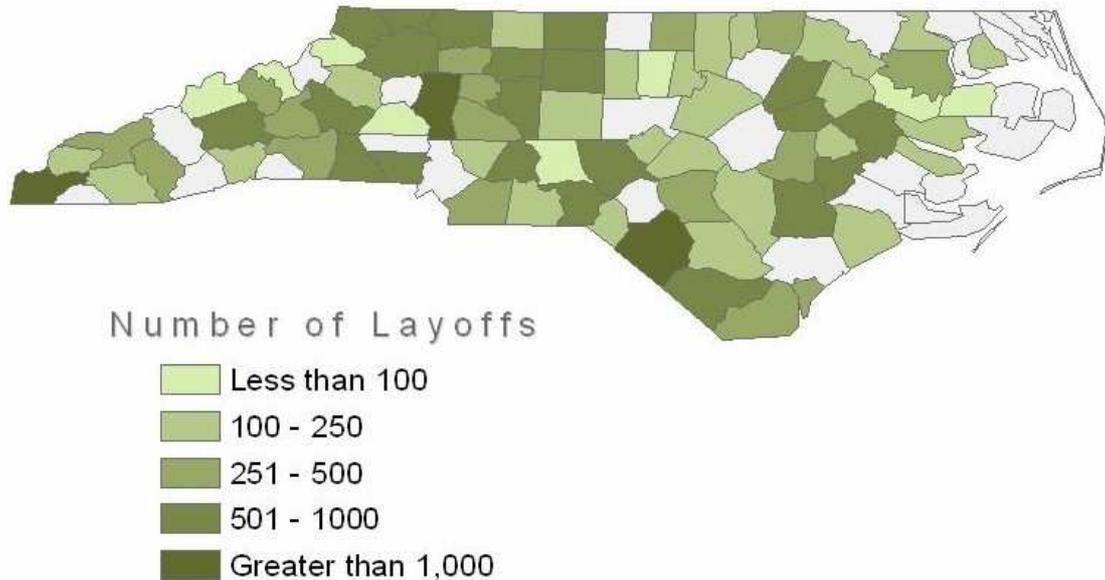


Spring 2008
GEOG 120: World Regional Geography

Decline in the employment in the textile and apparel industry in North Carolina (Number of layoffs), 1996-2006. Among other things, this class will show how geographers study the apparel and textile industry. In doing so, we will analyze how changes happening in North Carolina are linked with, and depend on, changes in the other regions of the world.



Monday-Wednesday-Friday, 02:00PM-02:50PM, Saunders Hall 220

Instructor

Christian Sellar,
sellar@email.unc.edu
Office: Saunders Hall #216
Office hours: Thursdays, by appointment

What is Human Geography?

Human geography is the study of the interactions between humans and their environment. It is also an ancient discipline. The Greeks invented the word 'geography', it meant 'to write the earth.' In the West, contemporary geography is rooted in the European explorations. Explorers and navigators mapped uncharted land brought home notes and artefacts; geographers systematized this knowledge and made it available to the public. Because it is so old, the meaning of geography and what geographers do shifted over time. Also, because all social life is rooted on Earth and influenced by places, human geographers can study almost everything. Thirty or forty years ago, human geographers privileged to study tangible patterns of human activity in space; they developed statistical models attempting to explain the rules that determined, for example, the location of cities, or certain industries,

or specific agricultural productions. Today, thinking geographically means examining how differences between people and places get constructed and how some places end up “meaning” a whole lot more to us than other places. For example, when human geographers look at a state capitol they do more than memorize its name and position on the map: they think about the political and economic discussions that went into deciding where the state capitol would be located, who paid for it, and how effective a political space it is (and for whom).

How will this class study human geography?

The economies of the whole world are becoming progressively more capitalist and interconnected, and this reflects on changes in politics, societies and cultures. These inter-related changes, or ‘globalization’ will be the focus of this class. In order to study how globalization is shaping people lives, this class divides the world in a set of macro-regions, i.e. large areas with common political-cultural-economic traits. The course analyzes how changes in politics, culture and economy are affecting each region. In doing so, it demonstrates that globalization is NOT leading the world to look the same everywhere. Instead, it is an highly uneven process, that may lead in some cases to greater differences among regions. Besides globalization, other key concepts in geography are ‘interconnectedness’ and ‘scale.’ What happens globally has an impact locally; changes in local places may affect the whole world. Events in far away places have an impact on everyday lives in North Carolina. One example of such interconnection is the textile and clothing industry. Global economic changes have impacted the local industry in North Carolina, leading to a major crisis. Therefore, this class will analyze each world region in two ways. First, drawing on the textbook, it will describe the main changes in economies, cultures and societies. Second, drawing on scientific journal articles, it will analyze in detail the specific changes of the textile and clothing industries. Showing the global interconnections of the textile industry, the class will show how world regions are tightly linked to each other, and how these links affect lives of people in North Carolina and elsewhere.

STRUCTURE OF THIS CLASS

This class is centered upon four key elements: lecturing, reading, discussing, conducting independent research. READ the following overview; it will help you in addressing each element:

Lectures are a key part of class. I will often refer to the textbook and other readings as I lecture, but I will not follow the same outline. Often I will expand on a particular case study relevant to the material presented in the reading, or I will even argue against it. So come to class! Feel free to ask questions, disagree, or make a point. Please do not use your computers or cell phones for anything other than note-taking. If you are going to miss a class, there is no need to tell me, but do your best to find someone in class who will lend you their notes.

Readings have been assigned for each class and should be read for the day on which they are listed. One of the most important things to think about as you sit down to read is *how to read*. When you read, you need to do three things: understand the author(s)’ main point; critically analyze the main point against the evidence marshaled by the author(s) to support their point – in other words, is the argument internally consistent?; decide whether you agree with the points, and explain (or at least understand) why or why not – this is where you deconstruct the reading and assess it with the information you have picked up in class, in your own reading, and in life. In order to help you with the most difficult readings, I will send you questions that will help your studying. Instead of trying to learn the whole text, you will have to extract enough information to answer the questions.

Discussion. Part of each class will be dedicated to discussion. We will be dealing with controversial material sometimes, and everyone needs to be able to simultaneously keep an open mind and defend their positions. Note: positions should be defended with well-constructed arguments, not simply opinions! This means that if we are debating an issue, the answer “North Carolina is becoming poorer/richer” will not be accepted. The answer “North Carolina is losing (gaining) jobs because outward investments and plants closure has led in the past ten years to more job losses than job creation by new firms and inward investments” will be. In other words, there are no wrong answers, just poorly formulated ones.

POLICIES AND MISCELLANEA

Only two policies will be carefully enforced. **1) DEADLINES ARE STRICT. No late assignment will be accepted, except in case of a proved medical condition. 2) LAPTOPS/NEWSPAPERS MUST NOT BE ON YOUR TABLE.**

<p>I MAY HAVE TO LEAVE TOWN DURING THE SEMESTER FOR PROFESSIONAL REASONS. If this will happen, I will give alternative assignments in advance.</p>

GRADING

You will both read carefully the articles and the textbook, and come to class regularly. **IN EACH LECTURE, YOU WILL BE GIVEN A SET OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE READINGS ASSIGNMENTS. THESE WILL BE GUIDELINES TO HELP YOU STUDY THE BOOK AND THE ARTICLES. YOUR EXAMS WILL BE BASED ON THESE QUESTIONS. YOU WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE SHORT ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS IN WRITTEN FORM AND PRINT THEM OUT BEFORE EACH CLASS** (no handwritten answers, please). Five times during the semester, randomly, I will collect your answers. This will count as your attendance.

Grade structure

Questions: 25% (5% each round)

Test #1: 25%

Test #2: 25%

Final: 25% (the final is NOT cumulative)

World Regional Geography: Course Readings and Lecture Outline

Required text:

World Regional Geography (fourth edition). Pulsipher and Pulsipher, 2008. This textbook is available at the UNC bookstore.

*** All additional readings will be available either on blackboard, e-journals, e-reserve.

Section 1: Introductory concepts and tools

Lecture 1, January 9 (Wed) Introduction to course

Reading: "1492: The Prequel" by Nicholas D. Kristoff in the New York Times Magazine (1999) available online: <http://www.nytimes.com/library/magazine/millennium/m3/kristof.html>

Lecture 2 January 11 (Fry) Concepts in human geography

Textbook: *Chapter 1* pp. 1-20; 29-40

Lecture 3 January 14 (Mon) Concepts in physical geography

Textbook: *Chapter 1* pp. 21-29; 41-50

Lecture 4 January 16 (Wed) on maps and mapping

Readings: Crampton, "Maps as social constructions: power, communication and visualization" *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (2): 235-252 June 2001

Case Studies: Visualizing the Globe (explore these sites)

Tom van Sant's Geosphere Project: <http://www.geosphere.com/home4.htm>

Atlas of Cyberspaces <http://www.cybergeography.org/atlas/geographic.html>

Counter cartographies <http://criticalspatialpractice.blogspot.com/>

Lecture 5 January 18 (Fri) on regions

Reading: Lewis, Wigen *The Myth of Continents*, Los Angeles, U. of California Press, 1997. Chapter 1. The Architecture of Continents, pp. 21-46.

----- Monday, January 21 NO CLASS Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -----

Lecture 6 January 23 (Wed) on Global Value Chains, Regional Economies, and the Textile Industry

Reading: Global Value Chains. Concepts and Tools <http://www.globalvaluechains.org/concepts.html>

North Carolina in the Global Economy. Apparel and Textiles, Overview http://www.soc.duke.edu/NC_GlobalEconomy/textiles/overview.php

Section 2 The world regions

Lecture 7 January 25 (Fri) Europe

Reading: Chapter 4

Lecture 8 January 28 (Mon) Europe

Lecture 9 January 30 (Wed) Europe

Reading: Dunford, "Industrial Districts, Magic Circles, and the Restructuring of the Italian Textiles and Clothing Chain" *Economic Geography*, Vol. 82, Num. 1, Jan, Pages: pp. 27-59

Lecture 10 February 1 (Fri) Russia and NIS

Readings: Chapter 5

Lecture 11 February 4 (Mon) Russia and NIS

Lecture 12 February 6 (Wed) Russia and NIS

Reading: Kalantaridis, C., Slava, S. and Sochka, K. 'Globalization processes in the clothing industry of Transcarpathia, Western Ukraine', *Regional Studies*, 37 (2): 2003, pp. 173-186.

Lecture 13 February 8 (Fri) First Review Session

Overview the previous readings

Lecture 14 February 11 (Mon) Test # 1

Lecture 15 February 13 (Wed) North Africa and South West Asia

Reading: Chapter 6

Lecture 16 February 15 (Fri) North Africa and South West Asia

Lecture 17 February 18 (Mon) North Africa and South West Asia

Reading: Tokatli "Networks, firms and upgrading within the blue-jeans industry: evidence from Turkey" *Global Networks*, Vol. 7, Num. 1, 2007

Lecture 18 February 20 (Wed) North America

Reading: Chapter 2

Lecture 19 February 22 (Fri) North America

Lecture 20 February 25 (Mon) North America

Reading: Bair, Gereffi "Upgrading, uneven development, and jobs in the North American apparel industry" *Global Networks*, Vol. 31, Num. 2, 2003, Pages: pp. 143-169

Lecture 21 February 27 (Wed) Middle and South America

Reading: Chapter 3

Lecture 22 February 29 (Fri) Middle and South America

Lecture 23 March 3 (Mon) Middle and South America

Reading: Bair, Peters “Global commodity chains and endogenous growth: Export dynamism and development in Mexico and Honduras” *World Development*, Vol. 34, Num. 2, 2006 Pages: pp. 203-221

Lecture 24 March 5 (Wed) Second Review Session

Overview the previous readings

Lecture 25 March 7 (Fri) Test # 2

-----**March 8-16 SPRING BREAK**-----

Lecture 26 March 17 (Mon) East Asia

Reading: Chapter 9

Lecture 27 March 19 (Wed) East Asia

----- **March 21 NO CLASS Good Friday**-----

Lecture 28 March 24 (Mon) East Asia

Grunsven, Smakman “Competitive Adjustment and Advancement in Global Commodity Chains: I. Firm Strategies and Trajectories in the East Asian Apparel Industry” *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, Vol. 22, Num. 2, July 2001, pp. 173-188

Lecture 29 March 26 (Wed) Southeast Asia

Chapter 10

Lecture 30 March 28 (Fri) Southeast Asia

Guest Lecturers: Arnold, D. and J. Palis

Lecture 31 March 31 (Mon) Southeast Asia

Arnold and Hewinson “Exploitation in global supply chains. Burmese migrant workers in Mae Sot, Thailand” in Kevin Hewison and Ken Young (eds) 2006, *Transnational Migration for Work*, London : Routledge-Curzon, pp. 314-339.

Lecture 32 April 2 (Wed) South Asia

Chapter 8

Lecture 33 April 4 (Fri) South Asia

Lecture 34 April 7 (Mon) South Asia

Rammohan, Sundaresan “Socially Embedding the Commodity Chain: An Exercise in Relation to Coir Yarn Spinning in Southern India” *World Development*, Vol. 31, Num. 5, 2003, pp. 903-923

Lecture 35 April 9 (Wed) Sub Saharan Africa

Chapter 7

Lecture 36 April 11 (Fri) Sub Saharan Africa

Gibbon “The African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Global Commodity Chain for Clothing” *World Development*, Vol. 31, Num. 11, Nov 2003, pp. 1809-1838

April 14-19 class cancelled

Lecture 37 April 21 (Mon) Oceania

Lecture 38 April 23 (Wed) Oceania

Lewis, N., Larner W and R Le Heron (2008) The New Zealand Designer Fashion Industry: Making industries and co-constituting political projects *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*

Lecture 39 April 25 (Fri) Third review session