

Fall 2019

Geography 419: The Professional Geographer

This course is restricted to Geography and to Spatial Data Science & Technology Majors. It is required for Geography majors and strongly encouraged for SDS majors.

Instructor: Dr. Leslie McLees

Instructor email: lmclees@uoregon.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 9-10 am and Thursday 2:30-3:30 pm, or by appointment

Office: Condon 107C

Course Websites: The textbook for this course will be delivered through [TopHat.com](https://www.TopHat.com). Please find an email from them to access the book. You can purchase the book through the bookstore or go to [TopHat.com/students](https://www.TopHat.com/students) and use the join code **310032**. If you purchase the book through the bookstore there is a small fee, but you can use some forms of financial aid to buy the book.

The textbook will have readings, videos, reflections, and assignments.

All assignments will be submitted via the assignment portals on canvas.uoregon.edu.

Course Description

In a job economy where the current generation of graduates is expected to change jobs every three to four years, students need to learn how to critically reflect on what skills, values, and strengths they have gained through both life and education. Traditionally, higher education has not prioritized communicating to students the valuable skills they gain through their studies, despite the accepted wisdom that you need to go to college to get a good job. This makes students feel uncertain about why they are in college and what they can do after they graduate.

This course is designed to provide Geography and SDS students with resources and opportunities to critically reflect on their individual career development pathways and to describe their accomplishments, interests, values and personal characteristics in professional situations. The course will emphasize the importance of skills students have gained in their classes and how they can translate those skills in professional situations not just now, but repeatedly and their career paths evolve. We will reflect on the critical thinking gained from geography and a liberal arts education more broadly and learn how to articulate the benefits of a geographical approach in different professional settings.

To provide students with the tools to present themselves, their strengths, and the value of a geography degree, students will prepare resumes and cover letters in response to specific job ads

they are interested in. They will also conduct informational interviews with people in the field they hope to enter and create online portfolios to demonstrate their skills and a professional profile. All of these activities will build upon each other, requiring continual self-reflection by the students as they learn more about how their skills, values, and interests articulate with different potential career pathways.

Etiquette

This is a professional development course, and as such students are expected to act and be prepared accordingly. Students will be held accountable for the following professional standards:

- come prepared having done the assigned readings, reflections, and activities;
- be engaged, share experiences and address each other respectfully;
- keep any unnecessary electronics stowed unless we are using them for class purposes;
- ask for help after having read the instructions;
- arrive to class punctually.

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and critically reflect on the skills, values and interests that students have gained through their life and academic experiences;
- Articulate the skills and values that they have, and how those translate into career options;
- Understand how a geographical approach and education enhances their potential career pathways and their ability to engage in the world as a global citizen;
- Connect skills to long-term personal and professional goals and develop a pathway of steps necessary to reach those goals;
- Understand how to see themselves outside the structure of college requirements, beginning to independently make decisions about career pathways;
- Identify and prioritize what is important in their personal and professional goals so that when life circumstances change, they are better able to adapt.
- Create an online portfolio that moves students beyond courses and articulates them as a geographer
- Create a Career Action Plan that can be utilized repeatedly throughout the student's career

Estimated Student Workload

Students will be expected to spend a significant amount of time outside the classroom engaged in work for the course. There are reading assignments throughout the term, as well as several projects dedicated to walking students through the process of career development. Just like any class, but maybe more obviously so, the time you take in this class will be reflected in your

preparedness after you finish. Take advantage of this class. You will not likely get these kinds of spaces and time to reflect again!

Please check your uoregon email at least once a day (which you should be doing anyway).

Our class only meets once a week and sometimes I need to send last-minute changes, events, or clarifications out to you. If you submit something incorrectly because you did not read your emails, you will not be excused.

I will always send Canvas message to your email directly, but in case I forgot to check the box, you can ensure that any email sent through canvas shows up in your inbox. To do this, click on the Account link (the one with your profile pic in the upper left-hand corner of his screen). Click on Notifications in the pop-up. Scroll down to conversations and click on the checkmarks in the three boxes.

Awesome possum.

How grades will be determined

Assessment type	% grade	Description
Attendance & participation	15%	Coming to class and engaging in discussion
Participating in TopHat	15%	Respond to discussions thoughtfully
Finding Five Jobs	10%	Summary of 5 jobs and the jobs ads
Informational interview write-up	15%	Reflection on Informational Interview
Draft Job Application	10%	Draft resume and cover letter
Final job application	10%	Final resume and cover letter
Online portfolio	15%	Online resource for employers and students
Career Action Plan	10%	Summary of the course and your next steps
TOTAL	100%	

A note on readings

Each chapter has several response questions embedded within them. You must answer these questions in the weeks that the chapters are assigned. You will be graded both on whether you participated AND whether you took the question seriously and answered it. If you can see your classmates responses, you are welcome to read their answers as well. I hope that you will benefit from the various experiences and perspectives in this class.

Material for the following week will be made available on Monday at 2pm after class and due the following Monday at noon. What is due are your responses to the question embedded within the TopHat text.

And a disclaimer: I wrote this book. It isn't finished. I wrote it to make delivering material more cohesive than having you read bits from several different books. The platform TopHat doesn't provide any editing, so yes, there are typos, but I work to catch them. If you find errors, please let me know via email and I can fix them. I appreciate your patience on this!

A note on assignments

This course is about professional development. Like any class, make sure you follow the guidelines and hand in professional quality material. As such;

- Marginal work will earn a marginal grade;
- Any assignment that is late will receive 10% off for each day it is late;
- There is no opportunity for extra credit in this class.

Academic Integrity Code

All students are expected to complete assignments in a manner consistent with academic integrity. Students must produce their own work and properly acknowledge and document all sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases). Students can find more complete information about the University of Oregon's Policy on Academic Dishonesty in the University of Oregon Student Handbook. Find links on the Blackboard to clarify what is meant by plagiarism and to find proper ways of using sources.

If you are found to have plagiarized (copied) off a classmate or from other materials for a test or an assignment of any sort, your first warning will be a zero on the assignment. Your second incident will result in an F in the course.

Disability Statement

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me at the beginning of the term if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center (formerly Disability Services) in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoac@uoregon.edu .

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is an important part of a student's educational experience. Students are expected to attend every meeting of their classes and are responsible for class attendance. Regardless of what reasons there may be for absence, students are accountable for all academic activities, and I reserve the right to require special work or tests to make up for the missed class or classes.

Privacy Policy

Part of this class requires a public, online portfolio. Each student must sign a FERPA Consent for Disclosure of Education Record: Course Blog and Social Media Participation form by Week 3. This form will indicate the level of privacy that the student wishes to keep as students create professional development materials, some of which could be public-facing. Please feel free to discuss with me any issues you may have and we can accommodate you. If for any reason you are uncomfortable putting information about yourself online, you can choose to create a paper portfolio and receive the same assessment of materials. This course also discusses the online presence and suggests that students take steps to create an effective and professional online profile. Students are strongly discouraged from posting telephone numbers and addresses in any material that appears online. Students can choose to not post these materials or anything else they are uncomfortable with, on the Internet. Further, students may choose not to put personal information on resumes and cover letters that they hand in for the assessment.