“It has been said that geography is what geographers do”
– G.R. Crone (1964)

“...the discipline is no more – nor less – than the total of thoughts/actions through which it is performed, communicated, and disciplined.”

“It has been said that geography is what geographers do”
– G.R. Crone (1964)

“...students inhabit this history whether they like it or not.”

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Required texts:
- Additional readings on Canvas

Course Goals
Geography 8000 is an introduction to the discipline of geography at the graduate level. We will be exploring the significant ideas, concepts, methodologies, and philosophies in 20th century Anglo-American geography. The first half of the course will trace the development of the discipline over the last century, examining the changing faces of geography – the personalities as well as major developments. In the second half, we will explore central themes of the discipline and current research in these areas. Part of becoming a geographer is understanding what it means to be a geographer.

In addition, this course is designed to kick-start you in your graduate career, working to further develop your critical reading, writing and thinking skills. This course is reading and writing intensive! Be warned!
I would like you to come away from this course with:

- insight into the rich history and the breadth of geography
- comprehension of where you fit into the “family tree” of geography
- familiarity with current developments in the field of geography
- sharpened critical thinking as well as communication skills

Grading
Grades will be based on:

- 10% class participation, leading discussion and writing workshop
- 10% submitted questions (2 questions for 12 class periods – allowed 2 passes)
- 15% reading journal (12 due – allowed 2 passes)
- 15% presidential address review
- 20% subdiscipline overview
- 30% critical review of three or four readings

Class discussions – One student will be responsible for leading discussion every week, with an assistant/back-up. They should be prepared to summarize the reading materials (all of them), raise as well as answer questions, and raise points for discussion. Each student will be involved in leading discussion twice times this semester. To facilitate this process, discussion leaders should plan the day’s discussion, after collecting the discussion questions from that week’s Discussion Board.

Submitted questions – You will each submit two discussion questions each week based on the week’s readings. These questions are due no later than noon on Wednesday and must be posted to that classes’ Discussion Board on Canvas. Discussion questions should raise “big questions” concerning the week’s readings. Attempt to include all of the readings in your question set. Where appropriate, reproduce brief passages from the articles your questions refer to and please include page numbers! You must hand in ten sets of questions during the semester (that means you have two passes to use if you wish – but you still must do the readings and the reading journal that week!).

Reading journal – you will be keeping a journal where you review and respond analytically to each week’s reading assignments. In these journals you can take notes on the readings (please include page numbers!), highlight quotes that you think are important or that are bogus, react/respond to the information being presented. It should illustrate clearly what you are thinking about and how you are interacting with the work. It must go beyond – “I disagree” or “Bullshit” or “I think the author is brilliant.” It should demonstrate clearly that you get what the author is writing about and can explain why this work is significant. In every journal entry should be your explanation of what you think the author believes is really important about their essay (why they wrote it) and how you evaluate their argument. Highlight this section in some way please! It may take more than one reading of the article or chapter for you to understand the author’s point.

There are three different ways to approach a reading journal:

1. Note-taking approach. This is where you take notes as you read, ranging from text quotes to responses to the text, all tied to page numbers. There should be three parts to each article’s entry:
1) Your reading notes
2) A brief, one-paragraph summary of the article -- emphasizing what you think the author believes is really important about their essay (why they wrote it) and how you evaluate their argument.
3) 1 or 2 discussion questions based on the article

2. Critical summary – 3-5 pages(ish) summarizing and discusses the readings as a whole, including points that you find unclear or that you disagree with, and one or two discussion questions for the group. It should be clear to me from your writing that you understand the whole of the articles (and aren't just ranting about one point that you pulled from one article!).

3. The Stuckey Method. A graduate student, Owen Stuckey, made the above into an outline/structured set of questions that he answered every week for each reading. This worked well. The outline/questions are:
   - Notes
   - Summary
     Main takeaways, what to remember
     What is the author writing about?
     Why is this work significant?
     What does the author believe is important, why did they write this?
     How was their argument?
   - Discussion questions

It is not necessary to pick one and stick with it. It you want to try all three, that is fine. If you want to vary it, that too is fine. The important thing is to have the readings done and some form of writing done before class time and have them with you. I WILL collect the journals/summaries in class!

Note: At times, I will ask you to skim a chapter or article. In these cases, I do not expect you to take notes on these readings . . . BUT you should include a brief paragraph in your journal of your observations and reaction to this skim.

There is no length requirement for the journals, only the caveat that you demonstrate that you have read and have at least a basic comprehension of each reading. As for its form – do what you feel comfortable with. If you like to write a more traditional journal, go ahead as long as you can hand it in every week . . . and I can read your handwriting (bound journals not handy in this case). If you'd rather do it on a computer, that's fine too, as long as you have a printed out copy of all of it with you on class night.

I know what you are thinking – Good grief! What a lot of work! Yes and no. My intent is multi-fold:
- To get you and keep you in the habit of thinking critically about what you are reading.
- To encourage you to read all the assigned works for each week and to think about all of them.
- To encourage everyone to be prepared for discussion every week – whether or not you are leading it.
- It should make submitting questions very easy!
Journals will be due at the end of each class.

Writing Assignments – During the course of the semester, you will be working on a series of assignments that will build in complexity. We will discuss the assignments several weeks before each assignment is due. We will workshop the first and second drafts of all of these papers, you will have time to revise them, and then turn them in for grading. When you hand in an assignment for grading, you will hand in a complete “portfolio,” that is, a folder containing not only your latest version of the essay but also all the various drafts you created, your workshop group comments, etc. Because the revision process is so important, I will provide you all with the opportunity to revise drafts after they are graded and turn them in again by the end of the semester for regrading.

1 Review: We will begin by discussing what goes into a good review and then have you draft a review of a major address on the status of geography. Look over all of these, then select ONE to focus on . . . preferably one that struck a chord – positively or negatively – with you:


In the review you will briefly:
1) summarize the text
2) appraise the address of an AAG President and their call to the discipline for a particular objective
3) evaluate a text’s strengths and weaknesses and compose a critique

2 Essay: For this assignment you will research the development of an area or subfield of geography you are interested in (such as biogeography, environmental conservation or historical geography). There will be three sections to your paper:
1. In 2-3 pages you will trace its history: its movements, controversies, twists, and turns. You should use at least two sources for this section.
2. From your history, you will identify an individual you believe has made a significant contribution to the field. Provide a 2-3 page bio/overview of their contributions to the field, using at least two academic sources. Must use at least two sources.
3. Finally, in 2-3 pages, provide an overview of the future of the subdiscipline, drawing from at least two academic sources. Must use at least two sources. (what your sources think about the future of the subdiscipline . . . not your thoughts on the subject!)

3 Assignment/review: The third writing assignment will begin with a journal scan. You will select 3 to 6 academic journals to scan in which geographers are regular contributors, but one must be a geography journal. The journals should encompass your subfield or area of interest.
Focusing on your area of geography (historical geography, biogeography, physical geography, urban geography, etc.), scan the past ten years and note the main trends, issues and debates. Consider:

- What trends do you notice? Topics, methods, approaches . . .
- Any particular topic/methods/approaches getting a lot of press?
- Any neglected topics/methods approaches?
- Notice any major debates occurring? Academic arguments??

You will be providing a brief oral report of your journal scan in class.

From your journal scan, select three to five readings in your area of interest that you will then critically review for your final paper. These readings should be linked thematically – such as specific methodologies or theoretical perspectives in your area of geography (a simplistic theme, like “soils” or “GIS” is not enough – you need to have a linkage within these areas, like current theoretical debates or methodological approaches). For your critical review, you should introduce your topic, provide a brief summary of each article, then compare/contrast the three to five articles.

This is essentially a mini-literature review, similar to what typically appears in a thesis proposal, a thesis, and in academic journal articles.

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**Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic honesty is very important to UNO’s faculty, staff, and students. Violations of it can include:

- cheating
- fabricating and falsification
- plagiarism
- falsifying grade reports
- misrepresentation to avoid academic work
- misrepresenting work as original

*Academic dishonesty is not tolerated in this class or at this university!*


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**Course Content and Structure**

In order for you to get the most out of the course and its readings, you must be actively involved in the course. There will be no lectures. Rather, students will lead class discussions (we learn by doing, right?). The rest of the class will provide discussion ideas and questions to the discussion leaders (via discussions in each module on Canvas). My role will be that of facilitator – I will do my best to stay out of the way, yet still keep the discussion moving critically (and by critically, I do not mean negatively).

If there is a topic you would like to see on the schedule that is not on there now, please suggest it to me.
Class Participation

Attendance: Attendance in class is required. Missing more than one class during the semester will affect your grade. Two absences will result in a half-grade drop in your final grade. Three absences will result in a whole grade drop in your final grade. Four absences or more will result in course failure.

Discussions: Be willing to participate in class discussions. I realize that some may be shy or intimidated by more vocal members of class. I know it is hard. Make your voice heard. This is your class too. At the same time, try to be good listeners. Be respectful of others and their opinions. Do not interrupt others as they speak. As much of the class will be spent in discussion, it is essential that you are on time and prepared.

Writing Workshops: As one of my goals for the course is to work on your academic writing skills, I will have you “workshop” your papers in class. By “workshop” I mean we will be working in small groups of three to four students, sharing and discussing our writing. When we have writing workshops, you are expected to have your draft completed and distributed to your group by noon Tuesday before the workshop, so that everyone has time to read the drafts and be prepared to discuss it on the day of the workshop. Carefully reading and responding to drafts, both our own and our peers, is a form of critical reading. No late papers will be accepted without prior consent. Your workshop groups will be depending on you to have your assignments completed and to be ready to work. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE YOUR DRAFT, YOU CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN CLASS & WILL BE CONSIDERED ABSENT!

In the workshop, readers will “walk” through the draft discussing their reactions while the author listens and takes notes. Participating in writing workshops will require you to talk about the decisions made by the writer in the writing process and how those decisions affected you as a reader. You do not have to agree with everyone’s responses and evaluations but try to keep an open mind and take their opinions seriously. While you will be receiving comments from both myself and your peers on your writing, it will be up to you whether you use the advice or not. These will be your essays, and ultimately your grade, so take responsibility for the decisions you make in the writing process. Keep in mind, however, that the comments are usually given with good intentions: trying to assist you in improving your writing. Please consider them carefully.

Websites

There are some interesting websites available for geographers . . .

There are three major geography organizations in the United States:

- The professional organization is the Association of American Geographers -- http://www.aag.org/
- The organization focused on geographic education and teaching is the National Council for Geographic Education -- http://www.ncge.org/
- And the oldest in the country is the American Geographical Society -- http://www.amergeog.org

Note that all of these organizations have student memberships at greatly reduced rates!
Another great resource is Seth Dixon’s Scoop.It! site:  
http://www.scoop.it/u/aphumangeog  
(you can also follow him on Twitter!)

For pure entertainment (especially as the semester goes on . . . and on . . .), check out:  
http://www.phdcomics.com/  
Piled Higher & Deeper  
Life (or the lack thereof) in Academia  
A comic strip by Jorge Cham

Atlas Obscura is always interesting:  
http://www.atlasobscura.com/  
“Our mission is to explore the world’s most wondrous and curious places”

If you would like to see and hear some of the great geographers of the past, check out:  
Geographers on Film  
https://www.loc.gov/collections/geographers-on-film/  
Interviews with such greats as Richard Hartshorne, Carl Sauer, Waldo Tobler, Arthur Robinson and many others.

If you know of or come across websites that you think the class may be interested in, please bring them to the attention of the class!

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: H&K 104, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)
Tentative Course Outline

28th Aug.  Intro to the course
   Why are we in this class? What should a geographer’s education consist of?
   Introductions
   Review syllabus
   Intro to critical reading and writing
   Why are we here?
   Readings due:

PART 1: EXPLORING OUR HISTORIES

4th Sept.  Geography and Empire
   What is geography’s relationship with imperialism? What is environmental determinism and how does it factor in?
   What goes into a review?
   Intro to Library Resources – Heidi Blackburn
   Readings due:
   - Cresswell: skim chapter 1, read and take notes on Chapters 2 and 3
   - Canvas:
     Read one, skim a second:
   Assignments due: First set of questions due in class, not before, and Reading Journal.

10th Sept. 1st draft of review essay due.

11th Sept. The Reaction to Environmental Determinism
   Why did geographers reject environmental determinism? On what grounds? What did they think geography should be?
   Discussion.
   Workshop draft.
   Readings due:
   - Cresswell Chapt. 4
   - Canvas:
     Read one, skim a second:
-- R. Hartshorne, (1939) “The Character of Regional Geography” 388-397 (Human Geography)
-- P. Vidal de la Blache, “Meaning and Aim of Human Geography” from Principles of Human Geography (1921)
SKIM one of the following:
-- N. Fenneman, “Physiographic Divisions of the United States” Annals (1928) 18 (4): 261-353 [Note: this is really long! Think carefully before printing out! Read only pages 263-272 plus a division description of your choice]
-- J. R. Whitaker, “Distribution of Dairy Farming in Peninsular Ontario,” Economic Geography 16, 1 (Jan., 1940), 69-78
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

6th Sept. Abstracts due for Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Regional Meeting, Manhattan KS, 5th-6th October 2017

17th Sept. 2nd draft of 1st review due

18th Sept.  **Positivism and the Quantitative Revolution**
Dando out. Guest host: Zac Suriano
What is positivism? What does it mean for geography and its practice/s?
Workshop 2nd draft.
Readings due:
- Cresswell Chapt. 5
- Canvas:
Read: M. Hill, “Positivism: A ‘Hidden’ Philosophy in Geography” from Themes in Geographic Thought (1981)
SKIM one:
-- W. Bunge, selection from Theoretical Geography (1962)
-- F. Schaefer, “Exceptionalism in Geography” Human Geography 571-589
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

25th Sept.  **The Human Turn & Marxist Geography**
Why did cultural/human geographers object to the quantitative movement? What was their response?
Tentatively identify subfield for 2nd essay. Discussion of 2nd project and source materials.
- Cresswell Chapt. 6 & 7
- Canvas – SKIM two:
-- P. Lewis “Axioms for Reading the Landscape” from The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes (1979)
2nd Oct.  **The Postmodern Turn**

*What is “postmodernism”? And what has it/does it mean for geography?*

Project check in – how is everything going?

- Cresswell Chapts 8 & 9
- Canvas:
  - SKIM two:
    - E. Soja, Prologue and Intro from *Seeking Spatial Justice* (2010)

Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

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**PART 2: EXPLORING OUR PRESENT & FUTURE GEOGRAPHIES**

8th Oct.  1st draft of 2nd paper due.

9th Oct.  **Relational & More-than-Human Geographies**

Workshop draft.

- Cresswell Chapts. 10, 11 & 12 (pick one to skim, two to read)
- Canvas, SKIM two:
  - R. Holliday et al “Beautiful face, beautiful place: relational geographies and gender in cosmetic surgery tourism websites” *Gender, Place, and Culture* 22, 1: 90-106.

Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

11-12th Oct.  Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Lawrence KS

16th Oct.  Spatial Analysis: Cartography & Visualization
Workshop draft.
- Skim “Maps” TBA
- Canvas, read two:

Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

22nd Oct.  2nd Draft of 2nd essay due.

2nd workshop on 2nd paper.
- Skim “GIS” TBA
- Canvas, read two:

Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

2nd paper portfolio

5 minute presentation on your topic (informal)

30th Oct. Human-Environment Relations
Discuss journal scan.
- Canvas, read two:

Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

6th Nov. Landscapes
Discuss journal scan results – be prepared to report.
- Canvas, read two:
  - F. Wartmann & R. Purves, 2018, “This is not the jungle, this is my barbecho’: semantics of ethnecological landscape categories in the Bolivian Amazon,” Landscape Research, 43:1, 77-94
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

12th Nov. 1st draft of Critical Review due.

13th Nov. Regions (happy geography awareness week!!!)
Workshop 1st draft of Critical Review
- Canvas – read two of the following:
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

19th Nov. 2nd draft of Critical Review due.

20th Nov. Movement
Workshop 2nd draft of Critical Review
- Read two:
-- C. Dando, 2018, “‘She scorches now and then’: American Women and the Construction of 1890s Cycling Spaces” in Architectures of Hurry, 25-41.
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal

27th Nov. Thanksgiving Break! -- have a good holiday!

4th Dec. Space and Time
- Canvas, read two:
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal
Critical Review Portfolio

11th Dec. LAST DAY OF CLASS//A Geographer’s Ethics
- Skim Cresswell Chapt. 13
- Canvas, read two:
  - N. Fagerholm “Whose knowledge, whose benefit? Ethical challenges of participatory mapping” in Fieldwork in the Global South (2014), 158-?
Assignment due: Questions and Reading Journal
Retire to the Dundee Dell!

18th Dec. 6pm – last revisions due.