Geography 600: Perspectives on Geography
Spring Semester 2017 – Syllabus

Class times: Wednesday and Friday, 3.00 pm – 4.15 pm
Location: Bolton B72
Instructor: Nicholas L. Padilla
E-mail: npadilla@uwm.edu
Office: Bolton 442
Office hours: Wednesdays 10.00am – 11.30am, by appointment, and virtual office hours via Skype.

COURSE OBJECTIVE: This course serves as the capstone experience for Geography majors. As such, students will bring together the knowledge and ideas gained in previous courses to address three general objectives. In this course, you will:

1. gain an understanding of Geography as a scholarly discipline;
2. develop a geographical research idea and present it to an audience; through this experience, you will transform from a learner to a producer and presenter of geographical knowledge;
3. and, explore what can be done with your geography major upon completion of your degree.

This course deals with being a geographer and doing what geographers do.

Course Format: To meet these objectives, the class will be conducted primarily as a seminar. A seminar course format means that each of you will play an active, important role in contributing to our learning environment. This means that, my role during class discussions will be to keep things on course, not to serve as the group leader or lecturer. During the discussion component of the course, students will lead discussions based upon assigned readings. Everyone will read the assigned pages and come prepared with questions and comments. There are seven Discipline (Group) sections. For each section, a group of three students will serve as team leaders and will be responsible for generating class discussions. When you serve as a team leader, please plan to meet outside of class with your team to discuss the strategy and then consult with me at least the day before class to confirm the plan.

The class will also attend the Geography Department’s colloquium series in which geographers present their research. This experience provides you with an opportunity to survey concepts, methods, and approaches to geographic inquiry. A brief review of these presentations will be required. Colloquia review sheets will be due at the start of the class after each colloquium.
Finally, a major portion of this course will be spent on developing a research project, presenting a portion of it to an audience, and preparing the final written report. You will complete work on this assignment in stages as research and writing involve a process. Please check the syllabus for these dates. In many ways the culmination of this experience will be the public presentation of your research. This will take place in a longer one-day symposium (December 9th) where conditions comparable to a professional conference will be provided. Your final research paper will be of moderate length (12 – 15 pages; 3,000-3,750 words). Additional details on all aspects of the research paper will be distributed throughout the semester.

ARE YOU READY FOR THIS COURSE?
Because this course is the CAPSTONE research experience course in the Geography major, you should make sure you are ready for it. By the time you enroll in Geography 600, you should have met with the Undergraduate Advising PA and/or with your Geography track adviser (a faculty member) about your preparedness for the course. You are prepared if:

- You have declared the major in Geography with the Geography department (not just L&S).
- You have senior standing.
- You have taken AT LEAST ONE upper-division course in your track.

If you have not done all these things, please consider taking GEOG 600 in a later semester. It is offered every semester.

COURSE TEXTS: The course has two required texts in addition to required readings that will be posted on the course D2L site as PDFs.


You can find the course text elsewhere through any number of online retailers. All other readings will be available on the course D2L site, Content page. Please do NOT plan to read them online. DOWNLOAD them to your computer, and/or a flash drive, early in the semester.

Need help?!?
YES, YOU WILL NEED HELP. Research is not a completely solitary endeavor. As you will note above, my office hours are on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Yang Song, your TA for class, also holds weekly office hours prior to Wednesday’s class. Please contact me or Yang to make other arrangements if your schedule does not fit within our office hours. Frequent contact will be needed to develop your research topic and respond to other course requirements. You will also be required to meet with your assigned Geography faculty advisor, and with any other Geography faculty with research expertise in your area of interest. Please allow maximum 48 hours us to reply your email when you email me or your Yang.

If you have any concerns regarding your ability to complete assignments for this course or have any special needs that must be addressed, please contact me as soon as possible.

STUDENT’S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Please see the link to the Secretary of the University Web site (http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/news_events/upload/Syllabus).
For University policies on the following:

1. **Students with disabilities**

   The University of Wisconsin Milwaukee supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform their instructors of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. We will work either directly with you or in coordination with the Accessibility Resource Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. See [http://uwm.edu/arc/](http://uwm.edu/arc/) for more information.

2. **Religious observances**

   A student shall be permitted to make up an examination or other academic requirement at another time or by an alternative method, without any prejudicial effect, where:

   (a) There is a scheduling conflict between the student's sincerely held religious beliefs and taking the examination or meeting the academic requirements; and

   (b) The student has notified the instructor, within the first three weeks of the beginning of classes (within the first week of summer session and short courses), of the specific days or dates on which he or she will request relief from an examination or academic requirement. See [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm) for more information.

3. **Students called to active military duty**

   Students called to active military service after the beginning of a term or session are entitled to drop their courses and receive a full refund of tuition and fees for courses still in progress and in which they are actively enrolled at the time of the call-up.

   To exercise this option, students should first withdraw from classes (or drop selected classes; see below) and then provide a copy of their military activation orders to the Military Education Benefits Office located in Mellencamp 168A. A copy may also be mailed to that office c/o Dept. of Financial Aid, P.O. Box 469, Milwaukee, WI 53201, or faxed to 414-229-5699. After appropriate review, a full refund will be authorized and processed. See [http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm) for more information.

4. **Incompletes**

   A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. See
5. **Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment)**

Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff. See [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf) for more information.

6. **Academic misconduct**

Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. See [http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/](http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/) for more information.

7. **Complaint procedures**

Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. See [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf) for more information.

8. **Grade appeal procedures**

A student may appeal a grade because it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. See [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm) for more information.

**A NOTE ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** One of the principle objectives of this class is your development as a researcher—that is, learning the skills to produce new and reliable geographic knowledge. To develop and synthesize new knowledge in the context of a research field, you must acknowledge and critically evaluate the knowledge produced by others. **THUS, CITING YOUR SOURCES IS AN IMPORTANT ETHICAL PRACTICE IN RESEARCH.** We will address how to do this in the literature review component of the course, but you are responsible for becoming familiar with UWM’s policies on Academic Conduct and Misconduct (online at [http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/](http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/)).
PLAGIARISM IS A SERIOUS ACADEMIC OFFENSE AND WILL BE TREATED AS SUCH.

Course Assessment and Evaluation

Course assignments
Reading summaries – Because of the seminar format of this class and the importance of readings in structuring our conversations, you will be asked to turn in a reading summary at the beginning of each class with assigned readings. These summaries are designed to support two primary objectives: 1) to facilitate our class discussion by ensuring that you’ve done a close reading of assigned materials, and 2) to further develop your critical reading skills.

Discussion facilitation – Remember that as a seminar based class, all class members are required to participate. So, as facilitators, your role is NOT to “teach” the class everything about the sub-discipline your group has been assigned. Rather, your role is to present any necessary background information, point out some important themes/contributions made in the readings, and raise questions for discussion. When you discuss the readings, please resist the urge to summarize.

Colloquium evaluation – Your goal is to evaluate the content and delivery style of presenters in departmental colloquia (or other similar talks). The items below should help you focus critical thought on important aspects of talks, but some items will be more or less relevant to a given talk. These assignments are intended to facilitate a deeper engagement with original academic research presented by geographers and researchers doing geographic work.

Participation – This is an upper-level, seminar style course that only functions with your active participation in each class. We will read a significant amount of geographic research that will highlight the discipline’s catholic approaches to interrogating and analyzing spatial phenomena. We will read a lot, and some of it will be difficult to interpret. Class discussions are intended for the entire class to collectively work through the readings in order to ensure that everyone has a firm grasp on the day’s articles. We will also use class time to engage in peer review of each other’s research during class time. All of this work requires you to be present and engaged in each class period. You should complete the course readings before each class and come prepared to discuss the day’s topic.

Final research project – The main portion of your grade in this course is an original research project that requires you to design and carry out research. The project grade consists of seven pieces: a topic statement, locational context, annotated bibliography, literature review, data and methods, faculty advisor meeting, presentation of project, and a final written paper. Your final research paper should demonstrate that you have developed an understanding of research design, including the statement of clear research questions related to already existing research (the literature review), and a description of data collection methods appropriate to the research questions. The paper, and the research and findings it reports, should demonstrate your use of some geographic methods and/or a geographic approach to the research topic. You should not only present the findings, but analyze them in relation to the literature you review. Finally, you should discuss the strengths and limitations of your research and its implications for future research (your own or others’).
Grade

Class discussion & participation
- Participation\(^1\), reading summaries, and colloquium 15%
- Leading discussion 5%

Research assignment components
- Topic Statement 4%
- Locational Context 4%
- Annotated Bibliography 4%
- Literature Review 10%
- Data and Methods 8%
- Faculty advisor meeting 2%
- Presentation of project 13%
- Final written project 35%

100%

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\(^1\) Please note that all students are expected to attend classes regularly and we will take attendance every class meeting. If you are not present, you cannot participate and class participation is part of your overall grade. You get two excused absences; after that it will affect your participation grade. If you anticipate missing a class meeting, please notify me in advance.
TENTATIVE – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

GRADES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>73-75%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>86-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>66-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-85%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>63-65%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>76-79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
<td>F</td>
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Work load

This is a 3-credit course. As a rule of thumb, I expect you to spend 2-3 hours outside of class for every one hour in class. Since we will spend 2½ hours in class each week, you can expect to spend approximately 5-8 hours each week preparing for class or working on assignments.

Federal law now requires university instructors to state the amount of time an average student can expect to spend on different class components during the entire semester:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated time for course components, Fall 2016</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time in the classroom* (28 sessions)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time spent reading textbook and other materials</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time preparing presentations</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time completing other assignments</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time for preparation and study</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total for semester (@3 credits x 48 hrs/credit hour)</strong></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
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THIS IS SEMINAR CLASS, SO TO FACILITATE DISCUSSION, READINGS MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE APPROPRIATE SESSION (AS INDICATED BELOW). The schedule and reading outline may be subject to change (with warning) so please assume responsibility for keeping up with classroom announcements. I will send these out via email.