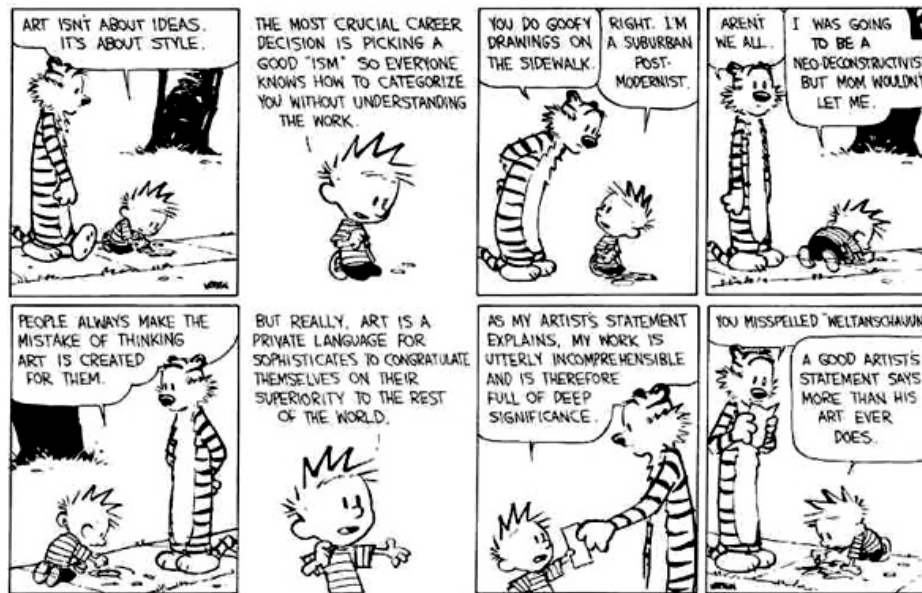


GEO6118: Contemporary Geographic Thought

Fall 2021

Section: GT61(class # 26467)
Meeting times: Tuesdays 11:45am – 2:45 pm
TUR 3018
Instructor: Dr. Jane Southworth
Email: jsouthwo@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-3:30 pm or by appointment



Course Description:

The central aim of the course is to learn what it means to be a geographer, and more specifically what it means to be a UF-trained geographer.

Overview

Geography describes a long running conversation about the earth and humanity's place on it, and a tradition in "earth-writing," to take the word literally from its Greek roots, that began long before any of us were born. What counts as geographical knowledge, and the acceptable means of producing it, has itself changed over time, and in relation to changing historical, institutional, and geographical contexts. As students and novice producers of geographic knowledge, you enter this long running conversation; it is the premise of the course that it is worthwhile for you to examine, both generally and in specific ways related to your own research interests, what has been said before, how it has been said, and why. The course is thus meant to raise questions. What practices have been formative in the development of geographic theories and ideas, what methods, values, and philosophies have defined geographic thought and practice, and how have these changed over the course of the modern discipline's development? What are the implications of this history today?

The seminar explores the making of Geography, geographers, and geographical knowledge, focusing on the western geographical tradition from the nineteenth century to the present. We will examine key ideas, debates, institutions and discourses that have shaped the modern discipline, but also attempt to keep in view the broader historical, social, and political contexts in which different models of science have taken shape. A special focus on a more integrative view of Geography – and less the traditional human/physical divide will be attempted, via in part, the incorporation of two keys texts: Couper makes abstract theory explicit and connects theory with the practices of geographical research and Holt-Jensen who attempts in his text to keep "the fragmented landscape of geography together in one-piece" and so talks about the science of Geography and not human versus physical. Given the diversity of UF Geography this is essential in the teaching of this course.

As such then, this seminar is devoted to excavating and defining the foundations of contemporary geographical thought. We ask: what does it mean to think geographically? What constitutes geographical thought? How can we define geographical thought when its practitioners think and do such diverse things?

Overall, this course is intended to “make geographers” out of you. This means that at the end of the semester you should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the discipline of geography to have preliminary answers to the following questions:

- 1) Where do my interests, strengths, and weaknesses fit in the context of the discipline of geography?
- 2) How has the discipline evolved over the past 100+ years, and how does that history shape the approaches that geographers use/choose?
- 3) What are “valid” (supported, contextualized) approaches to the study and practice of geography today? What are the easy and hard roads of participation in the discipline?
- 4) How is geography situated within the academy, and how does that shape my future possibilities?

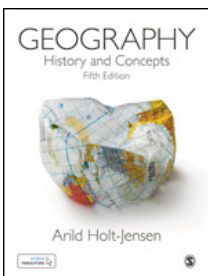
These are big, hard questions. Geographers differ as to the answers. In addition to having your own answers to these questions, you will be expected to understand competing perspectives on the shape of the discipline, to defend them (at least provisionally), and to be able to argue for and against them. In other words—and this is perhaps the central point of the course—it is not enough for you to justify why what you already care about is geographic and/or important. You must substantively understand why and how other scholars/ practitioners, with alternative approaches to the practice of geography, justify their own work as well. In addition to being able to answer these sorts of questions, there are some important kinds of embodied knowledge that the course is designed to help you develop. The sorts of reading, writing, presentation, and discussion in which you will engage this semester are sometimes designed to be usefully uncomfortable rather than maximally efficient. In addition to the substantive content of the course, we will spend some time discussing the practice of being a scholar in geography. This course covers a large and difficult topic, and as a result, the reading load is unavoidably heavy.

The goals of the course are:

- To develop better understanding of both the history and breadth of the discipline, including knowledge of major approaches and how they have changed over time.
- To move beyond the silos of our subdisciplines to identify things that have united and divided these different approaches—and how that might change in the future as we continue to shape the trajectory of the discipline.
- To read the work of UF faculty and understand the research foci of UF Geography – as you will carry this department's traditions and expertise with you after graduation.

TEXTBOOKS

Book 1: Required

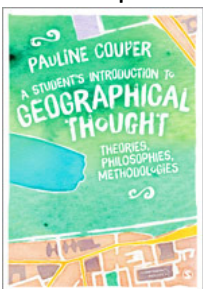


"Geography: History and Concepts" 5TH EDITION BY [Arild Holt-Jensen](#)

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/geography/book260586#resources>

ebook = \$33.00, paperback [ISBN: 9781526440150] = \$41.00
Also available on Amazon.com

Book 2: Required



"A Student's Introduction to Geographical Thought: Theories, Philosophies, Methodologies" by [Pauline Couper](#)

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/a-students-introduction-to-geographical-thought/book242349>

ebook = \$38.00, paperback [ISBN: 9781446282960] = \$47.00
Also available on Amazon

Format and Requirements

The seminar focuses on: (1) close reading and discussion of texts, as well as research articles and book chapters in the history and philosophy of science and geography; (2) key papers selected by faculty to represent the focus areas of research in UF Geography; and (3) research articles written by UF geographers, selected by these faculty as their most important contributions.

The primary course requirements for each student include: (1) leading discussion twice during the semester; (2) creation of a weekly summary of the main points of each week's readings; (3) suggested additional readings on the history and philosophy of geography to add to those assigned, with a brief discussion of each and description of why selected; (4) engaged discussion in the class environment; (5) in class activities and homework assignments (often group work); (6) selection of two focus areas for discussion leads in those weeks; and (7) reading at least one paper per faculty member listed for each week. There is no final paper or exam in this course but rather attention and focus is on the reading assignments, understanding and synthesis of material, development of an understanding what UF Geography and Geographers do, and contribution to weekly discussions.

The seminar format is meant to create an environment for critical evaluation and discussion of course texts and topics. Instead of lecturing (although I will begin most weeks with a brief set of comments), the instructor is there mainly to structure the course through the reading list, to help guide or direct discussions, raise questions, exchange ideas, and to explain and facilitate the assigned activities and homeworks. The success of a seminar, then, depends largely on the quality of the class discussions and on our abilities (and at times, perseverance) in engaging with course texts both individually and collectively. This requires a commitment for reading weekly texts before class (expect ~ 100-200 pages per week combining journal articles and book chapters, and set aside time accordingly), and, with the acknowledgement that some will tend to participate more than others on a given topic and in general, an effort to participate actively and generously in class discussions. I also encourage you to raise questions about issues arising from course readings that concern you or which may be confusing.

Detailed Course Requirements

There are seven (7) requirements for this class. Note all work will be submitted in Canvas.

First, each student will be expected to lead discussion twice during the semester. This involves a critical reading of materials presented for each week, together with an ability to synthesize those readings and draw out the major issues and points of contention. This does not mean a drivel recounting of the minutiae of a paper but an ability to provide critical insight into the main ideas presented, to compare and contrast them with other ideas, and to evaluate which seem to present better, more useful, or more coherent insights into what we are discussing. Such a task will require putting together a discussion sheet that is to be distributed to other students in the class. Think of what are the 4 or 5 big ideas that come out of the week's readings and use that as a springboard for generating discussion. The student leading a particular week's discussion will email the discussion points to the class and instructor no later than 5 pm two days before class (i.e. Sunday). This will give us all time to contemplate the questions/discussion points. Make sure you keep a copy for yourself to which you can refer in class.

Second, each student will prepare a précis/summary of the main points of each week's readings, to be handed in at the end of each class (this summary will be useful for you during the class discussion). This précis/ summary is to be limited to NO MORE THAN 3 PAGES, typed and double-spaced, 12-point font. This limited length will force you to be concise and precise in your writing. You will receive either a "Satisfactory" or an "Unsatisfactory" for each of these summaries. Again, this is not to be an "author X said this but author Y said that" account. I want you to think about the key issues that come out of the readings, where there are points of intersection between them and where there are points of discord. This is an important skill to learn as a graduate student for when it comes to writing for a broader audience (i.e., publishing).

Third, based on the topics presented for the Geographic Thought Topic of the week, provide 2 additional 'supplementary' readings you would recommend to help provide additional insights, contrary viewpoints, missing themes etc. For these readings you will submit 1 page maximum with the citation of each paper, and a brief description of what the paper discusses and what you feel it could contribute to the topic at hand (i.e. why you picked it!). You will also submit the pdf's of these papers. For these additional citations you must consider the diversity of the author(s). Geographic Thought courses are heavily criticized for focusing on 'old white men' literature! Note for this course one of the two main textbooks is written by a female author. As such, for the 2 additional citations you must look for diversity (you should consider gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, race, and culture) and state the diversity of the authors selected in your text. This will help us to very clearly address the issues of bias in our selections. At least 1 paper selected (and ideally both) will present this diversity of authorship.

Fourth, you must come to each class session prepared, having completed all the readings in advance, and you must contribute to the ongoing discussion and engage in the assigned classroom activities. You will receive either a "Satisfactory" or an "Unsatisfactory" for each week for discussion engagement.

Fifth, based on weekly topics, additional in-class activities (which will become homework for completion if not completed in class) will be assigned. These activities will ideally help bring Geography to life for you, force you to engage with other students and to consider the presentation and

'face' of Geography to the outside world. As such, these activities may engage technology, require the creation of videos, posters, blogs or other types of visual and media engagements.

Sixth. based on the focus areas (presented at the end of the syllabi), each student will select two focus areas to help lead the discussion on that topic when it comes about. For this, you will undertake all the readings as for the first task in this list. It is likely that more than one student may pick a given topic and in this case group work is allowed if desired. Just as for the Geographic Thought readings this involves a critical reading of materials presented, together with an ability to synthesize those readings and draw out the major issues and themes for the given focus area. Such a task will again require putting together a discussion sheet that is to be distributed to other students in the class. Think of what are the 4 or 5 big ideas that come out of the focus area's readings and use that as a springboard for generating discussion. The student leading a particular week's discussion will email the discussion points to the class and instructor no later than 5 pm two days before class (i.e. Sunday). This will give us all time to contemplate the questions/discussion points. Make sure you keep a copy for yourself to which you can refer in class. In addition, each student who selected this focus area will suggest 2 additional readings they feel would contribute well to the theme as possible 'key readings' and will provide 1-2 sentence description of why each was selected. Again, please consider the issue of diversity of authors when selecting your additional readings. Finally, the student(s) who selected each theme will then review all the readings assigned (which came from department faculty individually) and the suggested readings from themselves or other students and will then suggest a new listing of suggested readings for that focus area – using as many or as few of the assigned readings as you like. Again, some discussion from the group/individual on why these have been selected will be useful. Many of these suggestions will probably become future renditions of this course!

Seventh. depending on which faculty members are listed in a given week, the student will read at least one paper for each faculty member listed and come prepared to discuss the overall contribution of this paper to the faculty members field and to Geography overall. Given the large diversity of faculty in UF Geography, many papers will be well outside of your areas of expertise and knowledge and may be a challenge to read. By the end of the semester though, to say you have read at least one key paper from every faculty member in our program will be a significant achievement and useful to you during your career here at UF. You will receive either a “Satisfactory” or an “Unsatisfactory” for each week for completion of this task.

Grading

Based on final points total:

93-100% = A,

90-92.9% = A-

87-89.9% = B+

83-86.9% = B

80-82.9% = B-

77-79.9% = C+

73- 76.9% = C

70-72.9% = C-

67-69.9% = D+

63-66.9% =D

60-62.9% = D-

Less than 60 = E (Fail)

FALL 2021 COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesdays 11:45 am – 2:45 pm, TUR3018

Each week, I assign a set of readings which will be posted under the relevant module in Canvas. These readings will be: (1) related to the history and concepts in geography or the theories, philosophies and methodologies of geographic thought; (2) represent selected readings from the UF Geography faculty on the different focus areas represented in our program; and (3) be readings selected by each faculty member in response to the following request from me: "If you had to list 2 papers (by you, as solo, lead or coauthor) that you feel best represent you and your research what would these be". Topics to be covered are briefly given below – full detail, citations and links to papers for each topic are provided in canvas.

Week/Date	Geographic Thought Topic [1]	UF Focus Area/Faculty [2, 3]
Week 1: August 24 th	What is Geography?	Intro: History of Geography at UF up through Current Status of UF Geography
Week 2: August 31st	NO CLASS – JANE AT NASA	
Week 3: Sept 7 th	The roots of Geography and its development into a discipline	FOCUS AREA #1: Geospatial Analysis & Techniques Dr. Kevin Ash Dr. Jason Blackburn
Week 4: Sept 14 th	The Regional Tradition	Dr. Michael Binford Dr. Brian Child
Week 5: Sept 21 st	The Growth of Spatial Science	FOCUS AREA #2: Medical Geography in Global Health Dr. Johanna Engström Dr. Tim Fik
Week 6: Sept 28 th	Paradigms & Revolutions	Dr. Yujie Hu Dr. Gaby Hamerlinck
Week 7: Oct 5 th	Positivism	FOCUS AREA #3: Earth System Science Dr. David Keellings Dr. Liang Mao
Week 8: Oct 12 th	Alternatives to Spatial Science	Dr. Corene Matyas Dr. Joann Mossa
Week 9: Oct 19 th	Post-structuralism and Beyond	FOCUS AREA #4: Geopolitics and the Global Economy Mr. Stephen Mullens Dr. Esther Mullens
Week 10: Oct 26 th	Complexity Theory	Dr. Michael Norris Dr. Sadie Ryan
Week 11: Nov 2 nd	Moral Philosophy & Ethics	FOCUS AREA #5: Places, Networks & Flows Dr. Katy Serafin Dr. Cynthia Simmons
Week 12: Nov 9 th	Thinking, Doing, Constructing Geography	Dr. Anwar Sounny-Slitine Dr. Jane Southworth
Week 13: Nov 16 th	Geographical Tasks in a Globalizing World	FOCUS AREA #6: Catastrophes, Conservation and Conflict Dr. Bob Walker Dr. Olivier Walther
Week 14: Nov 23rd	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS	
Week 14: Nov 30 th	GIScience	FOCUS AREA #7: Sustainability & the Global Environment Dr. Berry Wen Dr. Willie Wright
Week 15: Dec 7 th	The Future of Geography	Pick 2 papers written by fellow graduate students in our program to discuss – because you all <i>ARE</i> the future of Geography 😊

Canvas: We will use the “modules” feature on Canvas to organize readings, discussion boards, and places to upload assignments. You can see how this works by visiting the Canvas page at <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/420554>

Office Hours: I will hold office hours on Mondays from 1:30-3:30 pm, but please make an appointment in advance via email if you plan to access office hours remotely – then I will be sure to use zoom for our meeting.

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy

- Attendance is required - you are responsible for the announcements made in class.
- Class Rules: Cell Phones MUST be turned off or placed on a silent mode. Texting during class time is not permitted nor condoned. It is expected that students will avoid surfing the internet, using phone apps, and checking e-mail during class to prevent distracting others.
- Please turn all work in on-time. Contact me immediately if any problems arise or you know something will be late. If you fail to complete the assignment by the assigned day and do not have a valid excuse, there will be no make-up and you will be given a zero (0) on the assignment.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) 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.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals>. 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://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Commitment to a Safe and Inclusive Learning Environment

The Department of Geography and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences values broad diversity within our community and is committed to individual and group empowerment, inclusion, and the elimination of discrimination. It is expected that every person in this class will treat one another with dignity and respect regardless of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. If you feel like your performance in class is being impacted by discrimination or harassment of any kind, please contact your instructor or any of the following: your academic advisor or Graduate Program Coordinator, the Department Chair or your Graduate Student Representatives.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <https://registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa.html>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc> , and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, Assault, or Violence: If you or a friend has been subjected to sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or violence contact the Office of Title IX Compliance, located at Yon Hall Room 427, 1908 Stadium Road, (352) 273-1094, title-ix@ufl.edu
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)
- Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
- University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu . <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> . Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/> .
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> .
- Student Complaints Campus: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf .
- On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process> .

The following are the Focus Areas of UF Geography to be discussed in this course.

(1) Geospatial Analysis & Techniques; (2) Medical Geography in Global Health (MGGH); (3) Earth System Science; (4) Geopolitics and the Global Economy; (5) Places, Networks & Flows; (6) Catastrophes, Conservation and Conflict; and (7) Sustainability & the Global Environment.

FOCUS AREA #1: Geospatial Analysis & Techniques

Modeling, Measurement, Visualization and Computation: techniques for the collection, analysis, interpretation and display of geospatial data, using tools such as GIS, Remote Sensing, GPS, and Spatial Statistics.

FOCUS AREA #2: Medical Geography in Global Health (MGGH)

Medical geography, an important area of health research, applies concepts, methods, and techniques from geography to investigate health-related topics across the world, focusing on spatial aspects of human and animal (livestock and wildlife) disease and health intervention.

FOCUS AREA #3: Earth System Science

This is the science of the atmosphere, land, biota, and water from a geospatial perspective. By combining contemporary issues such as climate change, environmental extremes, and hazards, this focus area emphasizes the integrative nature of physical and environmental geography. Earth systems scientists use biophysical understanding to identify and solve problems for management and policy.

FOCUS AREA #4: Geopolitics and the Global Economy

The turbulence of the current times has dramatically transformed the world's economic and political geographies. The scale and scope of such changes require urgent attention. Important topics in this arena relate to: globalization and its impact on peoples and places; economic inequalities across geographic scales and borders; terrorism and power; the development of the knowledge-based economy; and the relationship between economy and environment. Now, more than ever, the changing fortunes of peoples and places demands our attention.

FOCUS AREA #5: Places, Networks & Flows

Geographers conceive of networks and flows between places as a foundational spatial concept. Geographic information systems (GIS) are the main analytical tools employed in determining relations between individuals, settlements, modes of transport, and infrastructures like power grids, and communication networks. The concepts can also be applied to disease contagion, healthcare service delivery, crime activities, river networks and atmospheric teleconnections.

FOCUS AREA #6: Catastrophes, Conservation and Conflict

Disastrous natural hazards, both fast and slow, and violent conflicts affect many people worldwide, often impacting already fragile environments and conservation areas. These crises have significant political, economic, and social implications that can reverse development gains, further entrench poverty and inequality, thereby increasing the risk for future crises.

FOCUS AREA #7: Sustainability & the Global Environment

Major contemporary issues in global environmental change and sustainability have increasing relevance for environmental management and development practice in both the developed and developing worlds. Global socio-ecological problems call for interdisciplinary solutions that transcend the usual boundaries of science and decision-making.

Week 1 in class – sign up for which topics to lead in Geographic Thought and each student will select the 2 focus areas they wish to lead or group lead. We will complete this selection in class and then I will transfer assignment into canvas by assigning leads in the course to each topic

Week/Date	Geographic Thought Topic [1]	STUDENT ASSIGNED:
Week 1: August 24 th	What is Geography?	
Week 2: August 31 st	NO CLASS – JANE AT NASA	
Week 3: Sept 7 th	The roots of Geography and its development into a discipline	
Week 4: Sept 14 th	The Regional Tradition	
Week 5: Sept 21 st	The Growth of Spatial Science	
Week 6: Sept 28 th	Paradigms & Revolutions	
Week 7: Oct 5 th	Positivism	
Week 8: Oct 12 th	Alternatives to Spatial Science	
Week 9: Oct 19 th	Post-structuralism and Beyond	
Week 10: Oct 26 th	Complexity Theory	
Week 11: Nov 2 nd	Moral Philosophy & Ethics	
Week 12: Nov 9 th	Thinking, Doing, Constructing Geography	
Week 13: Nov 16 th	Geographical Tasks in a Globalizing World	
Week 14: Nov 23rd	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS	
Week 14: Nov 30 th	GIScience	
Week 15: Dec 7 th	The Future of Geography	

Week/Date	UF Focus Area	STUDENTS ASSIGNED (2 MAX):
Week 3: Sept 7 th	FOCUS AREA #1: Geospatial Analysis & Techniques	
Week 5: Sept 21 st	FOCUS AREA #2: Medical Geography in Global Health	
Week 7: Oct 5 th	FOCUS AREA #3: Earth System Science	
Week 9: Oct 19 th	FOCUS AREA #4: Geopolitics and the Global Economy	
Week 11: Nov 2 nd	FOCUS AREA #5: Places, Networks & Flows	
Week 13: Nov 16 th	FOCUS AREA #6: Catastrophes, Conservation and Conflict	
Week 14: Nov 30 th	FOCUS AREA #7: Sustainability & the Global Environment	

