

COURSE SYLLABUS: Geography 110/C110/ISF101

Economic Geography of the Industrial World

In this class, we look at the geographic side of economic life and modern industry in the advanced capitalist world. Geography is an indelible part of all economic processes, though sorely neglected in traditional economic theory. It rears its head in the siting of factories, national boundaries & policy, global trade, the location of malls, subcontracting networks, immigration, urban agglomeration, regional differences, imperialism, currency exchange, and much more. Geography comes into play at all scales, from the location of an office park and build-up of Silicon Valley to the European Union and trans-Pacific manufacturing systems.

While probing the geographic dimension, we will also engage such fundamental economic questions as: what causes growth? Is technology the key? What are the wages of labor? Are natural resources obsolete? Why did the financial system implode? Nor will we forget to spice things up with classic problems of political economy: inequality, national rivalry, warfare, imperialism, class conflict, etc.

So welcome aboard and buckle up for the ride across the global economy!

Lectures

Tuesday-Thursday 2:00 - 3:30 in 141 McCone Hall. Attendance is required: lectures are where the principal themes of the course are introduced.

If you do miss a class, lectures are recorded and available @webcast.berkeley.edu/courses. Powerpoints are NOT available, however.

No computers allowed, except by special permission. No reading, chatting, or sleeping in class!

Sections

There are no sections this year, thanks to cutbacks in GSI support funds. Speak to Governor Schwarzenegger, legislators, and President Yudof about that.

Examinations

Midterm and final. Your choice of in-class or take-home exams -- a low-anxiety system where you can take the exam or walk out and do the take-home within 48 hours. Same exam, different curves. Exams cover lecture and reading material. Exams are open book, open note.

Grading:

Final 2/3, midterm 1/3.

Office Hours and Access

Prof. Walker, W 2-4, room 599 McCone.

Sign up ahead of time on the door.

Email: walker@berkeley.edu.

Laura-Anne Minkoff-Zern

Office hours: Tues. 1-2, room 197 McCone.

Email: laminkoff@berkeley.edu

Webbing

The course has its own webpage on *bspace.berkeley.edu*, where the syllabus, articles, and announcements will be posted.

The course will also be available on podcasts @*webcast.berkeley.edu/courses*

Readings

Readings are an essential complement to lectures and sections, going over the same ground but also amplifying ideas, filling out the picture and providing more empirical evidence. You are not expected to remember everything for exams, but you are expected to be able to answer exam questions that refer to the books.

You are expected to keep up with the readings. There is too much to try to do it at the last minute! So if you're not serious about doing the readings, please don't enroll in the course.

Required Reading:

Brenner, Robert. 2004. New boom or bubble? New Left Review. 25: 57-100. (can be downloaded from bspace)

Harvey, David. 2005. A Brief History of Neo-Liberalism. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fligstein, Neil and Frederic Merand. 2002. Globalization or Europeanization? Acta Sociologica. pp. 7-45.

Fields, Gary. 2004. Territories of Profit: Communications, Capitalist Development and the Innovative Enterprises of G.F. Swift and Dell Computer. Stanford University Press.

Milkman, Ruth, 2006. L.A. Story: Immigrant Workers and the Future of the U.S. Labor Movement. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Baker, Dean. 2009. Plunder and Blunder: The Rise and Fall of the Bubble Economy. Sausalito, CA: PoliPoint Press.

Klare, Michael. 2008. Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy. New York: Holt/Metropolitan Books.

Books are available at ASUC bookstore, Ned's, and on 2 hr reserve at McCone Library

Additional Reading:

There will be also a handful of articles, mostly short journalistic pieces, added to the syllabus as the semester moves along. They will be announced in class and available to download from the course bspace.

Students with Disabilities or Special Needs:

Please bring these to our attention and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Lecture Schedule

part 1 - thinking geographically, or spatial political economy

Section I. THE RESTLESS GLOBAL ECONOMY

READ: Brenner, "New Boom or Bubble?"

- 8/26 1. Permanent Industrial Revolution: Making of the Modern World
- 8/31 2. When Worlds Collide: The Rise & Faults of the Global Economy
- 9/2 3. Great Depressions and Great Recessions: Instability, Crisis & Intervention
- 9/7 4. Capitalism Unleashed: Accumulation, Labor, Nature & Technology

Section II. TERRITORY, SCALE & DEVELOPMENT

READ: Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* + Fligstein & Merand, "Europeanization"

- 9/9 5. National Economies, Modern States & Trade
- 9/14 6. National Development & Inter-national Competition
- 9/16 7. Continents, Empires & Global Shifts
- 9/21 8. Cities, Regions & Uneven Development

Section III. PLACE, SPACE & INDUSTRY

READ: Fields, *Territories of Profit*.

- 9/23 8. Localization: Places of Production
- 9/28 9. Globalization: Chains of Production
- 9/30 10. Crossing Space: Flow & Logistics
- 10/5 12. Retailing: Spaces for Selling

10/7 MIDTERM EXAM

part II - the belly of the beast, or capital's 3 golden geese

Section IV. LABOR: WORKERS OF THE WORLD DISUNITED

READ: Milkman, *L.A. Story*

- 10/12 13. Beyond Manual Labor: A Complex & Creative Workforce
10/14 14. Will Work for Fast Food: The New Economy of Employment
10/19 15. Class Struggle in the U.S.A.: Neoliberalism & Capital Triumphant
10/21 16. The Fate of the Global Working Class: Hope in the East?

Section V. MONEY: THE MYSTICAL WORLD OF FINANCE

READ: Baker, *Plunder and Blunder*

- 10/26 17. Banking & Money At Work: Cash, Credit & Interest (exploitation)
10/28 18. Capital Markets & Global Finance: Money Makes the World Go Round
11/2 19. Finance & Development: Managing Capital
11/4 20. Financial Frenzy & Bubble Economies: Dysfunctional Finance

Section VI. NATURE: THE THIRST FOR RESOURCES

READ: Klare, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*

- 11/9 21. Industry and the Place of Nature
11/11 *Veterans Day Holiday*
11/16 & 11/18 *Prof. Walker away (guest lectures)*
11/23 22. Wood Work: The Political Economy of Lumber
11/25 *Thanksgiving Vacation*
11/30 23. Energy: Greasing the Wheels of Commerce
12/2 24. World without End? Rape of the Planet

DEAD WEEK

FINALS