



GEO 3502: Economic Geography

University of Florida - Department of Geography

Fall 2021

Credits: 3; Prereq: none

Class Number: 13635

This course is offered on Tuesday from 9:35-10:25 AM (Little Hall 0201)
and on Thursday from 9:35-11:30 AM (Computer Science En A101)

Updated: August 16, 2021

Instructor

Dr. Olivier J. Walther, Department of Geography, 3205 Turlington Hall, owalther@ufl.edu.
Office hours: Tuesday 10:25 AM-12:00 PM or by appointment.

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

Aug 24	Course introduction (McK&C 2019, chap 1, pp. 3-13)
Aug 26	Key concepts in economic geography (Thrift 2008) + Exercise 1
Aug 31	Key concepts in economic geography (McK&C 2019, chap 2: 26-34)
Sep 2	Regions and regional geography (World Bank 2009: xix-xxiii)
Sep 7	Population (Rosling 2014, 00:00-11:30, 19:15-26:20)
Sep 9	Exercise 2. Working with spatial data (Yau 2013, chapter 4, pp. 146-161)
Sep 14	Production, industrial districts and clusters (McK&C 2019, chap 3, pp. 58-85)
Sep 16	Exercise 3. Mapping spatial data 1 (ArcGIS)
Sep 21	Finance (McK&C 2019, chap 4, pp. 102-113)
Sep 23	Exercise 4. Mapping spatial data 2 (ArcGIS)
Sep 28	Labor and knowledge-intensive activities (McK&C 2019, chap 6, pp. 174-178)
Sep 30	Exercise 5. Spatial inequalities (Glaeser 2011: 69-91)
Oct 5	Development (McK&C 2019, chap 7, pp. 197-203)
Oct 7	Exercise 6. Mapping development. Optional assignment due Oct 7, 11:59PM
Oct 12	State and governance (McK&C 2019, chap 5, pp. 130-142)
Oct 14	Q&A on mid-term paper – Mid-term paper due October 14th at 11:59PM
Oct 19	Transport, communication, the digital economy (McK&C 2019, chap 8, 227-234)
Oct 21	Transport policies (Walther et al. 2019a)
Oct 26	Networks, value chains and space (Walther et al. 2019b)
Oct 28	Exercise 7. Economic networks (McK&C 2019, chap 9, pp. 254-265)
Nov 2	Cities, urban agglomeration, innovation (McK&C 2019, chap 10, pp. 295-303)
Nov 4	Exercise 8. Cities (Shane 2019)
Nov 9	Guest lecture
Nov 16	Tourism (Hall and Page 2014: 1-11)
Nov 18	Exercise 10. Tourism (Davis 2017, chap 9, pp. 253-260)
Nov 23	Individual work on final paper
Nov 30	Regional integration and borders (World Bank 2009: 96-102)
Dec 2	Exercise 9. Borders (OECD 2019)
Dec 7	Course overview, Q&A – Final paper due December 13th at 11:59PM

Final grade

Attendance and participation	10 points
Mid-term paper	40 points
Final paper	50 points
Total	100 points

Up to 5 extra credits can be earned by completing an additional assignment. The class will be out of 100 total points and the optional assignment will not hurt your grades.

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.
- Mid-term assignment (at least 2000 words). This descriptive paper will use 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 **October 14th at 11:59PM on Canvas**.
- Final paper (at least 4000 words). This analytical paper will apply some of the key concepts developed in economic geography to study the evolution of a region, using the existing literature and quantitative data. For more information, see “How to write your final paper” on [Canvas](#). The final paper is due **December 13th at 11:59PM on Canvas**.

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 will fulfill 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.
- Valerio, V. C., Walther, O. J., Eilittä, M., Cissé, B., Muneeppeerakul, R., & Kiker, G. A. (2020). Network analysis of regional livestock trade in West Africa. *PloS One*, 15(5), e0232681.
- 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, ArcGIS, 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.

Ethics

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.

Other information

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.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student.

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.