

Senior Seminar in Geography

Geography 380

Spring 2023

Instructor Information:

<u>Instructor:</u>	Dr. Steven Schnell	<u>Office Phone:</u>	610-683-1595
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<u>Office Hours:</u>	M 2:00-4:00 W 12:00-1:00 F 12:00-2:00 And by appointment Held in person, or via Zoom by arrangement	<u>website:</u>	https://schnell92.wixsite.com/website

The Course:

Senior Seminar is a core requirement for the geography major. It is a small, seminar-based course, and as such, it requires more thought and more participation from students than a "regular" undergraduate class. More than most classes, this is one where you will learn and grow in proportion to the time and energy you expend. There are two main areas of concentration for the course. The first is the writing of a Senior Thesis, a requirement for graduation (in lieu of a comprehensive exam). To this end, we will continue the discussion of methods begun in your Research Methods class, and will learn how to prepare and present original research projects. Additionally, we will discuss in detail the history of geographic thought. The philosophical basis of geographic thought forms an essential platform for a complete understanding of geography – we all have underlying biases and theories, whether or not we are conscious of them. Yet these assumptions and biases color the research we do, the methods we use, and the conclusions we reach. This course introduces the mainstream of geographic thought as it has evolved in the United States, and the underlying theories that have animated each time period. This may also be your chance for introspection, as you think about your place in the discipline of Geography that you have chosen for your life's work.

Texts:

There are no textbooks to buy for this class. Don't get me wrong – you'll have PLENTY to read. All of the readings will be on e-reserve on the library's web page.

E-reserves – <http://library.kutztown.edu/er.php> -- password is "kup"

Grading Information:

Your grade is based on your performance on your research paper, a final exam, several exercises, a readings journal, the oral presentation, and classroom participation. The final exam (25% of your final grade), Senior Thesis (25% of your final grade), and presentation (5% of your final grade) are the only aspects that will receive a numerical grade. If you're doing the math, you'll realize that about 45% remains. This portion of your grade will be made up of participation (25%) and class assignments and readings journals (20%). Participation in this class is vital – your participation in class discussions will make up a considerable portion of your final grade! Your assignments and reading journals will be graded on a check (adequate), check-plus (excellent), check-minus (not-so-good), or zero (didn't hand it in) basis. Too many check-minuses and your grade will be lowered, enough check-plusses and your grade will be raised. Zeroes, of course, will hurt you considerably. Please note also that failure to complete a senior thesis with a passing grade will automatically result in failure of the course, regardless of other grades received in the course.

The Senior Thesis will be a 12-15 page original research project (not including maps, figures, diagrams, tables, pictures, doodles, 3-inch margins, etc.) on a selected geographic research problem. You will be required to consult with your advisor on this project numerous times during the semester. The Oral Presentation will be a professional presentation reflecting the main points and conclusions of your geographic research paper.

Late papers, projects, and exercises will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor, and will be subject to a substantial penalty.

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is essential. This is a seminar class, where each class member is expected to initiate and contribute to discussion of the changing themes of Geography and to offer presentations and discussions of geographic techniques. In fact, in large part, the quality of this class will depend on the effort that you are willing to put into it. Absences are only acceptable in the case of a genuine, documented emergency or illness, or a University-excused absence (for a class field trip, for example). Attendance and participation counts for one-fourth of your final grade. You are expected to be prepared to contribute to class by asking questions, making presentations, and actively engaging in discussion. If you are not prepared, your grade will be lowered. Absences require

documentation to be excused. Other absences (e.g. I fell asleep; my boss called me at the last minute) are not valid excuses for missing class. Please arrange your schedule so you can come to every class meeting. **Final grades will be decreased one-half letter grade for each unexcused absence beyond the first one.**

Cellular Phones:

The rule regarding electronics is simple: None allowed. No laptops. No phones. No texting. If you want to get on my bad side, a very good way to do it is to text during class, or check your messages. Turn all electronic devices off before entering my (or any) class; I don't want to see them.

Academic Honesty:

I have NO tolerance for plagiarism or cheating. If you cheat, or attempt to pass off work that is not yours as your own, you will AUTOMATICALLY fail the course and your name will be forwarded to the appropriate disciplinary authorities for the Geography Department and the University. This can result in permanent expulsion from the University. Refer to the student handbook for specific guidelines concerning academic dishonesty.

Use of D2L:

I use D2L for posting of grades, making class announcements, and for posting links to various class materials, as well as additional copies of all assignment sheets. You will hand in all assignments in paper form.

A Highly Tentative Schedule		Readings/assignments
January 24	Introduction/Resumes/Editing	-----
January 26	Editing	Edits of paragraphs from first day
January 31	Resumes/Research Process/Observation (regular time); Also REQUIRED sr. orientation 11-11:50 **	
February 2	Library work/Journals	-----
February 4	10am-noon. Meet at Renninger's and my house, approx. 2 hours	
February 7	Focusing Research Questions	Bring in research topic ideas/descriptive writeup due
February 9	Career Development Center presentation (in regular classroom)	Resumes due - (one to me, upload one to C.S. for review)/meet w/ advisor re: proposal
February 14	Literature reviews/reliability and validity, etc.	Research Proposal due - bring 7 copies
February 16	Proposal Discussions	Bring written critiques of others, discuss your proposal
February 21	Proposal Discussions	Bring written critiques of others, discuss your proposal
February 23	Interviews/Surveys/Humanistic techniques	-----
February 28	Interviews/Surveys/Humanistic techniques	-----
March 2	Intro to Geog. Thought/19th Century	Literature reviews due
March 7	Environmental Determinism	-----
March 9	Discussion	Readings Journal #1 Due
March 14	Spring Break - No Classes	-----
March 16	Spring Break - No Classes	-----
March 21	AAG meeting - no class meeting	-----
March 23	AAG meeting - no class meeting	-----
March 28	Oral Progress Reports	Meet with advisor regarding progress report by today/methods section due
March 30	Regionalism/Quantitative Revolution	-----
April 4	Quantitative Revolution/Berkeley School	-----
April 6	Discussion	Readings Journal #2 Due
April 11	Interview debriefing/ Marxism	interview writeups due
April 13	Marxism/Humanism	Meet with advisor regarding thesis progress by today
April 18	Discussion	Readings Journal #3 Due
April 20	Postmodernism/Feminism/Postcolonialism	Last day to look at drafts
April 25	TBA	FINAL THESIS DUE
April 27	Discussion	Readings Journal #4 Due
May 2	Research Presentations	-----
May 4	Research Presentations	-----
Final Exam	Thursday, May 11, 11am-1pm	

**Or could also attend on Weds. Feb. 1 (2:00-2:50); Tuesday Feb. 7 (11-11:50am); or Wednesday, Feb. 8 (7-7:50pm)

Virtual session - links available at www.kutztown.edu/careercenter

Other relevant Career Center events:

Grad School Fair for KU programs (in-person): Tuesday, March 7, 11:00-11:50am 250 MSU

Internship and Job Fair (in person): Wednesday, March 29, Noon-3:00pm; 218 MSU

Mock Interview Mania Week (in-person)- April 10-14, Career Center, 113 Stratton

Internship and Job Fair (virtual): Tuesday April 18, 11am-2pm on Handshake