



**GEO 3502: ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY**  
University of Florida - Department of Geography  
Syllabus – Fall 2025 (online)

**Course Information**

Class Number/Section: 12342 / EGDL; 12343 / EGUF (UF Online)

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing or higher

Modality: Fully online (asynchronous)

First Week of Class: August 21-22

**Instructor Information**

Name: Md Shaharier Alam

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Office Location: Turlington Hall, 1215

Office Hours:

- By appointment, (use Canvas Inbox or by email to schedule)

**Course Description**

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.

**Course Objectives**

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.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze and discuss the fundamental concepts of economic geography
- Understand the key processes of economic geography
- Find and use economic data
- Apply the theoretical and analytical tools of economic geography to empirical case studies
- Write a research paper using original research and analysis

## **How This Course Will Be Taught**

This is a fully online course offered in an asynchronous format. All course activities, assignments, learning content, supplemental readings, and communication will be available on and conducted through Canvas, our course management system. You can access the course at <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>.

Each module contains: (1) a module overview, (2) learning materials, and (3) assessments.

- Module overview includes an introduction to major themes and learning objectives.
- Learning materials include readings, videos, PowerPoint slides, and exercise data.
- Assessments will consist of writing submissions uploaded to Canvas.

## **Writing Requirement and Course Expectations**

This course fulfills the Writing (formerly Gordon Rule-6000). This means that students in this course are required to write at least 6,000 words in assignments throughout the semester. Work in this course contributes to [UF's 24,000 original written word requirement](#). "Original words" DOES NOT include references and title pages.

The 6,000 word requirement is spread across two writing assignments in this course. Please note that excess words written in one assignment will not be counted toward the word requirements of another assignment.

Regarding course expectations: This is a research and writing intensive course. You will be expected to utilize data as evidence in your work throughout the term and, to some extent, feel comfortable using and/or interpreting quantitative methods.

This does not mean that you must rely exclusively on or demonstrate mastery of quantitative techniques, nor are you expected to have expertise in economic theory. However, gathering and interpreting data, quantitative methods, and at least rudimentary economic theory are key elements of the course.

## Grading and Assessments

Module exercises	10 points
Data and methodology paper	10 points
Midterm paper	30 points
Literature review	10 points
Final paper	40 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 points</b>

The major assessment components of this course include:

- **Module exercises:** There will be 5 module exercises throughout the term. These are meant to enhance your ability to gather, understand, and analyze spatial and economic data. Each exercise will include notes, PowerPoints, and/or videos to guide you. The exercises will equip you with all the tools you'll need to write an effective research paper for this course, as well as impart useful and marketable training for other endeavors.
- **Data and methodology paper:** 500-word description of the data and methodology used to describe the changing geography of a subnational region. This assignment is due **September 28 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- **Midterm paper (1,500 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 midterm paper" on Canvas. The midterm paper is due **October 19 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- **Literature review:** 1000-word literature review of a geographical concept used to explain the changing geography of your region. Keep in mind that a literature review discusses concepts/theories/frameworks and NOT the case study or region. This assignment is due **November 9 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- **Final paper (3,000 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 **December 7 at 11:59PM** on Canvas.
- Students who wish to improve their grades can complete an optional assignment due **December 7 at 11:59 PM**. Not completing this assignment will not hurt your grade.

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following numerical scale. Note that a grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for a major or minor credit. See UF's [Grading Policies](#).

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
>92.5	90-92.5	87-89	83-86	80-92	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	<60
4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	0.67	0

### Minimum Technical Skills

To complete your tasks in this course, you do not need advanced technical or quantitative skills, though such skills will certainly aid you in the course. You will be introduced to the following programs for data analysis and research: Excel, ArcGIS Pro, ORA. Further details about how to access these programs in UFApps are noted in the "Software" section below.

Week	Topic + Readings	Assignments + Due Dates
Week 1	Course introduction	
Week 2	<u>Key concepts in economic geography</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 1-2 (pp. 3-13, 26-34)	Exercise 1 (due Sun 8/31)
Week 3	<u>Regions and regional geography</u> World Bank 2009 (pp. xix-xxiii) <u>Working with spatial data</u> Yau 2013, Ch. 4 (pp. 143-161)	Exercise 2 (due Sun 9/7)
Week 4	<u>Population</u> Rosling 2014, 00:00-11:30, 19:15-26:20 [video] Günther & Harttgen 2016 (skim)	Exercise 3 (due Sun 9/14)
Week 5	<u>Production, industrial districts, and clusters</u> McK&C 2019, Ch.3 (pp. 58-85)	1. Research question + case study (due Fri 9/19) 2. Exercise 4 (due Sun 9/21)
Week 6	<u>Labor and knowledge-intensive activities</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 6 (pp. 174-178)	<b>Data &amp; Meth. (due Sun 9/28)</b>
Week 7	<u>Spatial inequalities</u> Glaeser 2011 (pp. 69-91) <u>Development</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 7 (pp. 197-203)	
Week 8	<u>Finance</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 4 (pp. 102-113) <u>Transport, communication, the digital economy</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 8 (pp. 227-234)	
Week 9	<u>Transport policies</u> Walther et al. 2019a	<b>Midterm (due Sun 10/19)</b>
Week 10	<u>Networks, value chains, and space</u> Walther et al. 2019b <u>Economic networks</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 9 (pp. 254-265)	Exercise 5 (due Sun 10/26)
Week 11	<u>Cities, urban agglomeration, innovation</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 10 (pp. 295-303) Shane 2019	
Week 12	<u>Regional integration and borders</u> World Bank 2009 (pp. 96-102) OECD 2019	<b>Literature Review (due Sun 11/9)</b>
Week 13	<u>Tourism</u> Hall and Page 2014 (pp. 1-11) Davis 2017, Ch. 9 (pp. 253-260)	Research question + concept (due Fri 11/14)
Week 14	<u>State and governance</u> McK&C 2019, Ch. 5 (pp. 130-142)	
	THANKSGIVING <b>No class</b>	
Week 15	<u>Course wrap-up</u>	<b>Final (due Sun 12/7)</b>

# GEO3502 Economic Geography: Fall 2025 Overview

Wk	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
<b>AUGUST</b>							
<b>1</b>	17	18	19	20 Registration	21 Class Start	22	23
<b>2</b>	24	25	26	27 Drop/Add	28	29	30
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>							
<b>3</b>	AUG 31 Ex. 1	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>4</b>	7 Ex. 2	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>5</b>	14 Ex. 3	15	16	17	18	19 <i>RQ + Case</i>	20
<b>6</b>	21 Ex. 4	22	23	24	25	26	27
<b>7</b>	28 Data + Meth	29	30	OCT 1	OCT 2	OCT 3	OCT 4
<b>OCTOBER</b>							
<b>8</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>9</b>	12	13	14	15	16	17 <i>Homecoming</i>	18 <i>Homecoming</i>
<b>10</b>	19 Midterm	20	21	22	23	24	25
<b>11</b>	26 Ex. 5	27	28	29	30	31	NOV 1
<b>NOVEMBER</b>							
<b>12</b>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>13</b>	9 Lit Review	10	11 <i>Holiday</i>	12	13	14 <i>RQ + Concept</i>	15
<b>14</b>	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23 <i>Thanksgiving</i>	24 -----	25 -----	26 -----	27 -----	28 -----	29 <i>Break</i>
<b>DECEMBER</b>							
<b>15</b>	NOV 30	1	2 Class End	3	4 <i>Reading</i>	5 <i>Days</i>	6
<b>16</b>	7 Final	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14 <i>Grades Due</i>	15	16	Key:	Module Exercise	Paper Due	Holiday

## Literature

Statement of attestation: Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is only responsible for these instructional materials.

### 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 for those with access to campus facilities. Students experiencing difficulty acquiring a copy of the textbook should reach out to the instructor as soon as possible.

### Supplemental readings (provided in Canvas)

- 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>
- 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.

## Citation style and plagiarism

When using information, data, quotes, etc. from a book, article, or other source, make sure that the source is cited properly and that your paper is not plagiarized, wholly or in part. Use Google Scholar or the UF Library website to export your references in MLA, APA, Chicago, IEEE, or any referencing style you want.

General statements must be presented as follows: *Cities tend to attract creative workers (Scott 2002)*. Excerpts must be presented in quotation marks to show that a particular portion of your paper is from a different source. Include the author's name, the date, and page number, as follows: *According to Glaeser (2011: 65), "national policy should strive to enrich and empower everybody."*

## The Use of Artificial Intelligence

UF has embraced the use of AI throughout the curriculum, in research and in the classroom. Learning to use LLM generative AI tools (like ChatGPT) is an important skill. However, conducting original research, developing original ideas, communicating clearly, and writing well are also key skills. Further, it is a violation of university policy to misrepresent work that you submit or exchange with your instructor by characterizing it as your own, including responses to assignments that do not acknowledge the use of generative AI tools.

To that end, limited use of AI tools for brainstorming ideas and refining research questions is permitted. If you use an AI tool in any assignment, you must include a brief statement at the top of the bibliography explaining:

- a. precisely which AI tools were used (e.g., ChatGPT paid version, Claude Sonnet 3.7 on UFIT NaviGator);
- b. how the tools were used (e.g., to refine a research idea, to check my understanding of a concept); and
- c. why you used the tools (e.g., to stimulate thinking, to save time, to manage stress).

You are not permitted to use AI tools for drafting text/prose or in your written assignment submissions. **Any unauthorized or undocumented use of AI will be treated as plagiarism.** AI tools should be used wisely with an aim to deepen understanding.

Please review the [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#) for additional details.

## Software

We will work with three programs (Excel, ArcGIS Pro, and ORA) available on [UFApps](#). The students are responsible for installing the software on their own computer or accessing UFApps. The instructor cannot be held responsible for any damage or malfunction resulting from the installation or use of the programs.

For general help using the UFApps on the Horizon platform, [visit UFIT's help page](#). For help with ESRI login for ArcGIS Pro, [watch this step-by-step video](#).

## University Policies + Other Notes

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for valuable student resources, please visit the [UF Academic Policies & Resources page](#).

Canvas. Important announcements and updates will be regularly posted to the course Canvas site. It is your responsibility to check Canvas frequently. To ensure you do not miss anything, please make sure that your Canvas profile is set to receive notifications.

Email accounts. It is UF policy that you use your GatorLink account or Canvas when emailing your instructors. I will not answer emails sent from other accounts (e.g., personal Gmail, etc.).

Changes. This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. As the semester proceeds, those plans may need to change on account of scheduling issues, weather, as well as to enhance student learning. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.