

Exploring Oregon

Spring 2019

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How will climate change impact fire in different parts of Oregon? How to urban growth boundaries in Oregon impact urban economies and food production? How do immigrant communities influence the cultural landscape in the Willamette Valley? How does the legacy of water rights impact Native American tribes and salmon fisheries?

This course is designed to give you tools that will help you address questions like these, and more. This class is not simply facts about places, but instead asks questions that compel us to look at the political, economic, social and environmental processes shaping Oregon, both locally here in Eugene-Springfield, and in the rest of the state. Throughout this course, you will develop tools that will help you continue learning about our state beyond finals week. Geographical concepts will provide you with a deeper context for comprehending the processes through which places are shaped and importantly, develop an understanding of current events playing out right now in our communities.

You will not be required to memorize trivial facts in this class. Instead, I expect you to engage with a geographical approach to understanding and explaining how spatial phenomena (i.e. economic, political, social or environmental processes) shape Oregon in different human and physical geographic contexts. Geographers examine how and why people interact with and transform the areas in which they are situated to create specific places (cities, watersheds, parks, coasts, climates, etc.). It delves into how power dynamics, histories, globalization, identity and more are mobilized and situated in places to explain the disparities and patterns that shape the issues we see in the headlines.

This class goes beyond a standard lecture format. Instead, we will take advantage of our location in Oregon to both bring practitioners into the classroom and to venture out and make observations about our surrounding area. Students will take these lessons, concepts, and weekly materials, and apply them to other parts of the state in a continual, term-long project.

Finally, this course is designed to build upon the various research strengths of the Department of Geography at UO. Readings and activities have been designed with their input, which allows students to have ways of engaging with more faculty, even if those faculty are not coming into the office. This gives students a closer picture of both 'what geographers do,' and it has the potential to develop their network in the department.

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Identify how political, economic, social and environmental forces influence different areas of Oregon, and understand the processes that shape different parts of the state
- Engage with course concepts to help explain current events in different places.

- Identify how our perception of places are influenced by various media forms and cultural histories, and using this knowledge and course concepts to create more informed global citizens.
- Develop tools that can enhance an appreciate for the diversity of processes and perspectives that shape any place.
- Learn how to communicate with practitioners, including asking questions, in a way that develops an understanding of how to apply classroom theory to the world outside.

Course Requirements

This course will meet twice a week, once for one hour and once for three hours. During the one-hour meeting, we will develop concepts that were presented in reading by having students discuss in class. We will also prepare for the three-hour session, which may include logistics for a field trip, preparing questions for practitioners, or putting together a plan for taking field measurements.

Reading

Each week readings will be posted on canvas that relate to that week's theme. Readings will include sections of the Atlas of Oregon and selections from various sources developed in consultation with Geography faculty.

Online quizzes on canvas

Readings should be completed by the first session of class. To ensure that we are all coming to class with the same set of knowledge and frame of reference, students will complete online quizzes based on the readings. Quizzes will also include two brief discussion/ reflection questions that will help facilitate the beginning of class discussion.

Attend class sessions

This class builds upon material presented in previous weeks, and much of the discussion will inform your final projects. Please make every effort to attend all class meetings. Only a document absence will be excused. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to make up missed work and to discuss what you missed with your classmates.

Field Day reviews

After each three-hour session, students will be required to complete a 400-500-word write up reflecting on what they learned during the session. These sessions will vary. They might be a guest speaker, a field trip, and/or a lab where measurements are taken. These write-ups are NOT a review of what was done, but a reflection on the broader significance, the student's reactions to the material, or how they might apply this information to other concepts we've learned in class. These will be graded based on coherence, thoughtfulness, structure, and their engagement with readings, discussions, and activities. Treat these like assessments (in other words, tests).

Post-field day discussion board

After each field day, students will need to respond to a prompt on the canvas discussion board by 11:59pm on Monday of the following week. This board should be a place to continue conversations that occur in class or bring in other ideas that students have had as they write-up their field day review.

Oregon storymap project

Students in the class will be assigned groups and complete a final storymap for the project. This storymap will be centered on a county in Oregon, and will tell the 'story' of that place through the themes (and others that the group identifies) in the course. At the beginning of the term, groups will define individual roles and there will be continual check-in's to ensure each group member is participating. More information will be found on the assignment page posted on canvas. Each group member will turn in a final 3-page report on the project, outlining the significance of patterns shaping their area and their contributions to the project.

Class Schedule

(tentative and subject to change)

Introduction Days will be a chance for the class to get on the 'same page' with the material. Students will have completed weekly readings and taken the online –pre-class quizzes. This time will usually be devoted to a mix of lecture and discussion as a way to prepare for the field day activity or guest. Each week we will come out of this session with questions for guests or to think about as we engage in the field day activities.

Field Days will be a combination of field trips, guest speakers, and self-guided tours. The specific format will vary each week, depending on the activities that the class engages in. The final 30-45 minutes will be spent without guests in a de-brief session where we apply some of the concepts from readings to what we have learned during our discussions and excursions. Part of this time will also be devoted to group project work in various weeks, dependent upon the schedule of guests.

Week 1: Introduction and set-up to the course

Reading: Historical maps and entries from the Atlas of Oregon; Creswell *Intro to Place* chapters 1-2

1.1 Introduction day

- Discussion of syllabus and course expectations, group assignments, and assessments.

1.2 Field Day

- *Danger of a Single Story*, looking past the dominant narrative to reveal the complex 'platial' stories.
- Orienting to Oregon (sharing, mental mapping)
- Lab day accessing ArcGIS online and Timeline app. Tutorials on how to create basic data to enter into ArcGIS online. Outline of using creative commons in the storymap.

Week 2: Climate and climate change

Reading: Pages from the Atlas; report from the Oregon 2100 project

2.1 Introduction Day

- Overview of factors that impact climate, overview of the impacts of climate change in Oregon (policies to address it?)

2.2 Field Day

- Outdoor activity: measuring solar radiation and reflectivity (albedo) in various parts of campus
- Guest speaker: Dr. Kathie Dello from the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute at Oregon State University. A presentation and discussion of potential impacts of climate change in Oregon, including some of the politics and policies.

Week 3: Water resources and conflict

Reading: Atlas pages; Chapters from *Water in Oregon* book.

3.1 Introduction Day

- Discussion of readings, basics on importance of water availability, history of rights, and overview of recent conflict (Klamath water wars, salmon v. farmers)

3.2 Field Day

- Field trip to the Long Tom Watershed, discussion with an ecologist from the Long Tom Watershed Council, Amanda Reinholtz.
- Discussion will be both on ecology, but also the various stakeholders and interests involved in making decisions about watersheds

Week 4: Fires and landscape ecology

Reading: Atlas pages; readings from Dan

4.1 Introduction Day

- Pre-settlement/pre-European fire regimes, recent trends (linking with climate change), policy and public outreach

4.2 Field Day

- Field trip with Dan Gavin to an area close to town where there has been a fire and a look at how the ecology is changed.
- Discussion of larger drivers of fire in Oregon.

Week 5: Public Lands

Reading: Atlas, Chapter from Sagebrush Collaboration, article on amenity vs. production landscapes in Oregon

5.1 Introduction Day

- Discussion of differing perspectives of land use (consumption/amenity vs. production)
- Debrief on the Malheur Occupation

5.1 Field Day

- Guest lecture/discussion from Peter Walker(?)

- Time saved for collaboration and lab

Week 6: Agriculture and Food

Reading: Atlas

6.1 Introduction day

- Overall look at the spatial distribution of agriculture in Oregon. Why is what grown where?
- Trends in food production (shift from grass to food in the valley)

6.2 Field Day

- Field trip to local farm and then food processing facility (Organically Grown Foods storage?)
- Discussion of the food chain through visiting two different sites and talking to stakeholders

Week 7: Urban Systems and Inequality

Reading: Atlas; Readings from *Planning Paradise*

7.1 Introduction day

- Discussion of Urban Growth Boundaries, their purpose and how they impact settlement and land value
- What is urban inequality? How is it reinforced?

7.2 Field Day

- Walking/bussing (EMX) tour of downtown Eugene and into Springfield (done in smaller groups) to examine spaces of inequality and the processes that shaped the urban development of these towns (Don H for some pointers!). Logging, rivers, etc.

Week 8: Economic Development

Reading:

8.1 Introduction Day

- Sectors of the economy, drivers of development historically and currently in Oregon

8.2 Field Day

- Invite the Economic Development Agencies of Eugene and Springfield to come talk about the similarities and differences between the visions of economic development between these two cities.
- Save an hour at the end to work on projects, communicate.

Week 9: Cultural Landscapes

Reading: Woodburn; looking at/deconstructing landscapes

9.1 Introduction Day

- History of groups in Oregon; how to dissect a cultural landscape

9.2 Field Day

- Small group walking tours around/on parts of campus. Reflective exercises to critically examine the cultural norms embedded within landscapes and how they might reflect dominant norms or ideals.

Week 10: Putting it all together/ final presentations! OR What else do they want to know?

10.1 Introduction day

10.2 Field Day

Finals week: Presentations on final projects.