

Geography of Texas: GEOG 3301
Sul Ross State University, Spring 2017

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Class Meetings: LH 200, TThr 9:30-10:45a
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Course Objectives and Skills

- Acquisition of a geographical perspective on Texas's diverse environments, cultures, law and economic systems

Assessment: analytical writing, map production, field sites and original research, exams, oral presentations

- Development of a geographical imagination and critical analysis of data, theory and texts
- Assessment: analytical writing, map production, field sites and original research, exams, oral presentations

- Acquisition of research skills:
 - Primary research sources (archival maps, field observations)
 - Application of social theory
 - Written and verbal presentation of original research

Assessment: analytical writing, map production, field sites and original research, exams, oral presentations

- Acquisition of cartographic and spatial visualization skills, including Geographic Information Systems (G.I.S.)
- Analyze meta queries: What are the human forces that create regions? How is identity derived from geography? What are the relationships between power and place?

Assessment: analytical writing, map production, field sites and original research, exams, oral presentations

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832, Telephone Number 432-837-8203.

Required Texts

All readings are in PDF form on the course website. Several of the books are in the SRSU bookstore and online, if you want to purchase. Readings are due by the day under which they are listed.

Assignments and Grade Acquisition

Student Eco-Region of Texas Presentation (25 points): Using the EPA “Eco-Regions of Texas” and the internet, you will prepare a 4-6 PPT slide presentation on the physical geography of your eco-region of Texas.

You must include 1) the climate system, 2) geology (soil, rocks, natural oil and gas, etc.), 3) elevation and topography (relation to sea level, mountains, variations across that eco-region), 4) indigenous wildlife and plant life (biology), 4) water sources (ground and surface, i.e., aquifers, rivers, lakes, Gulf of Mexico, etc.), 5) urban to rural ratio (cities, population, farmland, public lands). All PPTs will be submitted to the instructor and loaded on the Blackboard site for the mid-term. Due Thursday, Jan 26 in class.

Map Labs (20 points each, 60 points total): Attendance at all three G.I.S. labs and creation of three maps of Texas physical geography for professor review. Bring a flash drive to the G.I.S. lab to store your map.

Reading Response Essays, RRE (20 points each, 200 points total): With each designated reading, students prepare a 2-4 page essay of the 1) main argument; 2) at least three supporting details/examples of the argument; and 3) your analysis of the readings. You must **include all the readings for that week** in your write-up.

The essays are due at that class in paper. Essays should be written in 12-point font and include the works cited page of the readings. You do NOT have essay due if you are the student leader for that week. *We are doing these short essays in lieu of a big final paper.

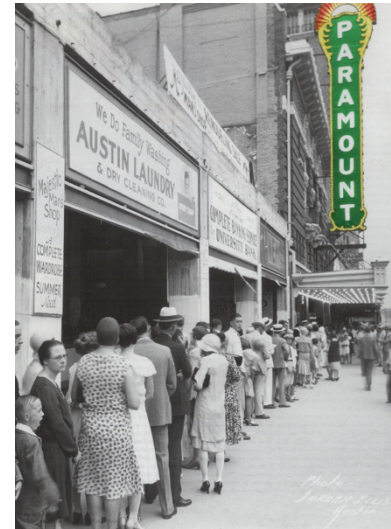
Student Discussion Leadership (25 points): Each student will lead discussion on the readings for one class meeting. Everyone in class should be prepared and ready to contribute to the discussion. Student leaders should be able to outline the main context of the readings and articulate two significant points for each reading of that week. Additionally, the student leader will prepare 3-5 questions for the class to discuss. Student leaders should meet with the professor before their week to organize.

Exams (100 points each, 200 points total): There are two exams in this course, the mid-term and final. Using your response essays, class PPTs, notes, etc. are an excellent way to prepare for the exam.

Field Notes, FN (25 points each, 75 points total): Field time is vital for a course based in the beauty of Texas! We have three field trips and using the methods outlined in week 2, you will gather data at each field site through your notes, participant observation, inquiries of site staff and data, any photograph, video and/or sketches you produce. Using that data you will write field notes due exactly a week from that field trip (noted on schedule below).

Cinematic Landscapes “Film of Texas” Storyboard Presentation (40 points):

Using the analytical ideas of Lukinbeal on Cinematic Geography, Shohat and Stam on Representation and Identity, and Tuan on Names and Spaces—you will create a short visual presentation on a film made in and/or about Texas. You can tell any story you are inspired to tell—but use these three readings as concepts to invoke and compare how Texas environments, culture, and people are portrayed in film.



Use the IMDB website for the film you choose to compare the filming locations. Go under “Details” and it will list all the filming locations. For example, is a location really West Texas or is it New Mexico filmed to look like TX? If so, what does that say about our expectations of place and cultural geography versus reality? How do our mythologies about space, people and stories create a space, even if it is an illusion? How do you think these expectations perpetuate the myths---especially, if we keep reasserting them? Do they help us form identities? Tell stories? Do we hear the same stories over and over? For example, who is usually cast as a cowboy? How does that compare to the history and contributions of *vaqueros*? Who is usually cast as the settlers of the West? How does that compare to contributions of Buffalo Soldiers?

You can create a storyboard, show clips with a Prezi or PPT presentation, map out the film’s location and compare to the real spaces, talk about the presentation of Texas culture and people, stereotyping within Texas or about Texans, etc. Simply invoke the geography and tell a coherent story, based on the texts listed above. In your storyboard explain how you used Lukinbeal, Shohat and Stam, and/or Tuan. GO DEEP IN YOUR ANALYSIS!

Possible films and filmmakers-

Texas filmmakers making films in TX:

- Richard Linklater: *Boyhood, Dazed and Confused, Slacker, Bernie*
- Robert Rodriguez: *Machete, Spy Kids, Grindhouse*
- Mike Judge: *Office Space* (filmed in Dallas---this is a great one using TX to represent an everywhere U.S. space, this inverts spatial expectations by using generic offices, apartment complexes and chain restaurants---absence of specific identity to tell the story. This is the opposite approach most filmmakers use in or about TX).
- Tobe Hooper: *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (the 1974 original! The locations are amazing: Bastrop, Round Rock, Kingsland, San Marcos, etc.---this film is known for utilizing the geography to tell the story)

Filmed in and about TX:

- Wim Wenders: *Paris, TX* (Big Bend NP, Marathon, Brewster County and Houston)
- Joel and Ethan Cohen: *No Country For Old Men* (Big Bend NP, Marfa); *True Grit* (Austin, Granger, Blanco)
- Gregor Nava: *Selena* (Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Houston, Lake Jackson)
- Peter Bogdanovich: *The Last Picture Show* (novel by Larry McMurtry, filmed in Archer City, Olney, Holliday, Wichita Falls)
- Peter Berg: *Friday Night Lights* (film, not T.V.; set in Odessa, filming in Odessa, Abilene, Elgin, Taylor, Houston)

2016 was also the inaugural year of the **Women Texas Film Festival**. Links to new films by young TX women filmmakers : <http://www.dallasobserver.com/arts/texas-first-all-female-film-festival-announces-its-lineup-for-texas-theatre-8531903>

Participation (25 points): Be present, be prepared and do contribute.

Grade Scale

650-620= A

619-590= B

589-560= C

559-530= D

<529 = F

Course Schedule

Jan 17 Tuesday: Introduction to Course

Reading: Syllabus

Jan 19 Thursday: Introduction to Physical Geography of Texas

Reading:

1. "Language and Making of Place" (Tuan)
2. "Journey's End: Wim Wenders in TX" (Ramirez)
3. Selections from *The Eco-Regions of Texas* (EPA) "Introduction", "Methods" and then skim through to select at least 3 regions you would like to focus on.

RRE #1 Due

In class: sign up for your Eco-Region (G.I.S. Lab 2 &3, and In-Class Presentation)

Assignment: Regional Geography Profiles Due Jan 26 in Class

Jan 24 Tuesday: G.I.S Lab 1, "G.I.S. 101, West Texas"

*Class Meets in G.I.S. Lab, 3rd Floor Warnock Bldg.

Jan 26 Thursday: Physical Regions of Texas

Due: Student Regional Profiles, min. 4-6 PPT slides on your eco-region

Jan 31 Tuesday: G.I.S. Lab 2, "Eco-Regions of Texas"

*Class Meets in G.I.S. Lab, 3rd Floor Warnock Bldg.

Feb 2 Thursday: Social Science Research Methods

Readings:

1. "On Writing Field Notes" (Wolfinger)
2. "Participant Observation" (FHI)

Feb 7 Tuesday: "Stars of Texas"

Field trip to McDonald Observatory, No Morning Meeting

*Meet at SRSU Entrance 4 Parking Lot, 5pm (Bring paper, camera, note-taking materials, snacks for ride)

Feb 9 Thursday: Indigenous Texas and Sacred Geographies

Readings:

1. "'Speaking with Names': Language and Landscape among the Western Apache" (Basso)

2. "The Biggest Tribe You Never Learned About in Your Texas History Books" (Mancias)
3. "The Legacy of Ethnic Cleansing: NAGPRA in Texas" (Russell)

RRE #2 Due

Student Leader #1:

Feb 14 Tuesday: G.I.S. Lab 3 "A Quad from your Eco-Region of TX"

*Class Meets in G.I.S. Lab, 3rd Floor Warnock Bldg.

Due: Field Notes 1 on McDonald Observatory and "Stars of Texas"

Feb 16 Thursday: Imperial Texas

Readings:

1. Selections from *Imperial Texas* (Mening)
2. "The Two Answers of the Colonized" (Memmi)

RRE #3 Due

Student Leader #2:

Feb 21 Tuesday: U.S.-Mexico War

Readings: Primary Sources on The War on Mexico (Zinn)

1. Diary of Col. Hitchcock (1845-146)
2. Miguel Barragan (18350)
3. Juan Soto (1847)
4. Frederick Douglass (1849)
5. *North Star* Editorial (1848)
6. Henry David Thoreau (1849)

RRE #4 Due

Student Leader #3:

Feb 23 Thursday: Ethnic Cleansing

Readings:

1. "Introduction: Demythologizing TX" from *The Conquest of Texas* (Anderson)
2. "Space, Position and Imperialism in South Texas" (Tamez [Lipan Apache/Jumano Apache])
3. "Mexico in his head": Slavery and the Texas-Mexico border (Kelley)

RRE #5 Due

Student Leader #3:

Feb 28 Tuesday: Immigration and Race

Readings:

1. "Galveston Ellis Island of Texas" (Hardwick)
2. "Bracero Agreement, 1942" (Governments of U.S. and Mexico)
3. "Derrick Bell's Toolkit" (Delgado)
4. "A Day Without Immigrants" (Pulido)

RRE #6 Due

Student Leader #4:

Mar 2 Thursday: Ethnic Identity and Civil Rights

Readings:

Selections from *Fighting Their Own Battles* (Behnken)

Documentary: *Austin Revealed: Civil Rights Stories*

RRE #7 Due

Mar 7 Tuesday: Mid Term Review

Mar 9 Thursday: Mid Term

Mar 13-17 Spring Break

Be safe and have fun!

Mar 21 Tuesday: Environmental Justice in Texas

Readings:

1. "Race and Environmental Justice in the United States" (Bullard)
2. "Environmentalism and Positionality" (Pulido and Peña)

RRE #8 Due

Student Leader #5:

Mar 23 Thursday: Chihuahua Desert Research Institute Field Trip

***Meet at 9am by SRSU Entrance 4 Parking Lot, bring water and wear hiking shoes!**

Mar 28 Tuesday: Environmental Case Simulation

Mar 30 Thursday: Borderlands, *La Frontera*

Readings:

1. Sections from "Borderlands, *La Frontera*" (Anzaldúa)
2. "Crimes and Consequences of Illegal Immigration" (Hernandez)
3. "Film at the Border: Memories of Cinemagoing, Laredo, TX" (Lozano)

RRE #9 Due

Student Leader #6:

Due: Field Notes 2 on Chihuahua Desert Research Institute

Apr 4 Tuesday: Cinema and Texas Geography

Readings:

1. "Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle Over Representation" (Shohat and Stam)
2. "Cinematic Landscapes" (Lukinbeal)

RRE #10 Due

Student Leader #7:

Apr 6 Thursday: Cinema and Texas Geography

Film: *Children of GIANT*

Apr 11 Tuesday: Cinema and Texas Geography

Film: *Children of GIANT*

Apr 13 Thursday: Field Visit to Hotel Paisano

***Meet at 9am by SRSU Entrance 4 Parking Lot**

Apr 18 Tuesday: Modern Human Geography in Texas: New Urbanism

Readings

1. "The Texas Urban Model" (Kotkin and Cox)
2. "A Tale of Six Cities" (Salamon), also in a form easier to read than the PDF:
<http://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/a-tale-of-six-cities/>
3. "An Urban-Rural Divide?" (Perryman Group)
4. "Mapping the Changing Face of the Lone Star State" (Goldsberry)

RRE #11* Due (11th option, but only the actual 10th depending on when you served as student leader)

Apr 20 Thursday: "Cinema of Texas" Workshop *No class meeting, space for you to prepare

Apr 25 Tuesday: Student Presentations

Due: Field Notes 3 on Hotel Paisano and GIANT

Apr 27 Thursday: Student Presentations

May 2 Tuesday: Final Review, Last Day of Classes (May 4- Dead Day)

May 5, 8-10 Final TBA