

## MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Earth Sciences

Geography 425  
Dr. Bill Wyckoff  
Spring 2017  
Class: Reid Hall 401  
Meets: T/Th 10:50-12:05

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**Geographical Thought**

Geographical Thought is a capstone course in Earth Sciences which focuses on the evolution of the field of geography from Classical times to the present. The course will focus on the historical evolution of the field of geography as well as some of the concepts, themes, and trends in modern American geography. The first two-thirds of the course are organized around a lecture/discussion format in which all students are expected to participate actively! Course readings (of which there are many!) will be used to shape and guide our daily discussions. The final third of the course will focus on student-led presentations and readings/discussions that are focused on current trends in various topical subfields of geography. Simply put, the course, designed for geography majors, is a kind of intellectual family history, providing students with an opportunity to explore the rich roots and contemporary diversity of their chosen field of study.

**Required Books/Readings**

All students will need to purchase and/or obtain copies of:

Martin (and James), ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS  
Sobel, LONGITUDE  
Schulten, GEOGRAPHICAL IMAGINATION  
E-access journal articles  
Reserve readings (electronic reserve: Renne Library)

Also, additional readings or source materials may be put on Reserve in the Renne Library for use as student reference material for their projects.

For each assigned reading, make sure you are prepared to answer two key questions: 1) What are the author's main points/themes/arguments in the reading? 2) How does the reading fit into the day's discussion topic? ALWAYS COME PREPARED TO INTRODUCE EACH READING and TO PARTICIPATE IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS!

### **Grading**

Course grades will be based on a total of 650 points, derived in the following fashion:

- 1) Two midterms, each worth 100 points, and a comprehensive final worth 150 points, for a total of 350 points.
- 2) Journal review projects worth 50/25/25 = 100 points.
- 3) A semester term project/presentation: Oral worth 50 points, written worth 100 points
- 4) Class participation in daily discussions/ pop quizzes worth 50 points

### **Capstone Course Philosophy**

GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT provides every geography major with an ideal opportunity to explore the evolution and current status of the field. Each student shall reap what they sow in terms of committing themselves to learning the material in the course. As a capstone course for majors, GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT assesses our incredibly rich and diverse ancestry as a field, as well as identifying the directions of its present evolution. With a shared enthusiasm and dedication to hard work, class members can provide themselves with a lasting and productive sense of what the field of geography is all about in the broadest sense. Rather than a being a narrowly-defined course preparing you for this or that career slot, GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT will define the field's broadest boundaries, explore the intellectual traditions that form the base for today's professional geographers, and, most importantly, it will try to communicate something of the wonder and excitement that generations of geographers have experienced as they have tried to make sense of the world around them.

### **Learning Outcomes: GPHY 425**

Specific learning outcomes in the course include:

1. Describing the major intellectual traditions of Western geography from Greek times to the present.
2. Appreciating the particular contributions of Western, Islamic, and Chinese geographical traditions in the historical evolution of geographical thought
3. Identifying the connections between the era of European exploration, global colonial expansion, and the development of modern geography as a European discipline
4. Tracing the specific connections between German, British, and French geographic traditions with the evolution of American geographical tradition.
5. Understanding the timing and significance of the profession of geography in the United States between 1875 and 1925
6. Tracing the evolution of American geography between 1925 and the present
7. Learning about new topical, thematic, and technological developments driving American geography today

8. Describing and explaining through an independent research project (including a class presentation and written term paper) the evolution of one specific subfield in the discipline of geography since 1990.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Assignments and Topics</u></b>
Th Jan.12	Course Introduction/Organization
T Jan. 17	Major Themes and Questions in Geography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ryden, “Thoreau, Cartography, and <i>The Maine Woods</i>”, e-reserve</li> <li>• Marston, “Land, Life,...and Mountains” (See ANNALS of the Ass. Of Amer. Geog. 98 (2008): 507-520, e-access)</li> <li>• Cresswell, “Introduction to Geographic Thought,” 1-13 (class handout)</li> </ul>
Th Jan. 19	Geography in the Classical World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW, 13-38</li> <li>• Glacken, “Traces on the Rhodian Shore”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
T Jan.24	Medieval Geography/ Age of Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW, 39-60</li> <li>• Marco Polo, “The Travels”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
Th Jan. 26	Era of Exploration and Discovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sobel, LONGITUDE, Part 1: 1-125</li> <li>• APW, 61-106</li> </ul>
T Jan 31	Emergence of Modern Geography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sobel, LONGITUDE, Part 2: 126-76</li> <li>• APW, 107-28, 162-181</li> </ul>
	<b>Journal Review Project is due today!</b>
Th Feb 2	Library Tour—meet in basement classroom, Renne Library
T Feb. 7	Emergence of Modern Geography: American Traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW, 131-161</li> <li>• Marsh, “Man and Nature”, e-reserve</li> <li>• Wulf, “Man and Nature: G.P. Marsh and Humboldt”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
Th Feb. 9	<b>MIDTERM 1 EXAM TODAY!</b>

T	Feb. 14	British Geographic Traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW, 213-247</li> <li>• Darby, “Changing English Landscape”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
Th	Feb. 16	French Geographic Traditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* APW 195-212</li> <li>* Vidal de la Blache, “Principles of Human Geography”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
T	Feb. 21	American Geographic Traditions I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW 338-381</li> <li>• Morin, “Charles Daly’s Gendered Geography” (See ANNALS of the Assoc. of Amer. Geog. 98 (2008): 897-919, e-access)</li> </ul>
Th	Feb. 23	American Geographic Traditions II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schulten, GEOG IMAGINATION 1-117</li> <li>• Harley “Deconstructing the Map”, e-reserve</li> </ul>
T	Feb. 28	American Geographic Traditions III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* APW, 382-413</li> </ul>
Th	Mar 2	American Geographic Traditions IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APW, 414-447</li> <li>• Schulten GEOG IMAGINATION 118-242</li> </ul>
T	Mar. 7	American Geographic Traditions V <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Murphy, “Enhancing Geography’s Role”, ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMER. GEOG. 96 (2006): 1-13, e-access</li> <li>• Harden, “Framing and Reframing Questions of Human/Environment Interactions” (See ANNALS OF THE ASS. OF AMER GEOG 102 (2012: 737-47) e-access</li> <li>• Review for Exam!</li> </ul>
Th	Mar. 9	<b>MIDTERM EXAM 2 TODAY!</b>
T	Mar. 14	<b>SPRING BREAK!</b>
Th	Mar. 16	<b>SPRING BREAK!</b>

T	Mar. 21	NO CLASS: Work on Research papers
Th	Mar. 23	<p>Current Trends in Geography I: GIS and Geographical Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dobson and Fisher, “Panopticon’s Changing Geog.”, GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW 97 (2007): 307-323, e-access</li> <li>• Solem et al, “Skills in Professional Geography” (See Professional Geographer 60 (2008): 356-373, e-access)</li> <li>• Radil and Jiao, “Public Participatory GIS and the Geography of Inclusion,” (See Professional Geographer 68 (2016): 202-210, e-access)</li> </ul>
T	Mar 28	<p>Current Trends in Geography II: Physical Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspinall, “A Century of Phys Geog Research in the Annals,” ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS 100 (2010): 1049-59. e access</li> <li>• NRC Report: see Physical: Human-Environment Themes (D2L)</li> </ul>
Th	Mar. 30	<p>Current Trends in Geography III: Physical Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zimmerer, “Retrospective on Nature-Society Geography,” ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS 100 (2010): 1076-1094</li> <li>• Discuss and turn in your Physical Geography article reviews today</li> </ul>
T	Apr 4	AAG MEETINGS: No class: Work on projects/NRC report
Th	Apr 6	AAG MEETINGS: No class: Work on projects/NRC report
T	Apr. 11	<p>Current Trends in American Geography IV: Human Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NRC Report: See Human themes (D2L)</li> <li>• Mitchell, “New Axioms for Reading the Landscape,” e-reserves</li> </ul>

- Th Apr. 13 Current Trends in American Geography V: Human Geography
- Kwan and Schwanen, "Geographies of Mobility," ANNALS OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOGRAPHERS 106 (2016): 243-56
  - Discuss and turn in your Human Geography article reviews today
- T April 18 **Student Presentations!!!**
- Th April 20 **Student Presentations!!!**
- T April 25 **Student Presentations!!!**
- Th April 27 Geography's Importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century World
- Winkler, "Embracing Complexity and Uncertainty," ANNALS of the AMERICAN ASSOC OF GEOGS 106 (2016): 1418-1433
  - Tuan, "A View of Geography," GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW 81 (1991): 99-107, e access
  - Review for Comprehensive Final Exam

**SEMESTER TERM PAPERS DUE FRIDAY (4/28) AT 5PM!!**

**M May 1 FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAM at 2:00-3:50 (please note this date). All students must take the final at the assigned date and time...so plan accordingly...thanks!**

**GEOGRAPHY 425:  
TERM PAPER PROJECT:**

**KEY SUBFIELDS IN AMERICAN GEOGRAPHY**

Select a major subfield of American Geography (examples: climatology, geomorphology (or subsets), vegetation, cartography, GIS (or some aspect of it), economic, political, cultural, urban, etc) from the sign-up sheet.

Write a 12-15 page typed (double spaced) paper that summarizes the current status of that subfield today in American geography. Be particularly sensitive to these four questions:

- 1) What are the **main research topics/questions** in the subfield? What have been important conceptual/theoretical statements in the subfield over the past 25 years?
- 2) Who are the **dominant academic figures** in the subfield and why?
- 3) What are the **key specialized journals** in the subfield and what types of research do they publish?
- 4) What are the **key sources, methods** for the subfield and at what scale is research usually undertaken (microscale, meso/regional scale, macroscale).

Your papers, worth 100 points, are due Friday April 28 at 5PM. You will also be presenting a brief oral synopsis of a portion of your research to the class during April, worth an additional 50 points. You will have only 20 minutes to summarize your work, so practice and come prepared!

Tips for research:

- Use some of the appropriate research tools introduced at the Library visit.
- Use earlier summations as a guide (check journals such as PROGRESS IN PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY and PROGRESS IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY for recent bibliographic treatments of your subfield).
- Talk to relevant faculty here in the Department that might have insight.
- Contact relevant Specialty Groups in the AAG and examine their recent activities and paper sessions at national conferences (the current Program is on the Web at aag.org).
- Find RECENT articles in the major journals that deal with your subfield and that can be used to hunt down other relevant references.
- You will need *a minimum* of **20 references and citations** to get a sense of trends in your subfield, so get an early start in the semester and **steadily build a working bibliography** of relevant material.
- READ, READ, READ the **works of key recent leading figures** as a guide to big themes and trends!
- Spend time organizing and structuring your presentation and paper carefully. Be well organized!
- Discuss your outline and organization with me ahead of time as we go through the semester!