

Geography 345/499: Geography of New Mexico and the Southwest

Spring 2009 – Tuesday/Thursday – 2:00-3:15pm

Meets in Dane Smith Hall 326
Instructor: Dr. Maria Lane // Office: Bandelier West, Room 224
Office hours: Tues/Thurs, 3:30-4pm and Wed, 12-1pm
Phone: (505) 277-1752 // Email: mdlane@unm.edu

Course Overview

The American Southwest is many things to many people. Originally home to some of the oldest urban settlements in North America, this arid region has undergone successive phases of conquest, colonialism, and economic development to become one of today's most complex (and most misunderstood) American cultural landscapes.

This course examines the changing historical, economic, and cultural geography of the American Southwest through the lens of human-environment interaction, focusing particularly on New Mexico. In the beginning of the semester, students will explore the Southwest through readings and in-class activities that are designed to provide a broad overview of the region's historical patterns, cultural meanings, and environmental issues. Starting in February, however, the class focus will shift to the planning and implementation of student research at four field sites in New Mexico. Students will work in groups and with the instructor to learn more about their field sites, to design a small research project, and to prepare for a two-day fieldtrip in April. The final month of the semester will be spent analyzing field data and preparing end-of-semester presentations and papers.

What will you get out of this course?

By the end of the class, you will have a firm grasp of human-environment relationships within the Southwest. You will also be capable of conducting fieldwork and geographical analysis within this region. The course structure is designed to provide a learning environment in which each student can achieve the following:

1. Design legitimate human-environment research for a Southwestern field site.
2. Implement basic field research techniques for a Southwestern field site.
3. Analyze field data and assess its value and limitations.
4. Provide a meaningful contribution to a research group.
5. State the importance and context of an original Southwestern field research project.

What are your responsibilities in this course?

This upper-level course requires students to do substantial independent work and to take responsibility for their own progress. Students are expected to read assigned texts carefully, to attend and participate in all class activities, and to become active contributors to their field research groups.

Format and Attendance

You will achieve the outcomes listed above by participating in a variety of learning activities, including reading articles and book chapters, working with maps, completing in-class assignments, and working in groups to plan and implement original research. Lecture presentations will be a minor part of how you learn the content and techniques of this class. On most days, the majority of class time will be spent on activities designed to help you master material with the support of the instructor and your classmates. For this reason, it is extremely important that you attend all class sessions. **If you will not be able to attend class regularly, you should not enroll in this course.**

Class Participation

In order to master the various topics and techniques we will be using in this course, the class involves a number of in-class assignments and group activities. These are designed to provide opportunities for you to learn geographical concepts and techniques in an environment where you can take advantage of instructor support and peer assistance. Because these activities are fundamental to how you will learn in this course, class participation is a substantial part of your grade. In order to earn the maximum class participation points, you must participate in and contribute to all in-class activities.

Required Field Trip

The most important element of this course is the design and implementation of original field research. To this end, we will take a two-day class field trip on April 4/5 (Saturday-Sunday) that will visit four separate sites in New Mexico. At each site, one of the groups will carry out its planned field activities while the other groups will engage in field tours and other activities set up by the instructor. Although the field sites are all fairly close to Albuquerque, this trip will nonetheless cover a lot of ground and will be fairly grueling. Please plan to set aside the entire two days (7am-8pm both days) for field activities.

NOTE: The field trip is a critical component of the learning process and is NOT optional. If you anticipate any conflict in attending and/or fully participating in the field component of this course, please see me immediately to discuss whether or not you will be able to take the course.

Students will be responsible for expenses incurred during the field trip, including transportation costs, meals and overnight lodging. (Please note that there is no standard course fee associated with this course.) I will make every effort to help you minimize these expenses by identifying low-cost food/lodging options and by organizing an efficient carpooling system so that students can share transportation costs.

Required Readings

The required text for this course is *Southwest: Three Peoples in Geographical Change 1600-1970*, by D.W. Meinig. Additional readings will be posted in WebCT. Please see the detailed schedule and note that readings should be completed BEFORE the class session listed.

Instructor Contact

In upper-division courses with significant levels of independent work, it is important for students to consult with the instructor regularly. If your schedule does not permit you to visit during office hours, I am happy to set appointments outside those times. Note: Whenever you email me, you MUST include "GEOG345" or "GEOG499" in the subject line of your email, and you must sign your email with your full name. This will prevent the problem of your email getting caught in my junkmail filter.

Class Communications

Class materials will be posted on the course website on WebCT and will generally NOT be available in paper copies. To log in to our class site, go to <http://vista.unm.edu>, enter your UNM NetID and password, then click on GEOG 345. WebCT will be updated regularly with PDFs of readings, field preparation assignments, report/presentation rubrics, and student grades. I will also use WebCT to make periodic class announcements via email. Please make sure that you check your WebCT mail regularly, or change the settings to forward messages to the email address you check most often.

Research Presentation

In the third week of April, each group will make a 30-minute oral presentation that provides a detailed overview of the field research activities, results, and significance. All group members should be involved in preparing and/or delivering the presentation, which will be graded for both content and presentation effectiveness. I will invite outside guests to attend the presentations, and I expect the highest level of professionalism from all students. A detailed assignment will be posted online, along with a rubric indicating how the presentation will be graded.

Research Report

In the last week of class, each group will submit a detailed research report that describes the design, implementation, and analysis phases of your research project. It should clearly state the achievements and significance of the research, putting your field site in context within the wider Southwest. All group members should be involved in preparing the research report, and you will be required to include an appendix that states how each group member contributed to the overall project, including the development of both the research presentation and report. A detailed assignment will be posted online, along with a rubric indicating how the report will be graded.

Grading

Your mastery of course content and concepts will be evaluated using the following grading breakdown:

- 30% Participation in Class Activities – Individual Score**
- 20% Fieldtrip Preparation Assignments – Group Score**
- 10% Research Presentation – Group Score**
- 20% Research Report – Group Score**
- 20% Group Contribution – Individual Score**

Schedule of Activities and Assignments

The schedule shown below and on the following pages includes readings that should be completed BEFORE the class session.

Part I: Geography of the Southwest

OVERVIEW

1/20 – Welcome and Introductions

1/22 – What is “The Southwest”?

Due at beginning of class (2pm): mental maps

READINGS (textbook):

Chapter 1: “The Southwest: A Definition,” pp. 3-8

Chapter 9: “Regional Social Geography c.1970,” pp. 95-119

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on post-Meinig evolution of SW

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

1/27 – Climate and Vegetation

READING (WebCT):

Paul R. Sheppard, Andrew C. Comrie, Gregory D. Packin, Kurt Angersbach, and Malcolm K. Hughes. (1999) “The Climate of the Southwest.” Climas Report Series #CL1-99 (Institute for the Study of Planet Earth, University of Arizona).

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on vegetation pattern interpretation

1/29 – Topography and Water

READINGS (WebCT):

Pick four national parks or national recreation areas within the Southwest and read the “Nature and Science” section of their National Park Service webpages, focusing particularly on geology and water (usually listed under the “Natural Features and Ecosystems” tab). Direct links to the various Southwestern parks and recreation areas are available in WebCT.

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on wind and water processes

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

2/3 – Precolonial and Colonial Geographies

READINGS (textbook):

Chapter 2: “The Spanish Era: 1598-1820s,” pp. 9-16

Chapter 3: “Connections and Boundaries, 1820s-1860s,” pp. 17-26

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on historical routes and connections

2/5 – Territorial and Modern Geographies

READINGS (textbook):

Chapter 4: “Changing Geography of Peoples: 1820s-1870s,” pp. 27-37

Chapter 5: “The Early Railroad Era: 1879-1900,” pp. 38-52

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on Southwestern sub-regions

CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY

2/10 – Cultural Landscapes

READING (WebCT):

Campbell, Barbara A. (2001) “Sedona and the New (Age) frontier.” In Melendez et al. (eds.) *The Multicultural Southwest: A Reader*. Tucson, University of Arizona Press, pp. 253-261.

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on observing UNM cultural landscape

2/12 – Urban Geographies

Due at beginning of class (2pm): Online Groupwork Questionnaire (WebCT)

READINGS (WebCT and textbook):

Yabiku, Scott T., David G. Casagrande, and Elizabeth Farley-Metzger (2008)

“Preferences for landscape choice in a Southwestern desert city,” *Environment and behavior* 40(3): 382-400.

Textbook Chapter 7: “Patterns of Economic Development,” pp. 68-81

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on air-photo interpretation

ENVIRONMENTAL GEOGRAPHY

2/17 – Water Management in the Southwest

READINGS (WebCT):

Jenkins, Matt (2005) “Squeezing water from a stone.” *High Country News*, September 15.

Kraker, Daniel (2004) “Tribe defeated a dam and won back its river.” *High Country News*, March 15.

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on acequia irrigation

2/19 – Forest Management in the Southwest

READINGS (WebCT):

Freiderici, Peter (2006) “Peace breaks out in New Mexico’s forests.” *High Country News*, October 30.

Larmer, Paul (2007) “Fire: friend and foe.” *High Country News*, August 20.

Due at end of class: in-class exercise on climatic and vegetation patterns

Part II: Preparing for Field Investigations

2/24 – Class visit to MAGIC

Due at beginning of class (2pm): welcome message on group discussion board

READINGS (WebCT):

Selected readings: physical geography of fieldsite

See WebCT for your group's assignment

Due at end of class: list of available maps for your fieldsite

2/26 – Identifying background sources

READINGS (WebCT):

Selected readings: cultural/environmental geography of fieldsite

See WebCT for your group's assignment

Due at end of class: list of key issues in region

3/3 – Creating a research question

Due at beginning of class (2pm): bibliography of background sources

READINGS:

Additional background info on fieldsite – as identified by your group

Due at end of class: draft of research question

3/5 – Assessing data needs and potential methods

Due at beginning of class (2pm): list of necessary data/resources

READINGS:

Additional background info on fieldsite – as identified by your group

Due at end of class: statement of data needs and potential methods

3/10 – Field methods

Due at beginning of class (2pm): revised research question

READINGS:

Additional background info on fieldsite – as identified by your group

Due at end of class: outline of specific methodology

3/12 – Field investigation planning

READINGS:

Additional background info on fieldsite – as identified by your group

Due at end of class: draft field investigation plan

3/17 – SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

3/19 – SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS

3/24 – Independent Work, NO CLASS

3/26 – Independent Work, NO CLASS

Due at end of class: written Field Research Plan due by 2pm on 3/30

3/31 – Field Plan Presentations and logistics work

Presentations: Groups 1 and 2 (20 minutes per group)

Due at end of class: checklist of all resources that will be used in fieldwork

4/2 – Field Plan Presentations & final logistics

Presentations: Groups 3 and 4 (20 minutes per group)

Due at end of class: transportation signups for field trip

Part III: Data Collection and Analysis

4/4 – Fieldtrip, Day 1: Cochiti Dam and Jemez Pueblo

4/5 – Fieldtrip, Day 2: Santa Fe and Las Vegas

4/7 – Field Data Analysis

Due at end of class: summary of data collected in field

4/9 – Assessing Results and Limitations

Due at end of class: summary of data limitations

4/13 – Groupwork: Analysis of results

4/15 – Groupwork: Presentation preparation

4/20 – Research Presentations: Groups 1 and 2 (30 minutes each)

4/22 – Research Presentations: Groups 3 and 4 (30 minutes each)

4/27 – Independent Groupwork, NO CLASS

Due at beginning of class (2pm): online response to presentations

4/29 – Independent Groupwork, NO CLASS

5/4 – Independent Groupwork, NO CLASS

Due at end of class: final papers due by 5pm on 5/5

5/6 – Independent Work, NO CLASS

Due at end of class: group member assessments due by 5pm on 5/7

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM IN THIS COURSE.
