

GGR 221 H1S
New Economic Spaces

Department of Geography and Planning
University of Toronto

Winter 2018

Wednesdays 4-6 pm in SS 2118

Course Instructor

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Teaching Assistants*

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

*How are workers and consumers economic actors whose activities produce space?
What does the geography of commodities teach us about the global economy?*

Throughout this course, we pursue an introduction to the essential geographical concepts in current debates among economic geographers. Once a subfield devoted to developing mathematical models attempting to predict human behavior, since the 1970s 'new economic geography' has focused on the relationships among key actors, processes, and sites of activity in the global economy. The first part of the course explores current dilemmas facing workers and consumers in service, manufacturing, creative, and cultural industries. The second part of the course traces the globalization of commodity flows, to examine the geographical restructuring of production. Throughout, we sustain a focus on continuities and changes extending from the current moment to previous eras of mass production and mass consumption, imperialism and industrialization. By the end of the course, students should have at least a basic foundation for analyzing the global economy *as geographers*.

COURSE FORMAT & STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

This is a lecture course with required tutorials, and your attendance is expected. Students contribute to the course by reading, speaking, writing, listening, and participating during in-class activities.

There are no pre-requisites for this course. A background in human geography is useful but not required. Familiarity with macroeconomics could be helpful, but it is important to keep in mind that this courses focuses on the ways *geographers* study the global economy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The most important requirement for this course, as with any that grapples with difficult questions about inequality and difference, is that we approach all readings, class meetings, and especially one another with patient and open minds; a willingness to see from new perspectives; and a commitment to honestly challenging our own assumptions.

Specifically, some basic ground rules are:

- Arrive to **every class meeting** on time, prepared, and ready to engage. Be ready to ask questions, share your thoughts, and discuss the material as best you can.
- Complete **all** readings and assignments **before** lecture.
- Bring course materials with you to **every** class, preferably in hard copy.
- **Review this course syllabus each week**, and before asking a question about course requirements or policies. **Carefully re-read assignment guidelines** while preparing and before submitting an assignment. All of the information you need to successfully complete the course is provided in class and on Blackboard.
- Please be aware that **we are sharing this learning space** and we can show each other respect by being considerate.
- It is a university policy that **no** defamatory or discriminatory language is tolerated in the classroom. If you are unfamiliar with these rules, please review the Student Code of Conduct.
- **Think carefully about which uses of technology directly support your learning, and which distract you and others in the classroom.** Electronic multitasking detracts from learning outcomes, both for device users and the people sitting nearby. Laptops/tablets can be powerful tools for learning when used with purpose; cell phones are not necessary in the classroom. If you are managing an urgent personal work matter, you are always welcome to quietly and momentarily leave the room to use your phone.
- **NO photographs or video recordings are permitted under any circumstances.** Personal audio recordings of lectures require the prior permission of the course instructor; see the course policies below.

ASSIGNMENTS & EXAM

ALL assignments are due, hard copy, **at the start of lecture at 4.10 pm on the due date**. Any assignments brought to class after the lecture begins will be considered late and assessed a penalty (see the course policies below).

Observing Economic Space (20%): To practice applying the insights of geographers, the first assignment asks you to critically reflect on your experiences performing a specific economic activity within the past two weeks. The paper must support an argument that integrates course readings and lecture concepts with your critical reflection, to consider how the relationships among key actors and processes make the place where you were an economic space. Assignment guidelines will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard. The paper will be no longer than 1000 words and is due **7 February**.

Global Commodity Chain Analysis (40%): You will choose a manufactured consumer product in your household and write a global commodity chain analysis of it. The paper should focus on key sites in the commodity's global chain, and it must support an argument that substantially integrates course readings with your own research. Assignment guidelines will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard. The paper will be no longer than 3000 words and is due **21 March**.

Preparation, Participation, and Engagement (10%): Throughout the term, you will complete in-class activities during lectures and tutorials. Because engagement in a course can take a variety of forms, you will be offered multiple modes of participation (discussion, writing, small group work, etc.). This component of the grade is evaluated based on a combination of the quality *and* quantity of your contributions of the course over the whole term.

Final Exam (30%): Covers *all* readings and lectures. A review guide, including question formats and content to study, will be posted on Blackboard before the last lecture. The final exam date, time, and location will be announced by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences later in the term.

TUTORIALS

There are 4 tutorials for this course. Tutorials are primarily devoted to introducing assignment requirements, and practicing skills required to complete course assignments. During tutorials, you will complete in-class activities that form part of the participation component of the course grade. Any preparation for tutorials, if required, will be announced in advance on the course Blackboard site.

You **must** register for one of the following tutorial sections. You may **only attend the tutorial you are registered for**. Any exceptions to this require the prior approval of the course instructor.

Tutorial Code	Day/Time	Room	TA
TUT5101	Wednesdays, 6-7 pm	SS 2108	Adam
TUT0101	Thursdays, 3-4 pm	SS 1087	Matt

Tutorial Dates & Topics

17 / 18 January	Defining Economic Space Assignment
31 January / 1 February	Critical Reflection Workshop
14 / 15 February	Introduction to Global Commodity Chain Research
7 / 8 March	Global Commodity Chain Analysis Workshop

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

In this course, we are lucky to work with a team of teaching assistants whose specialization in economic geography directly supports your learning.

Your TA is assigned to you based on the tutorial section you are registered in, and they will mark all of your assignments during the term.

Matt and Adam are available to you throughout the term to consult on assignments, answer questions, and discuss your interests.

You are warmly welcome – and strongly encouraged – to visit your TA's office hours, which will be announced on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES

Accessibility

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations, or have any accessibility concerns about the course requirements, the classroom, or the course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:

<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. You are most welcome, but in no way required, to discuss accessibility with the course instructor as needed.

Audio Recording

Only with the prior permission of the course instructor may you make personal audio recordings of lectures for your own individual use only. Audio recordings permit lecture content review and are not a substitute for attending class. If you are granted permission by the course instructor to make personal audio recordings of lectures, you may not, under any circumstances, share or distribute the files in any format through any means. No photographs or video recordings are permitted under any circumstances. Non-compliance with any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

In accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, students with accessibility needs will be permitted make audio recordings of lectures.

Academic Integrity

You must comply with the university's policies on academic integrity. Please don't plagiarize. As a student at the University of Toronto, you are expected to understand and follow these policies: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/code/the-code-of-behaviour-on-academic-matters>

Absence from Class

This course is designed assuming that all students attend all lectures and tutorials, but attendance 'points' are not recorded. It is ultimately up to you to determine how to best manage your time. It is your responsibility to obtain and retain all of the course material, including lectures and in-class exercises. It is not possible to participate if you are absent. If you encounter any difficulties during the term that will prevent you from regularly attending class, contact your College Registrar asap.

Absence from the Final Exam

The final exam is administered by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), not the course instructor or TAs. If you miss the final exam for any reason, you must formally petition the FAS: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/petitions/common#deferred>

Email

Please conduct as much course business as possible in person, before and after class and during office hours. Direct all administrative emails to the course instructor. We ask that you limit emails to very short questions for which you otherwise cannot find an answer. All of the information you need to complete the course is provided to you in class and on Blackboard. You are expected to be in touch with one another, and to carefully consult the resources provided to you, for answers to most questions.

It is a university policy that only emails from official UofT accounts will be returned; to ensure a response, include the course code (GGR 221) in all subject lines. Usually you can expect an email reply within 2-3 weekdays. Exceptions to this are times when we do not respond to student emails: weekends, holidays, the day before/day of an assignment deadline, and the same day a marked assignment is returned to you.

Submitting Assignments

ALL assignments are due, hard copy, at the start of lecture at 4.10 pm on the due date. NO assignments are accepted via email, under office doors, in tutorials, or during office hours. Any assignments brought to class after the lecture begins will be considered 1 day late and a penalty of 5% will be applied. Please plan your day to arrive to the classroom well in advance with your completed assignment in hand to avoid any unnecessary problems.

Late Assignments

Can be submitted to the assignment dropbox located in the main office of the Department of Geography and Planning in SS 5064 on the 5th floor of Sid Smith. Assignments placed in this dropbox will be date stamped at the end of the day, on days that the main office is open. When the main office is closed, late assignments can be placed in the 'after hours' dropbox located outside the main office doors. Any assignments submitted to the 'after hours' dropbox will be date stamped the next day that the main office is open. Note that this means that assignments submitted to the department's dropbox on or after the due date will be marked late and assessed a penalty accordingly. Take this information into account to avoid any additional late penalties.

Penalty for Late Assignments

Is 5% per day, and no assignments will be accepted 5 days after a deadline. Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) count as 1 day for this purpose.

Missed Assignment Deadlines/Extensions

Extensions are granted sparingly, and only in the case of documented illness or personal emergency. For medical reasons, you need an official doctor's note that clearly excuses you from work or school on the due date. In the case of personal emergency, contact your College Registrar ASAP.

Reviewing Assignment Marks

No questions about marked assignments will be addressed until the day after a marked assignment had been returned to you. This is to allow you enough time to read and reflect on the comments provided as well as to review the assignment requirements.

It is a university policy that you have 2 weeks from the day a marked assignment is returned in class to ask questions or to request a review of the assignment. If you wish to request a review of a marked assignment, you must do the following: carefully re-read the assignment, the comments, and the assignment guidelines; send the course instructor a brief (1-2 paragraph) motivation that clearly identifies the substantive assignment requirements that you believe could be re-evaluated; attach a copy of the marked assignment, including all comments, to this motivation.

You may provide these materials to the course instructor either in hard copy or via email.

If the request is accepted, keep in mind that there are 3 possibilities: the mark can stay the same, it can go up, or it can go down.

Copies of Assignments

It is your responsibility to pick up marked assignments, to maintain digital copies of written assignments, and to retain hard copies of all marked assignments until the final grades are recorded.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Developing strong academic skills (reading, writing, note-taking, citation, etc.) is a *process* – no one is born with these abilities! You are strongly encouraged to make frequent use of campus resources, which are provided to you for free as a student.

University of Toronto Libraries: You can book a one-on-one appointment with a librarian, access online chat, or just walk up to a reference desk in Robarts Library: <http://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/contact-us/>

Library research & writing workshops fill up fast so register early!
<https://libcal.library.utoronto.ca/>

The **Academic Skills Centre** offers workshops and online resources on a wide range of topics: <http://www.asc.utoronto.ca/>

Campus **Writing Centres** provide online resources and appointments – book an appointment as early as possible: www.writing.utoronto.ca

The **English Language Learning Centre** hosts Communication Cafes, workshops, and online writing support <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>

REQUIRED READINGS & LECTURE SCHEDULE

All assigned readings are provided as .PDFs on the course Blackboard site, courtesy of the University of Toronto Libraries.

10 January ‘All Economics is Geographical’

Coe, Kelly & Yeung, “Thinking Geographically About the Economy”
Read this course syllabus in full.

17 January Production, Consumption, and Social Reproduction

Richard Walker, “The Geography of Production”
Rosie Cox, “House/Work: Home as a Space of Work and Consumption”

24 January The Rise of the Service Economy

Linda McDowell, “Service Employment & the Commoditization of the Body”
Rachel Aviv, “The Cost of Caring”

31 January Creative, Cultural, and Sharing Economies

Deborah Leslie and Norma Rantisi, “The Rise of a New Knowledge/Creative Economy”
Lizzie Richardson, “Performing the Sharing Economy”

7 February New Industrial Spaces

Henry Nick & Dawley Stuart, “Industrial and Technology Regions”
Sara Mojtehdzadeh & Brendan Kennedy, “Undercover in Temp Nation”

14 February Global Commodity Chains

Michael Watts, “Commodities”
Priti Ramamurthy, “Why is buying a ‘Madras’ cotton shirt a political act?”

**** 20 – 23 February: READING WEEK – NO CLASS ****

28 February **Waste, Trash, and Value in Global Commodity Chains**

Susan Strasser, "Towards a Brief History of Trash"
Rajyashree N. Reddy, "Producing Abjection"

7 March **Governing States and Markets**

Danny Mackinnon, "Reinventing the State"
Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos* [excerpts]

14 March **Informal Economies**

Lorena Muñoz, "Selling Nostalgia"
Louise Crewe, "Tales of the Unexpected"

21 March **Geographies of Financial Exclusion**

David McNally, "The Great Panic of 2008"
Alan Walks, "Canada's Housing Bubble Story"

28 March **Alternative Economies**

Doreen Massey & Michael Rustin, "Whose Economy? Reframing the Debate"
Ajwoa Nzinga Ifteyo, "A Co-op State of Mind"

4 April **Review & Reassessment**