

G&ES 331: Economic Geography – Spring 2019

32-331-01: 11:00-12:15 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday, Advanced Sci and Tech Hall 309

Prof. Stentor Danielson

Office: Advanced Technology and Science Hall, Room 327 (enter through the Geography main office, Room 319, and go straight back then take a right)

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Office hours: Official office hours are 12-2 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. My door is generally always open when I am in the office, and I welcome students anytime I'm in.

About this class

Economic Geography is the study of how economic processes shape, and are shaped by, geographic factors of space, place, and environment. Economic geographers ask questions like: why is this industry located in this particular city? Why is this country prospering while that one is impoverished? How are our methods of production using up the earth's resources? What effect is economic globalization having on local cultures?

Outcomes

By the end of this course, a successful student will be able to:

- Identify the forces promoting and inhibiting economic development at the local, regional, and global scales
- Analyze the role played by natural resources in steering economic processes, and of economic processes in exploiting or conserving resources
- Trace the actions of people in response to changing economic circumstances, including cultural change, re-skilling, and migration
- Examine how networks of economic relationships connect producers and consumers across the globe

This course addresses the following departmental outcomes:

- Each graduate will deliver oral presentations, demonstrating the ability to effectively communicate discipline-specific concepts. (1.1)
- Each graduate will write scholarly papers using acceptable format and organization with proper citations to appropriate literature. (1.2)
- Each graduate will actively participate in collaborative projects and in academic field trips (1.3)
- Each graduate will demonstrate professionalism and integrity in his/her academic conduct. (1.4)
- Each graduate shall develop the ability to respect and integrate diverse worldviews in problem-solving frameworks (1.5)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to develop valid research questions and hypotheses. (2.1)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to apply proper techniques for data acquisition and interpretation in a problem-solving context. (2.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to solve open-ended problems using scientific methodology. (2.3)
- Each graduate will develop the ability to make informed, scientifically-based decisions regarding environmental issues. (2.4)

- Each graduate will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge, concepts and techniques from complementary disciplines to solve problems. (3.3)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of features and patterns of the human environment (4.2)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of concepts such as absolute and relative location, proximity, separation, direction, region, hierarchy, density, and dispersion, and methods that are used to describe and analyze spatial patterns (4.3)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of the major spatial features and patterns in the cultural environment such as language, religion, and agriculture and economic, political, and demographic regions (4.7)
- Each graduate will demonstrate an understanding of the major processes such as settlement, migration, trade, technological development, diffusion, and landscape transformation that shape cultural patterns (4.8)

And the following university-wide outcomes:

- Communication: Communicate effectively in speech and in writing, using appropriate information sources, presentation formats, and technologies. (1)
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving: Locate, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and ideas from multiple perspectives--mathematical, scientific, and humanistic. Apply this information literacy to contemporary challenges. (2)
- Personal Development: Demonstrate intellectual curiosity, as well as a commitment to wellness, and to emotional and spiritual growth. (6)
- Professional Proficiency: Apply knowledge and skills to meet professional competencies within a specific discipline. (8)

Assignments

General assignments policies

All written assignments must be submitted to the class's D2L Dropbox by the beginning of class on the day they're due. Assignments will be docked 5% for each 24 hours or part thereof they are late, unless a documented unforeseeable excuse is provided. Since you have the entire semester's schedule now, please plan your time so as to complete all assignments early, so that you are prepared if something unexpected happens.

In this class you will be graded on four items: Current Events, Class Participation, Case Studies, and the Final Project.

1. Class participation

Most classes will involve a combination of discussion, lecture, and interactive simulation games. Students are expected to have read the day's reading assignment, and to come to class prepared to discuss the topic and participate actively in the day's activity. Your participation grade will be based on the overall quality of your contributions in class.

By the day of the final exam, you will to turn in a writeup of no more than 1000 words stating what participation grade you think you deserve for the class, and making a case for it. Your writeup should address how you contributed to the class, and what you got out of our class activities, for all five units. You are not guaranteed to get the grade you ask for, but I will take

your self-assessment into consideration in making my decision about your grade.

2. Homework assignments

During each of the class units, you will have a homework assignment in which you will be asked to access and analyze basic economic data relevant to the unit's topic. Homework assignments will be set up as quizzes on D2L. There is no time limit on a homework assignment (as long as it is completed by the due date), and you may save and come back to work on it more later.

Due dates are as follows:

Unit 2: Feb 21

Unit 3: March 21

Unit 4: April 11

Unit 5: April 25

3. Case studies

During week 3, the class will be divided into groups of approximately four students. Each group will select an industry to focus on for the semester (e.g. steel, solar power, or chickens).

During each of the major units of the class, we will learn some general concepts about an aspect of economic geography and play a simulation game to explore the dynamics in more detail. After the end of the unit, you will write a short paper comparing what we learned in class to the information in a research article about your industry. Does your industry match what we did in class, or are there unique aspects to it? Is the research being reported high-quality or is it flawed? Are there additional unanswered question that you have?

Each person in the group will write their own paper, and each person's paper must address a different article. The articles must come from peer-reviewed academic journals. One week before the deadline, each group must upload to the dropbox on D2L a bibliography showing which group member is writing about which article. Failure to submit this plan will result in a one letter grade penalty to each group member. Failure to write about your assigned article (without discussing the change with me in advance) will result in a 2 letter grade penalty.

Due dates are as follows:

Unit 2: Plan Feb 19, Papers Feb 28

Unit 3: Plan March 19, Papers March 28

Unit 4: Plan April 2, Papers April 11

Unit 4: Plan April 23, Papers May 2

3. Final project

For your final project, each group will design a simulation game similar to the ones we played in class that relates to the industry that they have been doing case studies on. The game should be playable and engaging, while also communicating information about your industry.

Your game will be submitted to Dropbox by April 30 (Tuesday of the last week of classes). Everyone will be expected to read over the games created by the other groups. On May 7 at 10:30 am, we will meet for our final exam period. During that exam period, your group will play one of the games designed by another group, and write up a short evaluation of it. Your overall grade for the project will be based on:

- My reading of your game
- My observations of your game being played
- Your classmates' evaluation feedback
- The quality of your feedback to your classmates on their game

Grading

The final grade for this class will consist of:

- 20% Participation
- 40% Homework (10% each)
- 20% Case Studies (5% each)
- 20% Final project

Attendance and Preparation

Economic geography is a complex subject, and no manageable set of readings can cover all of the information that I think is important to highlight on each topic. I expect all students to attend every class, because class lectures and discussions will be key to learning the material. You should come prepared to talk about the readings.

I assume that all members of this class are adults who have chosen to take this class because you are interested in learning about research methods in geography. Therefore, behavior that is disruptive to your own learning or that of others will not be tolerated, and you will be asked to leave. Such behavior includes: eating, smoking, sleeping, working on work for other classes or personal business, talking about topics other than research methods in geography, and the use of non-approved electronic devices (iPods, laptops, cell phones, etc. – all cell phones must be *turned off* when you enter the class and remain off until you leave).

Special Needs

Your ability to master the class material should not be hindered by anything other than your own effort. If you have a disability, health issue, outside responsibility, or other concern that may affect your ability to succeed in this class, do not hesitate to contact me or the university's Office of Disability Services (738-4877, 105 University Union), and we will work together to find an accommodation for you.

Slippery Rock University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the University protection of minors policy. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: <http://www.sru.edu/offices/diversity-and-equal-opportunity/sexual-misconduct-and-victim-resources>.

Changes

While I do not expect much to change about this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes and will notify students of them in class and/or by email.

Readings

There is no text to purchase for this class. Readings will be assigned which will be available online or through the library's E-Reserve system.

Desire2Learn

I will use the D2L system to collect assignments, to record grades, and to send messages about the class. Students should make sure that they are able to log in to the class's D2L site as well as the electronic reserves for this class on the library website. It is your responsibility to contact ITS or the library if you have a problem. You are also responsible for checking your SRU email account daily, as I will be sending class emails through D2L to those addresses.

Academic Honesty

Cheating (any method for getting the correct answers other than knowing the material yourself) and plagiarism (representing others' work as your own) will not be tolerated, and I will be alert for signs of both. In your assignments, any idea that you take from any person other than yourself must be properly cited, and any words or phrases that you take from others must be clearly marked as quotations. You may discuss ideas with your classmates, or get help proofreading, but all of the writing must be your own. On the first instance of cheating or plagiarism, you will receive a zero for that assignment. On the second instance, you will receive a zero for the course. Review the section in your Student Handbook on Academic Honesty for a more detailed explanation of the university's procedures for handling cheating and plagiarism.

Unit 1: Introduction to Economic Geography

Week 1: January 22-24

Week 2: January 29-31

Week 3: February 5-7

Unit 2: Industrial Location and Commodity Chains

Week 4: February 12-14

Week 5: February 19-21 (Case study plan due Tues, HW due Thurs)

Week 6: February 26-28 (Case study paper due Thurs)

Unit 3: Place Promotion and Uneven Development

Week 7: March 5-7

(No class March 12-14 for Spring Break)

Week 8: March 19-21 (Case study plan due Tues, HW due Thurs)

Week 9: March 26-28 (Case study paper due Thurs)

Unit 4: Environmental Resources

Week 10: April 2-4 (Case study plan due Tues, HW due Thurs)
Week 11: April 9-11 (Case study paper due Thurs)

Unit 4: International Development and Unequal Exchange

Week 12: April 16-18

Week 13: April 23-25 (Case study plan due Tues, HW due Thurs)

Week 14: April 30-May 2 (Case study paper due Thurs)

Final Exam Tues. May 7, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

General essay and presentation grading rubric:

Item	A	B	C	D	F
Completeness 20%	Gives a complete, thoughtful, and integrated answer to all questions in the assignment	Addresses all questions, but gives insufficient depth to some, fails to link them together	Addresses all questions in a perfunctory way, omits some questions or adds irrelevant digressions	Veers significantly from the assigned topic	Essay is on a completely irrelevant topic
Argument 20%	Makes a strong argument, with a clearly stated thesis and demonstration of all key points.	Main argument is apparent but some points weakly argued	Argument is confused or central thesis not clear	Argument difficult to identify, or may contradict itself or leave large gaps	Absence of an argument
Sources 20%	All arguments fully supported by information that is relevant and obtained from reliable sources	Adequate use of information and sources relevant to the argument	Signs of inattention to source quality, some information presented irrelevant or missing but necessary	Failure to distinguish reliable and unreliable sources, “kitchen sink” approach to research results	Large gaps in research and irrelevant digressions, use of manifestly unreliable sources
Citations 10%	All information cited in a clear and consistent manner	Citations may be partially incomplete	Significant inconsistencies in citation style, important points not cited	Pervasive failure to cite sources or to cite them in an understandable way	Citations absent or impossible to follow
Writing 10%	Impeccable grammar and writing style that is enjoyable to read and appropriate to the subject matter	Generally consistent grammar and an easy to understand writing style	Significant grammar mistakes and writing style that is stilted or inappropriate	Rampant grammar mistakes and awkward writing that make it difficult to follow the argument	Pervasive grammar mistakes and clear lack of care about the readability of the text
Insight 20%	Raises new ideas that enter new ground in cultural geography and/or strongly stimulate my own thinking	Reaches deep and substantive conclusions that go beyond the class material	Draws conclusions consistent with the class material, or further insights which are significantly flawed	Contains original ideas that are shallow or clearly incorrect	Lacks any original ideas