

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
University of Toronto

**GGR 254F GEOGRAPHY USA**  
**FALL 2019 (PRELIMINARY)**

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Instructor:	Robert Lewis
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Class Times:	Tuesday 12-2 in Sidney Smith Hall, room 1069
Office Hours:	<i>Tuesday 2:10-3:10 pm; Wednesday 2:10-3:00 pm; or by appointment</i>

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**Course Description**

This course covers three broad aspects of the geography of the United States: the building of borders; the social and economic impacts of changes to American regions and cities; and the challenges facing American metropolitan areas since the end of World War Two. Particular attention is given to the creation of an American territory; the changing fortunes of regions (the American South and the Manufacturing Belt); the metropolitan geographies of poverty and racism; the rising importance of the postwar suburbs; the geographical effects of changes to twentieth-century immigration policy; and the contested and inequalities of the politics of place.

**Course Goals**

The aim of the course is to help students:

- Develop an understanding of some of the key processes and forces shaping the growth and decline of American regions and cities.
- Develop an understanding of some of the important geographic processes producing the internal structure and dynamics of American metropolitan areas.
- Learn key concepts used in the discipline of human geography by examining them in the context of the United States.
- Develop critical thinking, reading, writing and research skills.

**Course Readings and Lectures**

As there is no textbook that adequately addresses the topics covered in this course, weekly readings are drawn from journal articles and book chapters. You have access to all class readings on your Quercus dashboard (<http://q.utoronto.ca>). I expect that you have read and are familiar with the readings before class time. Slides of class lecture notes will be posted on Quercus after the lecture. It is the responsibility of students to check Quercus for class updates.

**Course Requirements**

Assignment 1: handed out, <i>September 24; due no later than 11:59 pm, October 11</i>	20%
Assignment 2: handed out <i>October 15; due no later than 11:59 pm, November 22</i>	35%
Reading responses: during term time	5%
Final exam (during faculty exam period)	40%

## **Term Assignments**

*Assignments:* There are two written assignments. In both cases, you will be assessed on your ability to analyze and synthesize research literature in geography and the social science and humanities more broadly. Both assignments focus on working through social and political issues related to topics and concepts raised in the course lectures and readings. Evaluation of your written work rests on your ability to write an interpretative essay using clear, correct English, which shows a basic command of diction, grammar, syntax and punctuation.

*Assignment 1 and 2 submission policy:* Papers must be submitted electronically to Quercus no later than 11:59 pm on October 11 for assignment 1 and 11.59 pm on November 22 for assignment 2. It is your responsibility to maintain digital copies of your written assignments and marked assignments until the final course marks are recorded.

*Penalties for late assignments:* There is a penalty of 5% per day. No assignments are accepted seven days after the deadline. Consult your registrar if you are having difficulties during the term that prevent you from completing your 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 only in the case of documented illness or personal emergencies. For medical reasons, you will need an official medical note that clearly indicates that you were unwell and unable to finish the assignment on time. 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 have a regrade of your paper, you must a) take a couple of days to carefully review the comments, paper, and requirements; and b) bring me your paper (the one with the TA's comments) and a brief rationale (1-2 paragraphs) that sets out the substantive aspects of the assignment that you would like revisited during my office hours. If the request is accepted, there are three possible outcomes: the mark can stay the same, it can go up, or it can go down. By University of Toronto policy, you have two weeks after receiving the mark to make a request.

*Reading responses:* You are required to submit five short reading responses (three to five sentences each) that answer the following question about the chosen course readings: what is the main argument of the author(s)?

Students may only submit one response per week (for five weeks) and should state clearly in their response which reading they are responding to. The response should be submitted on Quercus no later than 11:59 pm the night before the class in which the reading is due. For example, your response to either the Robert Kagan or Richard Schien reading is due no later than 11:59 pm, September 16. A full mark will be given to a thoughtful response that responds in some way to the question. An answer of fewer than three or more than five sentences will not be accepted and the student will receive a zero.

*Final exam:* The final exam consists of definitions and essays, and is based on course readings and class lectures. The date, time and location will be announced midway through term by the Faculty of Arts and Science.

### **Classroom Environment**

Everyone in the class has responsibilities. My primary obligation is to provide a safe and open space that provides a stimulating learning environment. Your primary obligation is to come to class having completed the course readings, ready to ask questions and foster conversations about lectures and the readings. All of us have to contribute to a respectful classroom space. Please do not hesitate to speak to me after class or during office hours if you have concerns about the course environment.

Some things that contribute to a better classroom environment are:

- 1) Arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the class. If you have to enter or leave during the lecture, please do so as quietly as possible (and sit close to the door).
- 2) Turning off (or putting in silent mode) cell phones and other communications devices. 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 and to me.
- 3) Being respectful to everyone involved in the course – instructor, teaching assistant and other students. You have the right to expect respect from them in return. 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. 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](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm)

### **Audio recordings**

Making audio recordings of lectures for your own personal use can only be done with the prior permission of the instructor. If you are granted permission, you must agree to the following: You will not distribute the audio recordings in any form (websites, email, file sharing, or any other means) or share audio recordings with other students without the explicit permission of the course instructor. No photographs or video recordings are permitted under any circumstances. In accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities act, students with accommodation needs will be permitted to make personal audio recordings of lectures.

### **Communication Policy**

Instructor-student interaction occurs in the classroom and during office hours. Email contact is limited to questions requiring simple yes/no answers, making appointments, and dealing with emergencies. Please come to my office hours or see me after class if you wish to discuss matters related to the course.

## Accessibility Services

If you require accommodations for a disability or have any accessibility concerns about the course contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible:

<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

## 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 a proper use of citation. Students also should not submit any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought without first discussing it with the instructor. Please consult the “Rules and Regulations” section of the Arts and Science Calendar for more information. For more information consult the University’s “Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters”:

[www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) as well as the useful resource at [www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize)

## Class Topics and Readings

Week	Date	Theme	Topic	Readings
1	September 1		Introduction	
2	September 17	Borders	Territory and the making of America	Kagan; Schien
3	September 24	Borders	Immigration and the border	Tienda and Sanchez; Rodríguez and Hagan
4	October 1	Regional Geographies	The Rust Belt	High; Hartley
5	October 8	Regional Geographies	The Sunbelt	Grantham; Abbott
6	October 15	Urban Geographies	America’s cities	Lewis; Martin
7	October 22	Urban Geographies	Suburban America	Knox; Beauregard
8	October 29	Geographies of Inequality	Segregation and race	Seligman; Casey-Leininger
	November 5		Reading week: no class	
9	November 12	Geographies of Inequality	Poverty and class	Jargowsky; Kraus
10	November 19	Geographies of Inequality	Environmental Risk	Pulido; Dreier
11	November 26	Geographies of Inequality	Ethnicity and community	Singer; Alberts
12	December 3		Summary	

## Course Readings

### Week 2: Territory and the making of America

Kagan, Robert "Liberalism and expansion" in Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), pp. 71-103.

Schien, Richard, "Populating the continent: the post-Columbian experience" in Frederick Boal and Stephen Royle (eds.), *North America: A Geographical Mosaic* (London: Arnold, 1990), pp. 70-87.

### Week 3: Borders and Latin American Immigration

Marta Tienda and Susana Sánchez, "Latin American immigration to the United States," *Daedalus* 142 (2013), pp 48-64.

Rodríguez, Nestor and Jacqueline Hagan, "US policies to restrict immigration," in David Leal and Nestor Rodríguez (eds.), *Migration in an Era of Restriction and Recession* (Cham: Springer, 2016), pp. 27-38.

### Week 4: The Rust Belt

High, Steven, "The deindustrializing heartland" in Steven High, *Industrial Sunset: the Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 92-130.

Hartley, Daniel, "Urban decline in Rust-Belt cities" in Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, *Economic Commentary* (May 2103), pp. 1-6.

### Week 5: The Sunbelt

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

Abbott, Carl, "Urbanizing the Sunbelt," *OAH Magazine of History*, 18 (2003), pp. 11-16.

### Week 6: American's Cities

Lewis, Robert, "An urban history" in Lisa Benton-Short (ed.), *Cities of North America* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), pp. 59-83.

Martin, Deborah, "Urban inequities" in Lisa Benton-Short (ed.), *Cities of North America* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), pp. 221-46.

### Week 7: Suburban America

Beauregard, Robert, *When America Became Suburban* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), pp. 101-21.

Knox, Paul, *Metroburbia, USA* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), pp. 1-12.

Week 8: Segregation and race

Seligman, Amanda, "What is the second ghetto?" *Journal of Urban History*, 29 (2003), pp. 272-80.

Casey-Leininger, Charles, "Making the second ghetto in Cincinnati: Avondale, 1925-70" in Henry Taylor, Jr. (ed.), *Race and the City: Work, Community, and Protest in Cincinnati* (Urbana and Chicago. University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 232-57.

Week 9: Urban poverty and Class

Jargowsky, Paul, *Concentration of Poverty in the New Millennium* (Rutgers Center for Urban Research and Education, 2015).

Kraus, Neil, "Local policymaking and concentrated poverty the case of Buffalo, New York," *Cities*, 21 (2004), pp. 481-90.

Week 10: The politics of risks

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

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

Week 11: Ethnicity and community

Singer, Audrey, "Contemporary immigrant gateways in historical perspective," *Urban Daedalus*, 142 (2013), pp. 76-91.

Alberts, Heike, "Changes in ethnic solidarity in Cuban Miami," *Geographical Review*, 95 (2005), pp. 231-48.