

**Department of Geography and Planning
University of Toronto
GGR254 –Geography USA
Winter 2016**

Course Instructor: Tamir Arviv

Office: Sidney Smith Hall (SSH), fifth floor, 5061

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12:00p.m.-2:00p.m., or by appointment

Email: tamir.arviv@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Time and Location: Wednesdays, 10:00a.m-12:00p.m., SSH2102

Course TA's:

Nicholas Lombardo nick.lombardo@utoronto.ca

Killian McCormack k.mccormack@mail.utoronto.ca

Haye Rizvi haya.rizvi@mail.utoronto.ca

Zyler Wang zyler.wang@mail.utoronto.ca

TAs' office hours and their locations will be posted on Blackboard

Course Description

This course provides a broad introduction to the 'Geography of U.S.A.', using critical theoretical perspectives. Rather than merely presenting an overview of different geographical regions of U.S.A, we will employ a thematic approach through which America's historical, economic, cultural and political geographies will be explored. Particular attention will be given to the geographies of urban poverty and racism; the geographical effects of changes to twentieth-century immigration policy; the rising importance of the suburbs in the post-war period; and the growing inequality between and among regions and metropolitan areas.

Course Goals

Students of GGR254 will

1. Become familiarized with the geography of the U.S.A, including the political, cultural, economic, and historical geography of different regions and urban areas.
2. Develop a broad understanding of some of the key processes and forces shaping American regions, cities, and borders.
3. Identify the relationship between some key historical events (in the U.S.A/ globally) and the geographic patterns of growth, decline, exclusion and segregation within American cities and regions.
4. Learn key concepts used in the discipline of human geography by examining them in the American context.
5. Develop critical thinking, reading, writing and research skills.

Course Evaluation

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|----------------------------------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| Assignment 1 (Critical Analysis) | 20% | February 24th |
| Midterm Test | 20% | March 2nd |
| Assignment 2 | 30% | April 6th |
| Final Exam | 30% | During faculty exam period (Date TBA) |

Tests and Exams

The in-class midterm test is worth 20% of the final mark in the course. It will cover all reading and lecture material for weeks 1-6 and will be 90 minutes in duration. The final exam is worth 30% of the total mark in the course. It will cover all reading and lecture material for the course (weeks 1-12) and will be two hours in duration. Both exams will be composed of short-answer questions, and essay questions. An exam review guide for the exams will be provided to you on the course website.

Written Assignments

Two (2) written assignments are required during the semester. Assignment 1 is a 4 page critical analysis of one week's worth of course readings and is worth 20% of the final mark in the course. Detailed explanation and discussion of the first assignments will take place in class and be available in textual form on Blackboard on January 13. Assignment 2 is a 6-7 page research paper and is worth 30% of the final mark in the course. Detailed explanation and discussion of the second assignments will take place in class and be available in textual form on Blackboard on February 24.

Assignment Submission policy

Both papers must be submitted, hard copy, at the beginning of class at 10:10 am on the due date. Papers will be returned to students two weeks after they are submitted. Email submissions will not be accepted. Note that the penalty applies after the lecture begins on the due date. Please submit late assignments through the drop box in the Geography Department 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 (between 9a.m. and 5p.m., Monday – Friday). Assignments submitted to the “after hours” drop box will not be date stamped until the next day the office is open. This means that any assignments submitted to the department’s drop box on or after the due date (or “after hours” the day before the assignment is due) will be stamped late. Take this into account to avoid further penalties. No assignments will be accepted via email, fax, or under office doors. It is your responsibility to maintain digital copies of your written assignments and a hard copy of marked assignments until the final course marks are recorded.

Penalties for late assignments: A penalty of 5% per day with no work accepted seven days after a deadline. Weekends (Saturday & Sunday) count as one day for this purpose. Please consult your registrar if you are having difficulties during the term that prevent you from completing your course work. Your registrar may be able to provide a letter documenting your situation in case of non-medical emergencies.

Missed Assignment Deadlines: Extensions will be granted sparingly, and only in the case of documented illness or personal emergencies. For medical reasons, you will need an official medical note that clearly excuses you for work or school on the day the assignment is due. In the case of a personal emergency, contact your College Registrar. You are responsible for providing official documentation explaining your absence as soon as possible.

Policy regarding grade changes

If you wish to request that a course paper mark be revisited by your TA, you **MUST**:

- 1) Take a couple of days to carefully review the comments, paper, requirements, and rubric.
- 2) By UofT policy, you have 2 weeks after receiving the mark to make a request.
- 3) Send me an email with a brief (1-2) paragraph motivation that identifies the substantive aspects of the assignment that could be revisited. Attach a scanned copy of the original assignment, including all comments and marking.
- 4) If the request is accepted, there are 3 possibilities: the mark can stay the same, it can go up, or it can go down. If the mark changes, it will be updated on Blackboard within 2 weeks.

*Any questions about the midterm test mark go to the course instructor; the Faculty of Arts and Sciences manages all aspects of the final exam.

Writing

If you think you may require help with your writing skills, please visit the central university website on writing: www.writing.utoronto.ca.

- You can find information about college writing centres at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>.
- The teaching approach of the college writing centres is described at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/learning>.
- More than 60 Advice files on all aspects of academic writing are available at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice.
- A complete list of printable PDF versions are listed at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/about-this-site/pdf-links-for-students>.
- You can also find information about the Writing Plus workshop series at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus>.
- Information about the English Language Learning program (ELL) is available at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

Academic integrity

Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of citation. Quotation marks are required when using an author's words. Students also should not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. Please consult the "Rules and Regulations" section of the Arts and Science Calendar (http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html) for further information. "How Not to Plagiarize" and other advice on documentation format and methods of integrating sources are listed at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources

Accessibility Services

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 course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca

Course site on Blackboard

This course will use Blackboard primarily for (1) course announcements, (2) posting of important documents, e.g., syllabus, assignment instructions, (3) posting course readings and lecture slides, (4) posting TA's office hours, (5) email correspondence, and (6) posting assignments and midterm grades (please note that any marks posted on Blackboard are *provisional* and that only marks posted on ROSI/ACORN are treated as official). It is your responsibility to check Blackboard frequently (once or twice a week). You MUST have a your.name@mail.utoronto.ca email address indicated on ROSI/ACORN to properly receive messages from the Instructor and TA through Blackboard. It is your responsibility to set this up if it is not already. To access the GGR254 course site, go to the UofT portal log-in page at: <https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>. To log in use your UTORid and password. Once you are logged in, look for the course link under the 'My Courses' module.

Classroom policies

Prior to each lecture meeting, students are expected to have completed the assigned readings, and have comments and questions prepared for discussion. Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the duration of the class. If you have to enter or leave during the lecture, please do so as quietly as possible. Remember that cell phones and other communications devices should either be turned off or in silent mode. Do not answer your phone or text message during class. Do not use computer for non-class related activities - it is distracting to people around you.

In accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities act, students with accommodation needs will be permitted to make personal audio recordings of lectures. Only with the prior permission of the course instructor may you make audio recordings of lectures for your own personal use only. If you are granted permission by the course instructor to make personal audio recordings, you must agree to the following: You will not 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 permission of the course instructor. No photographs or video recordings are permitted under any circumstances. Please remember to be respectful to everyone involved in the course – instructor, teaching assistant and other students. You have the right to expect respect from them in return. We will respect one another's views and perspectives during class discussions. In accordance with University policy, this classroom is not a space where sexist, racist, xenophobic, homophobic, ableist, transphobic, classist or otherwise discriminatory language will go unchallenged or unaddressed. Making this learning experience generative and valuable is up to all of us. Non-compliance with any of the above terms will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct. University policies regarding Code of Student Conduct can be found at: http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm

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. Carefully consult the resources you have (syllabus, course website, handouts, assignment guidelines, and each other). All of the information you need for the course is provided in class and on the course website. We ask you to limit email exchanges to very short questions for which you cannot otherwise find answers. To ensure a response, you MUST put GGR 254 in the subject line of all emails.

Readings and Course Schedule

All the readings, unless otherwise noted, are available as PDFs on the course website. Though recommended readings are not mandatory for this course, going through them provides additional perspectives on issues discussed in the lectures.

Week 1 (January 13) Introduction & Course Organization

****Assignment 1 explanation****

Week 2 (January 20) Exceptionalism & Empire

Agnew, J. and Sharp, J. 2002. "America, frontier nation: from abstract space to worldly place", in J. Agnew and J. Smith (eds.), *American Space / American Place*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 79-105.

Schien, R. 1990. "Populating the continent: the post-Columbian experience", in F. Boal and S. Royle (eds.), *North America: a Geographical Mosaic*. London: Arnold. 70-87.

Week 3 (January 27) Urban Poverty, Racism & the African-American "Ghetto"

Wacquant, L. J. 1997. "Three pernicious premises in the study of the American ghetto." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 21(2): 341-353.

Casey-Leininger, C.F. 1993. "Making the second ghetto in Cincinnati: Avondale, 1925-7." In H. Taylor, Jr. (ed.), *Race and the City: Work, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati*. Urbana and Chicago. University of Illinois Press. 232-57.

Week 4 (February 3) The Making of Suburban America

Beauregard, R.A. 2006. *When America Became Suburban*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Chapters 5 and 6, 101-43.

Katznelson, I. 2005. "White Veterans Only." In *When Affirmative Action Was White*. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 113-141.

Week 5 (February 10) Immigration and New Metropolitan Geographies

Price, M., Cheung, I., Friedman, S., and Singer, A. 2005. "The world settles in: Washington, DC, as an immigrant gateway." *Urban Geography*, 26(1), 61-83.

Alberts, H. C. 2005. "Changes in ethnic solidarity in Cuban Miami." *Geographical Review*, 95(2): 231-248.

Week 6 (February 17) Reading week - no class

Week 7 (February 24) Urban Landscapes of Environmental Risk

Pulido, L. 2000. "Rethinking environmental racism: White privilege and urban development in southern California." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90(1):12-40.

Dreier, P. 2006. "Katrina and power in America." *Urban Affairs Review*, 41(4):528-49.

*** Assignment 1 due at the beginning of class ****

Assignment 2 explanation

Week 8 (March 2) Midterm Test

Week 9 (March 9) Empire, Militarism & the War on Terror (Guest Lecture: Killian McCormack)

Fluri, J. 2009. "'Foreign Passports Only': Geographies of (Post)Conflict Work in Kabul, Afghanistan". *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 99(5): 986-994.

Gregory, D. 2004. "Architectures of Enmity". In *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 17-29.

Week 10 (March 16) The U.S- Mexican Border: People & Policy

Heyman, J. M. 1999. "Why Interdiction? Immigration Control at the United States-Mexico Border." *Regional Studies*, 33(7): 619-630.

Ackleson, J. 2005. "Constructing Security on the U.S. – Mexico Border." *Political Geography*, 24(2): 165-184.

Week 11 (March 23) The Rise & Fall of the Manufacturing Belt

High, S. 2003. The deindustrializing heartland. In *Industrial Sunset: the Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 92-130.

Week 12 (March 30) The Rise of the Sunbelt

Grantham, D. 1994. "The Sunbelt South." In *The South in Modern America: a Region at Odds*. New York: Harper Collins, 259-80.

Glaeser, E. L., and Tobio, K. 2007. *The rise of the sunbelt*. National Bureau of Economic Research.

Week 13 (April 6) Conclusions /Reassessment & Exam Review

Please come prepared with questions concerning the content of the course

Assignment 2 due at the beginning of Class

Final Exam: During faculty exam period (Date TBA)