

Department of Geography
University of Mary Washington

GEOG 221A: GEOGRAPHY OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Dawn S. Bowen
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OFFICE: Monroe Hall 303B
HOURS: MWF 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. (and every day
TR 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. by appointment)

Course Description: This course is a survey of geographic patterns in the eastern United States and Canada that introduces students to the similarities and differences that exist from place to place. Emphasis is given to environmental conditions, cultural patterns, regional economies, the interplay between these phenomena, and how they have evolved through time. The course is designed to help you appreciate the nature of regions and of the relationships between people and their environment, and understand the forces that have contributed to the existence of distinctive patterns on the land.

The Classroom Experience: Class periods will consist of map work, a lecture, and a slide presentation focusing on a particular area or geographic theme. At the start of each class, copy the locations and patterns from the overhead to your own outline map. (I highly recommend that you use colored pencils when you create your maps.) I will then lecture on the day's topic. The final portion of each class will be a presentation of slides that illustrate the places and themes introduced in the lecture. By the time you leave class, you should know where certain places are located and what they are "like," in a physical, cultural, and/or economic sense.

Text: Tom L. McKnight, *Regional Geography of the United States and Canada*, 4th ed. (2004). This book would never make the *New York Times* Best Seller list, but it is full of relevant information and should be viewed as a valuable supplement to the lectures. Be sure to integrate its information with the lectures to gain a fuller understanding of the character of places. You will also find additional thematic maps and other course material on **Blackboard**.

Course Objectives:

There are three broad goals for this course:

- 1) to develop your critical thinking skills through reading, discussion, and writing;
- 2) to enhance your knowledge of the eastern United States and Canada by comparing and contrasting patterns of culture in various parts of the region; and
- 3) to foster geographic thinking and analysis through examination of spatial patterns of human processes, human-environment interactions, and connections between places in North America.

The first goal is a general one that will serve you well throughout the rest of your life as a global citizen. The second and third goals reflect my desire to teach you to think about and understand North America from a spatial perspective.

Attendance: I expect you to come to class and I take attendance every day. I do this because 1) matching a face to a name can be challenging and I want to know yours; 2) lectures and discussions supplement (not replace) your readings by introducing new material; 3) test questions are drawn from both lectures and the text; 4) numerous studies confirm that students who attend class have a better understanding of the material and perform better on tests; and finally, 5) my lectures are interesting and fun. If you miss class, you will therefore be at a disadvantage. Your attendance will not count explicitly toward your final grade; however, I take attendance into consideration when I assign final

grades. Students on the border between a C+ and B-, for instance, may be assigned the higher grade in the case of excellent attendance.

Professional Conduct: I have two rules. 1) Come to class on time. I realize that there is often not much time between classes, but make the effort to be in your seat when class begins. Because of the layout of the classroom, it is often a severe disruption when someone enters the classroom late. I will make every effort to end the class on time. Please do not pack up your belongings before I dismiss the class. (If you know that you will arrive late or need to leave early, please let me know in advance.) If tardiness becomes a problem, I reserve the right to enforce a policy of no admittance after the door is closed. 2) **Turn Off** your cell phone before class begins. If your phone rings during class, please leave the room immediately. You may return to collect your belongings AFTER the class is dismissed.

Exams: Exams are scheduled for **February 16** and **March 28**, and during the final exam period. Exams include multiple choice and matching questions, as well as map locations. The goal of each exam is to determine if you know where certain places are located, the physical, economic, and cultural characteristics of these places, why these particular characteristics exist, and how they have evolved. The exams account for 70% of your final grade.

Environmental Issue Report: You are to investigate an environmental issue in eastern North America and prepare a report on your findings. A detailed assignment is attached. The paper is worth 30%.

Honor Code: I expect you to adhere to the principles of the Honor Code. All work must include the honor pledge and your signature. I do not tolerate any form of dishonest behavior, whether it is in written or oral communication. If you cheat or plagiarize, your assignment will receive a grade of 0.

Grading: The following scale will be used to determine your final letter grade.

		A	93-100	A-	90-92	(Excellent)	
B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82	(Commendable)	<u>Pass/Fail</u>
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72	(Average)	P = 60% & above
D+	68-69	D	60-67			(Marginal)	F= below 60%
F	59 and below					(Failure)	

COURSE SCHEDULE

Map abbreviations: AP/Q – Atlantic Provinces & Quebec NE – Northeastern United States
 CC – Central Canada SE – Southeastern United States
 NC – North Central Interior NU – Nunavut

Part One: Northeastern North America (Chapters 6, 7, and 8)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Map</u>
M 1/15	Introduction	
W 1/17	Atlantic Provinces #1: Newfoundland's Outports	AP/Q
F 1/19	Atlantic Provinces #2: The Codfish Crisis & Community Collapse	AP/Q
M 1/22	Atlantic Provinces #3: The Hibernia Field & Economic Development	AP/Q
W 1/24	Atlantic Provinces #4: Halifax: A Primate City	AP/Q
F 1/26	Atlantic Provinces #5: A Comparison of New Brunswick & Maine	AP/Q
M 1/29	French Canada #1: The Evolution of a Distinct Society	AP/Q
W 1/31	French Canada #2: Long Lots and the Rural Landscape	None
F 2/2	French Canada #3: Urban Québec	AP/Q
M 2/5	Megalopolis #1: The Urban Northeast as an Economic Force	NE
W 2/7	Megalopolis #2: A Region of Human Diversity	NE
F 2/9	Megalopolis #3: High Tech Corridors & Suburban Sprawl	NE
M 2/12	Megalopolitan Fringe #1: Eastern Shore Agriculture & the Chesapeake Bay	NE
W 2/14	Megalopolitan Fringe #2: Culture & Econ Diversification on the Lancaster Plain	NE
F 2/16	Exam #1	

Part Two: Appalachia and the South (Chapters 9, 10, and 11)

M 2/19	Appalachia #1: Industrial Change in the Upper Ohio Basin	NE
W 2/21	Appalachia #2: Underdevelopment in Deepest Appalachia	NE
F 2/22	Appalachia #3: <i>Razing Appalachia</i> video presentation	None
M 2/26	Appalachia #4: Culture & Settlement Patterns in the Shenandoah Valley	NE
W 2/28	Inland South #1: Changing Industrial Patterns on the Southern Piedmont	SE
F 3/2	No Class – Spring Break Extended	
	SPRING BREAK	
M 3/12	Inland South #2: Urban Growth in Piedmont NC	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Map</u>
W 3/14	Inland South #3: Productivity and Poverty in the Mississippi Bottomlands	SE
F 3/16	Southeast Coast #1: The Forest Economy on the South Atlantic Coastal Plain	SE
M 3/19	Southeast Coast #2: Land and Land Use in Central Florida	SE
W 3/21	Southeast Coast #3: Land, Water, & Economy in the Everglades	SE
F 3/23	Southeast Coast #4: Gulf Coast Rural Landscapes	SE
M 3/26	Southeast Coast #5: Oil Development on the Gulf Coast	SE
W 3/28	Exam #2	

Part Three: The North Central Interior (Chapters 12, 19, and 20)

Chapter 19: Read pp. 452-464 and 467-468 (Labrador Trough & Sudbury-Clay Belt District)
 Ford, James. 2005. Living with Climate Change in the Arctic. *World Watch Magazine*.

F 3/30	Southern Ontario #1: Canada's Industrial Heartland	CC
M 4/2	Southern Ontario #2: Ethnic Diversity in Toronto	None
W 4/4	Southern Ontario #3: A Profile of Southwestern Ontario	CC
F 4/6	Midwest #1: Chicago – Nature's Metropolis	NC
M 4/9	Midwest #2: Changing Patterns of Corn Belt Agriculture	NC
W 4/11	Midwest #3: Urban Landscapes of the Corn Belt	NC
F 4/13	Midwest #4: Economic Decline in the Rust Belt	NC
M 4/16	Boreal Forest #1: Wisconsin's Cutover Country	NC
W 4/18	Boreal Forest #2: The Mining Heritage of Ontario & Québec	CC
F 4/20	Boreal Forest #3: Forestry in Ontario & Québec	CC
M 4/23	Boreal Forest #4: Hydroelectric Development & Aboriginal Peoples	CC
W 4/25	Eastern Arctic: The Creation of Nunavut	NU
F 4/27	No Class – U of Maine Lecture	

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 2 at Noon

Environmental Issue Report

1. To raise your environmental awareness of Eastern North America, you must prepare a report on an environmental issue in your home state or one which I designate. That issue may for example, be an ongoing problem, involving river or air pollution, hazardous waste cleanup, logging or mining, or may reflect the successful completion of an environmental restoration project.
2. Begin by doing a basic Google search using the terms “environment” and “your state.” This will be time consuming so please give it the attention it deserves now rather than waiting until the last minute. What most interests you? Make sure that you select a topic that is going to challenge you. Although you may choose any topic that involves the interplay between people and the environment, you must submit (either in person or via email) a topic and two references to scholarly articles for my approval no later than Monday, **February 19!** Failure to do so will result in a 5 point deduction from the report grade.
3. Once you have selected a topic, you must consult full text databases (GEOBASE, Human Population & Natural Resource Management, Environmental Science & Pollution Management, Article First, and Expanded Academic) available through the Simpson Library homepage and find FIVE additional sources of information to incorporate into your report. Two of these must be SCHOLARLY sources from academic journals or books. (A list of some appropriate journals is available on Blackboard.) All of these must be fully referenced and incorporated in the report. (Under NO circumstance is Wikipedia acceptable as a source.)
4. Your report must contain the following:
 - The first section (Introduction) should identify the key issue, noting those people or organizations most closely involved, and briefly outline the report.
 - The second section (Setting) should be a brief description of the place(s) affected: location, relevant physical geographic features, population (human, animal, or plant as relevant), economic base (IF applicable) written in a cohesive paragraph. This is often a hard section to write. You need to provide enough relevant information for the reader to understand how this issue affects this particular place.
 - The third section (Issue) should identify and define the specific environmental issue, and explain how and why this has occurred, being sure to identify the consequences. This is the most significant section of the report.
 - The fourth section (Environmental Perspective) must explain environmentalists’ view on why this is a problem.
 - The fifth section (Current Status) must provide an update on the current situation and how the problem is or is not being addressed.
 - The sixth section (Assessment) must provide your own critical evaluation of this issue. This is your opportunity to offer your opinion; please support it!
 - The seventh section (Conclusion) must tie together the ideas contained in your report.

continued on reverse ...

- Your report must include a map showing the site and situation of the area being examined. All locations detailed in your report must be shown on the map. The report should also contain data in the form of graphs and charts.
5. The report should be 5-6 double-spaced pages in length (1500-1800 words) using a 12 point Times font with one-inch margins on all sides, excluding maps, graphs, or charts. Please number all pages.
 6. References in the text should be cited parenthetically (Gately 2004). You must include a reference list. A sample with various examples of formats is located on Blackboard.
 7. The grading criteria and the matrix that I use to score your report are posted on Blackboard.

Due Date: Friday, March 16

Value: 30%

Late penalty: A ten point deduction will be made for each day that the assignment is late.