

GGR 221 H1S
New Economic Spaces
Department of Geography
University of Toronto
Winter 2015
Mondays, 1-3 pm in SS 2118

INSTRUCTOR

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Teaching Assistants*

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*Please direct all administrative emails to the Course Instructor.

How do changes in the global economy influence space? How do economic processes affect workers, communities, nations, and environments globally?

In this course, we pursue an introduction to key concepts and debates in economic geography. Once a field concerned with mathematical models, since the 1970s “new economic geography” has studied the dynamics of global economic change. To study this new economic geography, we focus on the relationships among key economic *processes* and *actors* in economic spaces. Our timeline takes us from the historical development of capitalism, to industrialization and mass production, to today’s knowledge-based “new economy”. We examine the globalization of commodity chains, the spatial reorganization and restructuring of economic activity, and question what’s new in the “new economy”. In doing so, we trace changing regimes of global economic governance and transformations in global markets. Throughout the course we investigate how people and places across the globe are linked through economic activity, keeping a close eye on relations of inequality and the ways that economic space influences our lives.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, we will have an understanding of:

- How economic processes take shape, reoccur, and endure across geographical constructs (place, space, scale, and territory);
- The roles, experiences, and relationships among economic actors within and between sites of economic activity;
- How to analyze and interpret contemporary economic issues, as geographers;
- How to evaluate global economic restructuring by creating and closely examining global commodity chains.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

The most important requirement for this course, as with any course that deals with economic inequality and social difference, is that we approach all readings, class sessions, and especially one another with patient and open minds. We can all attend every class meeting willing to see from new perspectives, to explore the unfamiliar, and to honestly challenge our own assumptions.

Specifically, remember to:

- Come to every lecture and tutorial prepared and ready to engage. Complete all readings and assignments *before* lecture. Be ready to pose questions, share your thoughts, and discuss the material as you are able and inclined to.
- Bring the relevant course materials to every lecture and tutorial, preferably in hard copy (readings, syllabus, assignment guidelines, notes, etc.)
- Re-read the course syllabus every week, and carefully review assignment guidelines while preparing and before submitting an assignment.
- Please be aware of the needs of others in the classroom – we are sharing this learning space and can show each other respect by being considerate, particularly because:

Web browsing, text messaging, or other forms of electronic multi-tasking detract from learning outcomes. Laptops can be powerful tools for learning when used with purpose; cell phones are not necessary in the classroom. Both for our own benefit and out of courtesy to one another, we can all strive to set aside our multi-tasking during class time. If you are managing an urgent personal or work matter, you are welcome to quietly and momentarily leave the classroom to do so. *Please think carefully about which uses of technology directly support you to focus and engage, and which distract or isolate you and others in the room.*

Accessibility: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or the course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

Academic Integrity: You must comply with the university's policies on plagiarism and academic honesty. As a student at the UofT, it is your responsibility to understand and follow these policies: <http://life.utoronto.ca/get-smarter/academic-honesty/>

Recording lectures: You may, only with the prior permission of the course instructor, create audio recordings of lectures for your own personal use only. Audio recordings are intended to permit lecture content review to enhance your understanding of course topics. Audio recordings are not a substitute for attending class.

Please note that since audio recordings are permitted with the prior permission of the course instructor, your voice may be recorded by others during class. Please speak to the instructor promptly if this is a concern for you.

In accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities act, students with accommodation needs will be permitted to make personal audio recordings of lectures.

If you are given permission by the course instructor to make personal audio recordings of lectures, you agree to the following terms: You may not under any circumstances distribute audio recordings in any form (websites, email, file sharing, or any other means). You may not share audio recordings with other students without the explicit prior permission of the instructor.

No photographs or video recordings are permitted in lectures or tutorials under any circumstances.

Non-compliance with any of the above terms will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Email policy: Please conduct as much course business as possible in-person before or after class and during office hours. Please direct all administrative emails about the course to the course instructor. You are encouraged to be in contact with each other to discuss the course, assignments, and “nuts and bolts” questions. Please carefully consult the resources you have (syllabus, course website, handouts, assignment guidelines, discussion boards, and each other) for answers to many of your questions. All of the information you need for the course is provided in class and on the course website.

Therefore, we ask you to limit email exchanges to very short questions for which you cannot otherwise find answers.

Email from the Instructor and TAs: Periodically the instructor and TAs will send important announcements via email; therefore all students must set up and regularly check a UofT email account.

Course website: The course website is Blackboard. Course materials (readings, assignments, lecture slides) will be posted on the Blackboard site. Please also check the site regularly for announcements from the instructor and TAs.

Submitting Assignments: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy *before* the start of the lecture at 1.10 pm on the due date. Any assignments brought to class after the lecture begins will be assessed a late penalty.

Late assignments can be submitted to the Geography Department's drop box on the 5th floor of Sidney Smith Hall, Room 5047. Note that assignments will only be date stamped at the end of the day on days that the main office is open (usually 5pm, Monday-Friday, except holidays). This means that any assignments submitted to the department's dropbox on the due date will be considered late. Take this into account to avoid further late penalties. No assignments will be accepted via email, fax, or under office doors.

Penalties for late assignments: A penalty of 5% per day with no work accepted one week (7 days) after a deadline. Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) count as one day for this purpose. Note that the penalty applies *after the lecture begins* on the due date.

Extensions: will be granted sparingly, for which you must present a medical note <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/> or appropriate documentation for non-medical emergencies: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/petitions/process#documentation>

Please consult your college registrar promptly should you have any difficulties during the term that prevent you from completing your coursework due to extenuating circumstances.

Copies of assignments: It is your responsibility to maintain digital copies of your assignments and a hard copy of marked assignments until the final course marks are recorded.

Remarking requests: According to Faculty of Arts and Sciences policy, any requests to remark coursework must be made no later than 2 weeks after the work has been returned.

Absence from class: This course is designed assuming that all students will attend all lectures and tutorials. While attendance for the lecture period will not be recorded, it is your responsibility to obtain and retain the course material, including lectures and in-class exercises. It is ultimately up to you to determine how to best manage your time.

Absence from exam: The *final exam* is managed by the Faculty of Arts and Science. You must file a formal petition with the FAS if you miss the final exam for any reason.

TUTORIALS

There are a total of four tutorial sessions. The tutorials provide assignment guidelines and review of course concepts. You will complete in-class activities during tutorials that form part of the participation component of the final course mark.

You *must* register for a tutorial section:

T0101	Monday, 12-1 pm	in SS 2127
T0201	Monday, 3-4 pm	in SS 2106

Tutorial Sessions:

19 January Defining Economic Space Paper Workshop
23 February Global Commodity Chain Research
9 March Global Commodity Chain Paper Workshop
30 March Final Exam Review

* Any readings or other preparation required for tutorials, if assigned, will be announced in advance and posted on the course Blackboard site.

Recommended/Optional Readings

You may find it helpful to use the following sources as reference for geographical and economic terms and concepts that we use throughout the course:

The Dictionary of Human Geography (2009), in the Robarts Reference Collection (<http://uoft.me/Reference>)

The Oxford Dictionary of Economics (2012), available at: <http://uoft.me/ODE>

Available on Course Reserve in Robarts Library (<http://uoft.me/CourseReserve>):

Wayne Ellwood (2009) *The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization*
Heilbroner & Thurow (1984, 8th Ed.). *Understanding Macroeconomics*

Assignments & Exam

ALL assignments are due in hard copy at the **start of the lecture period at 1.10 pm** on the due date. Any assignments submitted after the start of lecture will be subject to late penalties.

Defining Economic Space (20%)

You will choose a place where you performed a specific economic activity, and reflect on your experience in this place. Comparing your reflections to course materials, you will develop and support an argument about how this location is a space where economic processes occur. In doing so, you will consider the relationship between *economic and non-economic* activities, processes, and spaces. The paper will be no more than 600 words. The first tutorial will be devoted to preparation for writing this paper. You will receive the assignment requirements and assessment guidelines on the course Blackboard site. The paper is due in hard copy on **Monday 2 February** at the start of lecture.

Engagement, Preparation, and Participation (10%)

Throughout the course we will complete short writing exercises, group discussions, and other activities in tutorials and lectures, for which you will receive marks for the quality of your engagement, your active listening and speaking, and your effective contribution to course activities.

Global Commodity Chain Analysis (40%)

You will choose a manufactured consumer product in your household and write a commodity chain analysis of it. In the paper, you will examine and analyze sites of economic activity along the commodity's chain. Your argument in the paper will be focused on what the "life" of this commodity teaches us about economic geography and the geography of the global economy. The paper will be no more than 2500 words. You will receive assignment requirements and evaluation guidelines on the course Blackboard site. A research guide is available at <http://guides.library.utoronto.ca/ggr221>. Two tutorial sessions will be devoted to research and writing preparation. The paper is due in hard copy on **Monday, 23 March** at the start of lecture.

Final Exam (30%)

Covers *all* reading and lecture material for the course. An exam review guide including format of the final exam will be provided to you on the course website prior to the last lecture of the course. The final tutorial will be devoted to an exam review session, guided by your questions.

Required Readings & Lecture Schedule

All required readings, unless otherwise noted, are available on the course website through the University of Toronto Libraries.

5 January Introducing Economic Geography: “All Economics is Geographical”

Neil Coe, Philip Kelly and Henry W.C. Yeung (2013). “Thinking Geographically” in *Economic Geography: a Contemporary Introduction*.

Key Economic Processes

12 January Production

Danny Mackinnon and Andrew Cumbers (2007). “Geographies of Production and Consumption” in *Introduction to Economic Geography: Globalization, Uneven Development and Place*.

19 January Consumption & Reproduction

Juliana Mansvelt (2013). “Geographies of Consumption and Reproduction” in *Introducing Human Geographies*.

26 January Commodification

Karen Bakker (2003). “A Political Ecology of Water Privatization” in *Studies in Political Economy* 70.

Michael Watts (2013). “Commodities” in *Introducing Human Geographies*.

2 February Financialization

Yuko Aoyama, James T. Murphy and Susan Hanson (2010). “Financialization” in *Key Concepts in Economic Geography*.

David McNally (2011). “The Great Panic of 2008” in *Global Slump*.

9 February Uneven Development & Spatial Divisions of Labour

David Harvey (2014). “Division of Labor” [whole chapter] and “Uneven Geographical Developments and the Production of Space” [selections] in *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*.

**** 16-20 February Reading Week (no class) ****

23 February Global Commodity Chains

Prithi Ramamurthy (2004). "Why is Buying a 'Madras' Cotton Shirt a Political Act? A Feminist Commodity Chain Analysis" in *Feminist Review* 30(3): 734-769.

Key Economic Actors

2 March Workers

Melissa Wright (2001). "Desire and the Prosthetics of Supervision: A Case of Maquiladora Flexibility" in *Cultural Anthropology* 16(3): 354-373.

9 March Transnational Corporations

Peter Dicken (2011). "Transnational Corporations: the Primary 'Movers and Shapers' of the Global Economy" in *Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*.

16 March The State & Economic Governance

Danny Mackinnon (2012). "Reinventing the State: Neoliberalism, State Transformation, and Economic Governance" in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Economic Geography*.

23 March Consumers

Kathryn Furlong (2013). "The Dialectics of Equity: Consumer Citizenship and the Extension of Water Supply in Medellín, Colombia" in *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 103(5): 1176-1192.

30 March The "New Economy" and New Economic Geography

Linda McDowell and Jane Dyson (2012). "The Other Side of the Knowledge Economy: 'Reproductive' Employment and Affective Labours in Oxford" in *Environment and Planning A* 43(9): 2186-2201.

**** Final Exam: TBA, 8-30 April.**