

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

GEOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION  
COLLECTIVITY, AUTONOMY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

GEOGRAPHY 301  
SPRING 2010  
THRS 3:30–5:25 PM, SCIENCE HALL 360  
CREDITS: 3

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR KEITH WOODWARD  
SCIENCE HALL 455  
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## DESCRIPTION

This course explores the connections between space, social organization, and social change. It will provide you with geographic perspectives on the theoretical, practical, political and affective dimensions of social movements, collective action, and political organizing. It presents a broad engagement with classic and contemporary perspectives, paying particular attention to the socio-political production of space and time and the spatio-temporal production of social and political life. In addition to focusing upon the radical and revolutionary trajectories of political philosophy and social theory, it interrogates the theoretical and practical problems surrounding their realization. Key contemporary social movements and practices of resistance will be explored in detail, as well as the principle social divisions contributing to political oppression and social inequality in connection with the changing characteristics of work, exploitation, global capitalism, autonomy, identity, collective life. Through lectures and discussion, this module will equip students with the theoretical, conceptual and empirical grounds necessary for understanding and analyzing issues concerning social change and social inequality in contemporary societies.

## COURSE READINGS

REQUIRED ARTICLES: Most of the readings for this course will be made available to you on electronic reserve via MyUW.

Go to <http://my.wisc.edu/portal/index.jsp>, click on the Academic tab, and you will find Library/Reserves by Department. Go to “Geography,” they will be listed under “301.”

REQUIRED BOOK: To Be Determined by the class.

Whichever we choose, used copies of the book will be made available at Rainbow Bookstore: 426 W. Gilman St., just off State Street (Tel: 257-6050).

RECOMMENDED *Dictionary of Human Geography* (Available on MADCAT) READING:

Notes From Nowhere 2003 *We Are Everywhere: The Irresistable Rise of Global Capitalism*. New York: Verso.

Peet, R. (ed.) 1977 *Radical Geography: Alternative Viewpoints on Contemporary Social Issues*. Chicago: Maaroufa Press.

Blunt, A. and Wills, J. 2000 *Dissident Geographies: An Introduction to Radical Ideas and Practice*. Essex: Pearson.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

It is strongly recommended that you:

- 1) Consult the large variety of academic journals devoted to the study of pertinent political issues, leftism, radical organizing, and the politics of dissent.

Geography journals: *Antipode*, *ACME*, *Gender, Place and Culture*, and *Human Geography* address many of the course themes directly, but many of the top geography journals will also regularly feature such discussions.

Other journals: *New Left Review*, *Rethinking Marxism*, *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, *Mobilization*, *Radical Philosophy*, *Working USA*, *Anarchist Studies*, amongst many others.

- 2) Explore the various alternative news resources available online. My first suggestions would be both international and local versions of the *Independent Media Center* <[www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)> & <<http://madison.indymedia.org>>; *Democracy Now!* <[www.democracynow.org](http://www.democracynow.org)>; and Z Net <<http://www.zmag.org/znet>>.

- 3) Several websites publish the works of thinkers whom we will discuss in class. See especially: Libcom (Marxist and anarchist archives) <[www.libcom.org](http://www.libcom.org)>, (Marxist archives) Marx 2 Mao <[www.marx2mao.com](http://www.marx2mao.com)>, (post-Marxist and post-structuralist archives) <[www.after1968.org](http://www.after1968.org)>, Situationist International Online <<http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/index.html>>, Zapatista Archives in English <<http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/zapatista.html>>.

These resources should be used for exercises in the course, to complement lecture material, and as resources for finding topics for your final papers.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Geography 301 is designed to give you exposure to arguments and discussions in a wide array areas addressing the intersections between social life and space, on the one hand, and exploitation and social change, on the other. You will be required to complete one

major research paper that critically examines a social movement from the perspective(s) of the major course themes. Specifically, your research topic should assess a movement or collective in terms of the relationships between space, social organization, and social change. This writing assignment requires that you make effective use of the library resources on campus, and is structured to encourage you to continue to develop and refine your skills as a critical thinker and writer, with an aim toward 1) finding the nuance in debates and current events, and 2) crafting clear and convincing arguments. We will address the conventions of academic scholarship and social science research during the semester, so please be very attentive to this throughout the research and writing process. While web research may provide a good place to start to get ideas, all writing assignments should engage scholarly articles and/or books. With the exception of 'primary' resources, any bibliography that is web-focused will be downgraded.

In addition to the major writing assignments, there will be a series of smaller assignments given in lecture and section, as well as a midterm examination. The shorter assignments will include participation in debates, reading presentations, and participation in a 'research collective' that will explore a local collective, cooperative, movement or project here in Madison. The midterm will consist of essay-style questions, as well as some short-answer questions regarding key concepts and is designed to aid in your preparation for the final paper.

Throughout the semester, required to read the course materials *prior* to the class for which they are assigned and to attend lectures. Unlike some other courses, I also expect students to be active during lectures, asking questions, and responding to the questions I ask of you. I realize that students may occasionally miss a lecture or section; however, regular attendance and active participation are critical for success in this course and will be considered in evaluating students.

As one way to communicate about evolving scheduling issues, readings, and other assignments, I will email you periodically with updates and reminders. You are responsible for checking your email regularly and reading these updates as they may contain information important for completion of course assignments. If you are not a regular email devotee, at a minimum please check your email account at the beginning and end of each week. I will send a test email message to all students before the end of the first week of class. If you do not receive it, please verify that you are officially enrolled in the course and notify your TA.

Please note that I will *not* distribute copies of my Powerpoint course slides via Learn@UW or email. I will, however, distribute study guides just prior to the mid-term exam, as well as relevant handouts throughout the term. The rationale for this policy is to structure the course so that your note-writing abilities are enhanced, and to encourage you to come to class (as the slides only convey some of the content from the lecture). If you missed content on a particular slide, or didn't understand something from lecture, please ask for clarification during the lecture, via email, or during my office hours.

*I am always open to feedback, or calls for assistance or advice. Please come to my office hours or make arrangements to meet in my office if there is anything about the course you would like to discuss.*

## GRADING

94-100 = A  
89-93 = AB  
84-88 = B  
79-83 = BC  
70-78 = C  
60-69 = D  
Below 60 = F

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

<u>WRITING ASSIGNMENTS</u> (45%)	
Essay Proposal	10%
Essay	35%
<u>EXAMS</u> (30%)	
Midterm Exam	30%
<u>DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES</u> (25%)	
Presentations and Research Collectives	15%
Attendance and participation	10%
<u>TOTAL</u>	100%

### *Note:*

Late papers will suffer a 10% reduction per day unless unavoidable circumstances arise. In the case of illness, family emergency or other similar circumstance, please contact me.

Please be aware that if you miss lecture for any reason, *you* are responsible for the material covered.

Specific instructions regarding the assignments will be distributed in class.

Please also note that the UW policy on academic honesty states that students can be expelled for one case of cheating or plagiarism. If you have any questions about citation or more general questions regarding your academic rights and responsibilities please do not hesitate to ask me.

## SCHEDULE OF EXAMS AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

MIDTERM EXAM: March 25th, 180 Science Hall

ESSAY PROPOSAL: Week 8

RESEARCH COLLECTIVES: Week 15 & 16

ESSAY: Week 17

## SCHEDULE

*With the exception of the book(s) we select, all readings will be available on E-Reserves.  
Schedule subject to change.*

January	21 <sup>st</sup>	Wk 1	COURSE INTRODUCTION
	28 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 2	THE FACTORY FLOOR: LABOR AND (ANTI)-CAPITALISM SELECTIONS FROM: Marx, Blunt & Wills
February	4 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 3	POLITICAL ORGANIZING & THE PROBLEM OF VANGUARDISM SELECTIONS FROM: Robertson, Lenin, Althusser, Harvey
	11 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 4	FROM BELOW: THE CRITIQUE OF STATISM AND AUTHORITARIANISM Bakunin, Kropotkin, Guérin, Blunt & Wills
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 5	SOUS LES PAVÉS, LA PLAGE! '68, SITUATIONISM, & OPERAISMO Lefebvre & Debord, Negri & Tronti
	25 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 6	THE LABORATORY OF POWER: POSTSTRUCTURALISM & DIFFERENCE Chomsky, Foucault & Deleuze, Žižek & Badiou
March	4 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 7	FOUCAULT, PART II
	11 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 8	THE INTERNATIONAL ENCUESTRO: NAFTA, ZAPATISMO, AND ANTI-GLOBALIZATION Marcos, Maquilas, Lynd & Grubacic, Starhawk
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 9	EXPANDING THE FLOOR OF THE CAGE: NEW ANARCHISM AND THE NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: Graeber, Holloway, Day, Freire
	25 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 10	MIDTERM EXAM
April	1 <sup>st</sup>	Wk 11	SPRING RECESS – NO LECTURE
	8 <sup>th</sup>	Wk 12	FROM ITALY TO ARGENTINA: WORKERISM, AUTONOMISM, HORIZONTALISM Berardi, Virno, Fortunati, Hardt & Negri, Sitrin, Read

15 <sup>th</sup> Wk 13	FILM (NO LECTURE – AAG)
22 <sup>nd</sup> Wk 14	RESEARCH COLLECTIVES
29 <sup>th</sup> Wk 15	RESEARCH COLLECTIVES
May 6 <sup>th</sup> Wk 16	RESEARCH COLLECTIVES
Monday, 10 <sup>th</sup> Wk May 17	FINAL ESSAY DUE

## References

Fortunati, L. 2007 "Immaterial Labor and its Mechanization." *Ephemera* 7(1): 139-57.

Virno, P. "General Intellect." In *Lessico Postfordista*, A. Bove, trans. (Feltrinelli).