Course Overview

Historical geography is a sub-field of human geography which explores the geographies of the past, and seeks to understand how the past continues to shape or influence our contemporary and future worlds. Through lenses of space, place, region, landscape, and cinematic geographies, GEOG 454 offers a study of selected past geographies of the United States with emphases on significant geographic changes in political, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions through time. For Spring 2018, course topics include:

- Colonial encounters
- Geographies of Southern Reconstruction
- The West as movement
- New Deal landscapes
- Pacific America
- Atomic Age geographies.

Although we will not be bound by specific dates or periods – since as Faulkner wrote, “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.” – we will concentrate on the century from 1863-1963, tracing past geographies and exploring their implications for the present and future.

Students will also be exposed to historical geographical research methods, archival practices, and development of original new media content through semester-long geo-humanities projects, to be carried out in collaboration with the CDHI’s Digital Innovation Incubator program and Wilson Library Special Collections.

Format

Geog 454 (HGUS) brings together lecture, seminar, and research and methods workshop formats, promoting inquiry- and project-based learning and skills development in critical thinking, writing, communication, and elementary digital mapping and design. There will be field trips, * methods workshops, films, and engagements with the digital geo-humanities and other new media projects (some days you will be asked to bring a laptop to class). There will also be lectures, readings, and
student seminar presentations; plan to read about ~50-75 pages per week (more when including cartoons!), and set aside time accordingly.

**Grades**
Grades will reflect HGUS’s varied format:

- Seminar assignments 20%
- Digital asst #1 10%
- Mid-term exam 15%
- Final exam/project presentation 20%
- Geohumanities projects 25%
- Just showing up 10%

100

**Texts:**


These two books are available @ student stores. Additional texts (in schedule & listed below) will be posted to sakai as pdfs and links. Some additional digital materials – usually in connection with course lectures and activities – will also be posted and circulated via sakai announcements.

**Provisional Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>M/W/F</th>
<th>Section/Topic</th>
<th>Required Readings</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Jan   | XX/10/12 | **1. Introduction to Historical Geography of the US**  
- The past is a foreign country | • Heffernan  
• Ott  
• “Burning Settler’s Cabin” |
| Jan   | XX/17/19 |  
- [Jan 15: MLK Holiday]  
- Key concepts & approaches  
- Colonial encounters #1 | • Cronon  
• Cosgrove  
• Phillips  
• Lowenthal  
• Meinig (3-28)  
• *Battle Lines* (Preface; Ch.1-2) |
| Jan   | 22/24/26 |  
- American historical geographies from 1620 | |
| Jan-Feb | 29/31/02 | **2. Geographies of Southern Reconstruction**  
- Linking spaces of war and reconstruction  
- New Souths | • *Battle Lines* (Ch. 3-9)  
• Meinig (187-226)  
• Woods (Ch. 3)  
• *Battle Lines* (Ch. 10-15)  
• Harrison |
<p>| Feb   | 05/07/09 |  | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>12/14/16</td>
<td>• Symbolic landscape &amp; identity&lt;br&gt;• Archive/digital methods workshops&lt;br&gt;<strong>Asst 1 due</strong></td>
<td>• Leloudis&lt;br&gt;• Fennessy&lt;br&gt;• Alderman&lt;br&gt;• Meinig (227-293: background)</td>
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<td>Feb</td>
<td>19/21/23</td>
<td>3. <strong>New Deal Landscapes</strong>&lt;br&gt;• New agricultural geographies?&lt;br&gt;• picturing the New Deal landscape&lt;br&gt;<strong>Feb 23@Ackland Museum: WPA arts programs</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Legacies</td>
<td>• “New Deal”&lt;br&gt;• Living New Deal&lt;br&gt;• Woods (Ch. 6)&lt;br&gt;• Mitchell&lt;br&gt;• Weems</td>
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<td>Feb-Mar</td>
<td>26/28/02</td>
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<td>Mar</td>
<td>05/07/09</td>
<td>4. <strong>The West as Movement</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Colonial Encounters #2&lt;br&gt;<strong>Mid-term exam Mar. 7</strong></td>
<td>• Meinig (31-36; 137-183; tba*)&lt;br&gt;• Kirsch (1999)&lt;br&gt;• Powell</td>
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<td>Mar</td>
<td>12/14/16</td>
<td>[Spring Break]</td>
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<td>Mar</td>
<td>19/21/23</td>
<td>• Travelling the other way?&lt;br&gt;• Continental spectacle: Chicago World’s Columbian Exhibition, 1893&lt;br&gt;• Project workshops</td>
<td>• Limerick&lt;br&gt;• Domosh</td>
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<td>Mar</td>
<td>26/28/30</td>
<td>5. <strong>Pacific America</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Linking oceanic worlds&lt;br&gt;• Colonial encounters #3&lt;br&gt;• An insular empire?</td>
<td>• Meinig (327-394)&lt;br&gt;• Iggler (3-15; 99-128)&lt;br&gt;• Kirsch (2016)&lt;br&gt;• Davis</td>
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<td>Apr</td>
<td>02/04/06</td>
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<td>Apr</td>
<td>09/11/13</td>
<td>6. <strong>Atomic Age geographies</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Spaces of Cold War America&lt;br&gt;• Nuclear landscapes&lt;br&gt;• [colonial encounters #4]</td>
<td>• Farish&lt;br&gt;• Solnit&lt;br&gt;• Pitkanen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>16/18/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>23/25/7</td>
<td><strong>project workshops/presentations</strong></td>
<td><strong>FINAL EXAM: Tues May 1 @ noon</strong></td>
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**Additional Readings:**


*Journal of Historical Geography* 36: 90-101.

“Burning Settler’s Cabin” (2009) *Yesterland* (online publication), W. Weiss (curator):


Selection: Ch. 6 “America as Landscape” (pp. 161-188)


Living New Deal. [https://livingnewdeal.org/](https://livingnewdeal.org/) (Selections): [https://livingnewdeal.org/map/](https://livingnewdeal.org/map/)


Selection from Ch. 4: “Ancients vs. Moderns: tradition and innovation” (pp. 147-151; 184-205)


*Additional digital resources will be posted on sakai***
Class Policies

- Please inform the instructor if you have special needs which require accommodations in or out of the classroom in order for you to fully participate in this course.

- Attendance is expected. Points for “Seminar assignments” and “Just showing up,” in particular, are based on occasional in-class activities, both formal and informal, and exams will test students on both readings and lectures. Students can make up missed participation activities for excused absences (illness, academic or athletics travel, grandmother’s wedding, etc.).

- Changes to the syllabus and class schedule are occasionally required. Any key date changes will be announced in class and via sakai: announcements, which students are expected to receive.

- Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty as reflected in the UNC honor code: http://honor.unc.edu

(Source: US Atomic Energy Commission, 1957)