topic early in the semester. All topics should be discussed with the instructor as early as possible and before undertaking exhaustive research. The paper will be 20+ double-spaced pages in length and will adhere to accepted standards of content and form. It should give evidence of a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, extend well beyond the course readings, reflect a critical approach to the material, and should be fundamentally sound. The instructor must approve the topic and students may be sent to other department faculty to consult on their topics. The research paper is due at the time of the exam. Two copies of the paper will be submitted. One copy will be graded and returned. The second will be retained for department review.

Option A) Historical Definitions of Geography-Students selecting this option will prepare a paper on one of the major historical definitions of geography. This paper will be a critical historical essay in which it would be necessary to identify major proponents of the particular concept, discuss logical and practical consequences of such a concept, identify arguments contrary to the view, and discuss the relevance of the view to the historical reality of geography.

Option B) Biography-Students selecting this option will prepare a biography of an influential geographer who is no longer active in the discipline. In preparing his/her biography, the student should consider what themes the subject believed were of central importance to the discipline. The student should seek to explain the particular approaches the subject followed in published works. Possible sources of explanation might follow from (1) the personal history of the subject; (2) the influences of contemporaries upon the subject; (3) the influences of neighboring disciplines; (4) the influences of accumulated traditions of geography; (5) the influences of the times and events current during the subject's career. The analysis should reach some conclusions, however tentative, and as such will be MUCH more than just a chronology of the individual and his/her professional career.

Option C) Historical Development of a Subfield of Geography-Students selecting this option will prepare a paper on the development of some subfield of geography (urban geography, biogeography, medical geography, etc.). This paper should discuss the goals, methods, and concepts of the subfield as related to the prevailing concepts of geography as a discipline. There should be some suitable time dimension, although the emphasis should be on recent materials.

Exam: The exam will call on students to synthesize the course materials in informed responses to essay questions. It is open note/book/whatever. The exam will take place on December 17th.

GRADES AND GRADING POLICIES:

Grades for the course will be based on the following grading scale.

A	93-100%	B	83-86.9%	C	73-76.9%	D	63-66.9%
A-	90-92.9%	B-	80-82.9%	C-	70-72.9%	D-	60-62.9%
B+	87-89.9%	C+	77-79.9%	D+	67-69.9%	F	Less than 60%

The distribution of the grades for the course will be determined as indicated in the Course Requirements section of this syllabus. If you ever have questions concerning your performance, please see me during office hours or make an appointment. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

READING LIST AND TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

The schedule of classes below is, as indicated, tentative. It may change due to any number of unforeseen circumstances. What will not change are the paper and exam due dates. In the event that classes are cancelled due to the weather, we will schedule a make-up class. It is expected that students will come to class having read the assigned readings.

PART 1: THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF GEOGRAPHIC STUDY

9/3 Week 1-Course Introduction

Reviewing the history and standards of Geographic research.

The Four Traditions of Geography, William Pattison, *The Journal of Geography*, Vol. 63 (1963), pp. 211-216. **SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT**

9/10 Week 2-The Traditions of Geographic Thought-What is Geography?

The Value of Geography to the Scholar, the Merchant, and the Philanthropist, Joseph P. Thompson, *Journal of the American Geographical and Statistical Society* (later the *Geographical Review*), Vol. 1, Issue 4 (1859), pp. 98-107.

The Circumference of Geography, Nevin M. Fenneman, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 9 (1919), pp. 3-11.

A Retrospect of Geography, W.M. Davis, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 22, No. 4. (1932), pp. 211-230.

Changing Currents of Geographic Thought in America, Charles C. Colby, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (1936), pp. 1-37.

The Nature of Geography: A Critical Survey of Current Thought in the Light of the Past, Richard Hartshorne, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1939), pp. 636-645.

9/17 Week 3-Antecedants of 20th Century Geography

The Concept of Location in Classical Geography, F. Lukermann, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (1961), pp. 194-210.

The Nature of Geography: A Critical Survey of Current Thought in the Light of the Past, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (1939), pp. 211-277.

Darwin's Impact on Geography, D. R. Stoddart, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (1966), pp. 683-698.

9/24 Week 4-Environmentalism, Environmental Determinism, Human Ecology and Responses

- Principles of Geographic Description, W. M. Davis, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 5 (1915), pp. 61-105.
- The Anglo-Saxons of the Kentucky Mountains, Ellen Churchill Semple, *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* (later the *Geographical Review*), Vol. 42, Issue 8, (1910), pp. 561-594.
- The Relation of Health to Racial Capacity: The Example of Mexico, Ellsworth Huntington, *Geographical Review*, Vol. 11, Issue 2 (1921), pp. 243-264.
- Geography as Human Ecology, Harlan Barrows, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1923), pp. 1-14.
- Environment, Village and City: A Genetic Approach to Urban Geography; with Some Reference to Possibilism, Griffith Taylor, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (Mar., 1942), pp. 1-67.
- Determinism in Geography, R.S. Platt, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (1948), pp. 126-132.

10/1 Week 5-The Region

- Morphology of Landscape, Carl O. Sauer, In Dohs and Sommers *Introduction to Geography*, 1925, New York: Crowell Publishers, pp. 90-120.
- IN RESERVE**
- A Detail of Regional Geography: Ellison Bay Community as an Industrial Organism, Robert S. Platt, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1928), pp. 81-126.
- The Blackstone Valley: A Study in Chorography in Southern New England, Preston E. James, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1929), pp. 67-109.
- Toward a Further Understanding of the Regional Concept, Preston E. James, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (1952), pp. 195-222.
- The Highest Form of the Geographer's Art, John Fraser Hart, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (1982), pp. 1-29.

10/8 Week 6-The Quantification Revolution

- "Academic War over the Field of Geography": The Elimination of Geography at Harvard, Neil Smith, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 77, No. 2 (1987), pp. 155-172.
- Exceptionalism in Geography, F. Schaefer, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (1953), pp. 226-249.
- Comment on "Exceptionalism in Geography", Richard Hartshorne, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (1954), pp. 108-109.
- "Exceptionalism in Geography" Re-Examined, Richard Hartshorne, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 45, No. 3. (1955), pp. 205-244.
- Where is the Research Frontier, Edward Ackerman, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (1963), pp. 429-440.
- Geography 1957-1977: The Augean Period, Peter Gould, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (1979), pp. 139-151.

10/15 Week 7-The Quantifiers

- The Functional Bases of the Central Place Hierarchy, Brian J. L. Berry, William L. Garrison, *Economic Geography*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (1958), pp. 145-154.
- A Multivariate Analysis of the Spacing of Urban Settlements in the United States, Leslie J. King, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (1961), pp. 222-233.
- A Classification of Map Projections, Waldo R. Tobler, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 52, No. 2 (1962), pp. 167-175.
- Geography and Analogue Theory, Richard J. Chorley, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (1964), pp. 127-137.
- The Decision Process in Spatial Context, Julian Wolpert, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (1964), pp. 537-558.
- Is Statistix Inferens the Geographical Name for a Wild Goose? Peter Gould, *Economic Geography*, Vol. 46, Supplement: Proceedings. International Geographical Union. Commission on Quantitative Methods (1970), pp. 439-448.
- Losch's Single-Good Equilibrium, Gordon Mulligan, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (1981), pp. 84-94.

10/22 Week 8-Marxist and Postmodern Geography

- Population, Resources, and the Ideology of Science, David Harvey, *Economic Geography*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (1974), pp. 256-277.
- Inequality and Poverty: A Marxist-Geographic Theory, Richard Peet, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 65, No. 4 (1975), pp. 564-571.
- Structural Marxism and Human Geography: A Critical Assessment, David Ley, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (1982), pp. 30-59.
- The Social Origins of Environmental Determinism, Richard Peet, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 75, No. 3 (1985), pp. 309-333.
- Postmodern Phoenix, Michael J. Schmandt, *Geographical Review*, Vol. 85, Issue 3 (1995), pp. 349-363.
- What Causes Poverty? A Postmodern View, Lakshman Yapa, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 86, No. 4 (1996), pp. 707-728.

PART 2: THE TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY

Topics in this part of the course will be as shown. Copies of readings that are not available on-line will be placed on reserve in the Geography 500 mailbox.

- 10/29 Week 9-Humanist/Feminist Geography**-Professor Pope
- 11/5 Week 10-Resource Geography**-Professor Kyem
- 11/12 Week 11-Tourism Geography**-Professors Benfield & Truly
- 11/19 Week 12-Physical Geography**-Professor Van Beynen
- 11/26 Week 13-NO CLASS**
- 12/3 Week 14- Cultural Geography**-Professor Harmon
- 12/10 Week 15- Regional Geography and Sustainability**-Professor Rickard

12/17 Exam-Papers Due