



GEO 3502: Economic Geography

University of Florida - Department of Geography

Fall 2021

Credits: 3; Prereq: none

Class Number: 13823

This course is offered in person on Tuesday from 1:55-2:45 PM (FL Gymnasium 220)
and on Thursday from 1:55-3:50 PM (FL Gymnasium 230)

Updated: December 16, 2021

Instructor

Dr. Olivier J. Walther, Department of Geography, 3205 Turlington Hall, owalther@ufl.edu.
Office hours: Tuesday 2:25-4:25 PM or by appointment (in person or Zoom).

Teaching assistant

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Overview

The world is becoming increasingly connected. Yet, the benefits of globalization have not been shared equally across the regions. What makes regions competitive? Why are some cities more innovative than others? How do borders affect human flows and ideas?

The aim of this course is to study the spatial causes and consequences of uneven development. The course provides a general introduction to economic geography, a science that examines how societies, firms and states make use of space through their economic activities.

The course first discusses the concepts developed in economic geography to understand uneven economic development across the world. It then examines how money, states, firms and workers reshape the global economic landscape. Finally, the course considers the territorial consequences of uneven development for local societies, firms and regions and discusses possible policies that can contribute to reduce territorial disparities.

At the end of the course, you will be able to reflect on the major drivers of territorial change observed across the world using a variety of concepts developed in economic geography. You will also be able to find relevant data pertaining to the evolution of cities, regions and countries, organize the data into tables, maps, or graphs, and apply your knowledge of the spatial economy to compare major trends across regions.

Schedule

Jan 6	Course introduction (McK&C 2019, chap 1, pp. 3-13) + Exercise 1
Jan 11	Key concepts in economic geography (McK&C 2019, chap 2: 26-34)
Jan 13	Regions and regional geography (World Bank 2009: xix-xxiii)
Jan 18	Population (Rosling 2014, 00:00-11:30, 19:15-26:20)
Jan 20	Exercise 2. Working with spatial data (Yau 2013, chapter 4, pp. 146-161)
Jan 25	Production, industrial districts and clusters (McK&C 2019, chap 3, pp. 58-85)
Jan 27	Exercise 3. Mapping spatial data 1 (ArcMap)
Feb 1	Finance (McK&C 2019, chap 4, pp. 102-113)
Feb 3	Exercise 4. Mapping spatial data 2 (ArcMap)
Feb 8	Labor and knowledge-intensive activities (McK&C 2019, chap 6, pp. 174-178)
Feb 10	Exercise 5. Spatial inequalities (Glaeser 2011: 69-91) First assignment due Feb 14 at 11:59PM
Feb 15	Development (McK&C 2019, chap 7, pp. 197-203)
Feb 17	Exercise 6. Mapping development.
Feb 22	State and governance (McK&C 2019, chap 5, pp. 130-142)
Feb 24	Q&A on mid-term paper. Mid-term paper due Feb 28 at 11:59PM
Mar 1	Transport, communication, the digital economy (McK&C 2019, chap 8, 227-234)
Mar 3	Transport policies (Walther et al. 2019a)
Mar 15	Networks, value chains and space (Walther et al. 2019b)
Mar 17	Exercise 7. Economic networks (McK&C 2019, chap 9, pp. 254-265)
Mar 22	Cities, urban agglomeration, innovation (McK&C 2019, chap 10, pp. 295-303)
Mar 24	Exercise 8. Cities (Shane 2019) Second assignment due March 28 at 11:59PM
Mar 29	Guest lecture
Mar 31	Individual work on final paper
Apr 5	Tourism (Hall and Page 2014: 1-11)
Apr 7	Exercise 9. Tourism (Davis 2017, chap 9, pp. 253-260)
Apr 12	Regional integration and borders (World Bank 2009: 96-102)
Apr 14	Exercise 10. Borders (OECD 2019) Final paper due April 18 at 11:59PM
Apr 19	Course overview, Q&A

Final grade

Attendance and participation	10 points
First assignment	10 points
Mid-term paper	30 points
Second assignment	10 points
Final paper	40 points
Total	100 points

The major assessment components of this course include:

- Regular attendance and participation: students are expected to be at every class meeting throughout the entire class session, and must not be reading other materials or use their cell phones. Participation entails responding to questions directed by the instructor and participating in peer-initiated discussions as well.
- First assignment: 500-word description of the data and methodology used to describe the changing geography of a subnational region. This assignment is due **February 14 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- Mid-term paper (1500 words). This descriptive paper uses statistical data from various sources to study the recent economic evolution of a region of your choice. For more information, see “How to write your mid-term paper” on [Canvas](#). The mid-term paper is due **February 28 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- Second assignment: 1000-word literature review of a geographical concept used to explain the changing geography of your region. This assignment is due **March 28 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- Final paper (3000 words). This analytical paper applies some of the key concepts developed in economic geography to study the evolution of a region. For more information, see “How to write your final paper” on [Canvas](#). The final paper is due **April 18 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.

There will be no extra or optional assignment.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following numerical scale:

A: 93-100+, A-: 90-92, B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69, D: 63-66, D-: 60-62, E: <60, E1: stopped attending, I: incomplete. For more information, visit UF’s [Grading Policies](#).

This course fulfills the University of Florida’s Writing and Math Requirement (formerly Gordon Rule). This means that students in this course are required to write at least 6,000 words in assignments throughout the semester. For more information on the Writing and Math Requirement, please examine this [link](#) at the Office of the Registrar.

Literature

Textbook

The textbook for the course is *Introduction to Economic Geography. Globalization, Uneven Development and Place* by Danny MacKinnon & Andrew Cumbers (third edition, 2019). Two hard copies are reserved for this class at the library.

Supplemental readings

- Davis JE. 2017. *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea*. New York, W.W. Norton.
- Glaeser E. 2011. *Triumph of the City. How our Greatest Invention Makes us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier*. New York, Penguin.
- Hall MC, Page SJ. 2014. *The Geography of Tourism and Recreation*. London, Routledge.
- OECD 2019. Regional integration in border cities. Paris, OECD *West African Papers* 20.
- Rosling H. 2014. Don't Panic, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAck2knC08E>, 00:00-11:30
Fertility, 19:15-26:20 Mortality
- Shane S. 2019. Prime Mover: How Amazon Wove Itself Into the Life of an American City. *The New York Times*, Nov. 30.
- Thrift N. 2008. Space: the fundamental stuff of human geography, in Clifford N, Holloway S, Rice SP, Valentine G. (eds) *Key Concepts in Geography*. New York, Sage: 85-96.
- Walther O, Dambo L, Koné M, van Eupen M. 2019a. Mapping travel time to assess accessibility in West Africa: The role of borders, checkpoints and road conditions. *Journal of Transport Geography* 82.
- Walther O, Tenikue M, Trémolières M. 2019b. Economic performance, gender and social networks in West African food systems. *World Development* 124: 1-14.
- World Bank. 2009. *World Development Report. Reshaping Economic Geography*. Washington, DC, The World Bank.
- Yau N. 2013. *Data Points. Visualization That Means Something*. New York, Wiley, chapter 4.

Software

Students must have their own laptop or desktop computer. We will work with three programs (Excel, ArcMap, and ORA) available on [UF Apps](#). The students are responsible for installing the software on their own computer or accessing UF Apps. The instructor cannot be held responsible for any damage or malfunction resulting from the installation or use of the programs.

Other information

Please review the University's policies regarding [student conduct and conflict resolution](#), available through the Dean of Students Office [website](#). Any violations of the Student Honor Code will result in a failing grade for the course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs.

A course description is available here: <https://one.ufl.edu/soc/>

Books and articles can be accessed using UF's Libraries: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/>. To find a scientific journal, please go to [Journals](#) of use [Google Scholar](#).

The course is delivered in person. It includes lectures, discussions, tutorial exercises, and case studies. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with [university policies](#).

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. For additional information, please visit the [University website](#).

This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As the semester proceeds, those plans may need to change to enhance the class and student learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.