

GEOG 445: Geography of New Mexico and the Southwest

CR# 43683, Fall 2012
T/TH 9:30-10:45am, Castetter Hall 57
Dr. Maria Lane, mdlane@unm.edu
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies
Office: 224 Bandelier West, 277-4075
Office hour: Tues 1-2:30pm & Thurs 11am-1pm

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. Over the course of the semester, students will learn how to apply several basic techniques of geographic analysis. They will use these techniques to conduct original field research here in Albuquerque, analyzing how various parts of the city have responded in unique ways to the broad trends affecting the Southwest as a whole.

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. Identify on a map the basic environmental and cultural features of the American Southwest.
2. Explain prominent environmental and cultural patterns in the Southwest using core geographic concepts.
3. Analyze the relationships influencing human-environment interaction in different times and places in the Southwest.
4. Implement basic field research techniques for a Southwestern field site.
5. Analyze field data and assess its value and limitations.

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, to complete all writing assignments on time, and to become active contributors to their field research groups.

FORMAT AND ATTENDANCE

You will achieve the five learning outcomes listed on page 1 by participating in a variety of learning activities, including reading articles and book chapters, working with maps, completing in-class assignments, writing several original analytical papers, and working in groups to plan and implement original research. Lecture presentations will be only one part of how you learn the content and techniques of this class. On most days, significant 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.**

REQUIRED TEXTS

Required reading assignments for each week will be posted in WebCT and are drawn from the following sources:

- *Southwest: Three Peoples in Geographical Change 1600-1970*, by D.W. Meinig.
- *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country*, by Marsha L. Weisiger
- Additional readings posted in WebCT.

Reserve copies of *Southwest* are and *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* are on reserve in Zimmerman Library. The reading assignments for each unit are listed in the weekly modules on WebCT, along with a reading guide for each day.

CLASS COMMUNICATIONS

Class materials are posted on WebCT and will NOT be available in paper copies. To log in, go to <http://vista.unm.edu>, enter your UNM NetID/password, then click GEOG 445.

WebCT contains PDFs of required articles, reading guides, assignment details, grading rubrics, and student grades. You will submit your written papers through WebCT, using electronic forms that allow me to provide feedback visible only to you. 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 that you check most often.

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT

In upper-division courses with significant levels of independent work, it is important for students to consult with the instructor regularly. See the first page of the syllabus for my office hours. If your schedule does not permit you to visit during office hours, please email me to set an appointment. Note: Whenever you email me, you MUST include "GEOG445" 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.

REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

You will demonstrate course content mastery through the following required assignments and activities.

Assignments and Quizzes (daily)

This class involves a number of in-class assignments, group activities, and occasional unannounced reading quizzes. 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, in-class assignments constitute a substantial part of your overall grade. In order to earn the maximum “in-class” points, you must attend, participate in and contribute to all in-class activities.

Short Essay Assignments (due throughout October and November)

Before you begin working on your major analytical paper for the class, you will complete a series of short weekly essays on various topics. These weekly essays will help you develop your writing skills and hone your analytical techniques, using feedback from the instructor to improve your performance. These short essays will count toward your overall assignments/quizzes score.

Midterm Exam (October 2)

The first third of the class focuses on basic geographic details about the physical and historical geography of the Southwest. You will demonstrate your mastery of this content through a midterm examination that includes multiple-choice questions, map identifications, and essays. A review sheet will be provided on WebCT, and the exam will be discussed extensively in class ahead of time. Makeup exams will be offered only for emergency situations and at the instructor’s discretion.

Analytical Paper (draft due December 4; final version due December 6)

The final section of the course focuses on the geographic analysis of environmental and urban issues in various Southwestern locations. You will demonstrate mastery of geographic analysis through an original essay paper (1,500-2,000 words). An essay prompt and grading rubric will be provided on WebCT, and the assignment will be discussed extensively in class.

Fieldwork Report & Presentation (presentations November 8 & 13; papers due November 13)

The final element of the course is a field research project that you will conduct in a group with other students. Each group will be assigned a field site in Albuquerque, with individual group members responsible for specific types of data-gathering at each site. You will conduct your fieldwork together, as a group, during the weekend of October 27/28 (with followup fieldwork expected for the following weekend of November 3/4) and will then work collaboratively to develop an analytical report and presentation over the following two weeks. Detailed instructions and grading rubrics will be provided on WebCT for both the independent and group-based elements of this assignment. This will also be discussed extensively in class. Note that the course schedule provides for group meetings during regular class time.

OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM

The final exam in this class is optional. If you choose to take the final exam and earn a better score than the midterm, I will replace your original score. The final exam will cover the exact same material as the midterm and will use the same format, but the questions will be different. Makeups will NOT be offered for this optional exam, for any reason.

GRADING

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

	% of Grade	Description	Dates
Assignments, Quizzes & Short Essays	30%	Individual and group activities, in-class and at home	Daily
Midterm Exam*	25%	Covers physical and historical geography	Tuesday, Oct 2
Analytical Paper	20%	Original paper on urban / environmental issues	Thursday, Dec 6
Field Report	15%	Individual report on fieldwork	Tuesday, Nov 13
Field Presentation	10%	Group presentation on fieldwork	Thursday, Nov 8 or Tuesday, Nov 13

* This score can be improved by taking the optional final exam, see above.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Individual reading assignments and detailed assignment guides will be posted in WebCT. For each week, you will open the online module to access all relevant materials.

UNIT 1: Introduction

- Week 1 8/21 Course Welcome and Intro
 8/23 Defining the Region

UNIT 2: Physical Geography

- Week 2 8/28 Topography
 8/30 Climate
Week 3 9/4 Water
 9/6 Vegetation

UNIT 3: Historical Geography

- Week 4 9/11 Precolonial Geography
 9/13 Colonial Spanish Transitions I
Week 5 9/18 Colonial Spanish Transitions II
 9/20 Colonial Mexican Transitions
Week 6 9/25 Anglo Territorial Transitions
 9/27 An American Century

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2: MIDTERM EXAM

UNIT 4: Economic and Urban Issues

- Week 7 10/4 Albuquerque and surroundings
 10/9 El Paso and surroundings
 10/11 NO CLASS: FALL BREAK
Week 8 10/16 Tucson and surroundings
 10/18 Phoenix and surroundings

UNIT 5: Field Research

- Week 9 10/23 In-class preparation for Albuquerque neighborhood research
 10/25 In-class preparation for Albuquerque neighborhood research
 ((10/27&10/28: FIELDWORK IN GROUPS, exact times TBD))
Week 10 10/30 In-class groupwork: field data analysis
 11/1 In-class groupwork: field data analysis
 ((11/3&11/4: FOLLOWUP FIELDWORK IN GROUPS, exact times TBD))
Week 11 11/6 In-class groupwork: field data analysis
 11/8 Final group presentations
 11/13 Final group presentations // **Final reports due at beginning of class**

UNIT 6: Human-Environment Interactions

- Week 12 11/15 Pastoralism and its origins
 11/20 Navajo-Anglo conflicts in the grasslands
 11/22 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Week 13 11/27 Interpreting environmental conflict
 11/29 Interpreting cultural conflict
Week 14 12/4 Peer review workshop // **Full draft of paper due at beginning of class**
 12/6 Semester wrap-up // **Final papers due at beginning of class**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 7:30-9:30AM: OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM

ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

Because 20% of your grade in this class comes from an essay assignment, I encourage you to take advantage of the options offered by the Center for Academic Program Support (CAPS). CAPS provides academic assistance free-of-charge to UNM students enrolled in undergraduate courses on the Albuquerque campus. The CAPS Writing Center offers one-on-one peer tutoring for students at any stage of the writing process, from generation and organizing ideas to revising essays and improving grammatical skills. Individual appointments for writing tutoring may be made in person at CAPS (Third Floor of Zimmerman Library) or by phoning 277-7205.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Intellectual integrity is expected in all work. Although this course features numerous peer instruction activities and encourages collaboration and group learning, written essays are expected to be the independent work of each individual student.

Using someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledgement constitutes plagiarism. This includes, but is not limited to, purchasing a paper and submitting it as one's own; "recycling" someone else's paper; cutting and pasting from the Web; paraphrasing someone else's ideas without acknowledgement; or copying phrases, sentences or passages without quotation marks and/or without acknowledgement. Anyone who is caught plagiarizing will receive an F in the course and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.