

GEOG 3010 –Economic Geography (Spring 2026)

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12.30 pm to 1.50 pm

Instructor: Dr. Waquar Ahmed

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 am to noon and by appointment.

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Overview:

This is an introductory course in *Economic Geography*. First, this course examines the progress in the sub-discipline of economic geography. We focus on key schools of thought, and progress in the ontology and epistemology of economic geography. Second, we examine the spatio-temporal transformation of our world while focusing on factors of production like land, labor/technology and capital; economic activities like consumption, trade, production, investments, as well as culture; and institutions like state, markets and corporations. Third, economic geography makes sense of the interconnectedness of our world, how capital, goods and services, and labor flow or move in space. Finally, we examine how economic processes differentially impact the global North and the South.

Learning Outcomes:

- Understand regionally specific economic processes.
- Understand how regionally specific political-economic processes produce mutual dependence, exploitation and contestations on the global scale.

Readings:

In addition to attending classes, you are expected to read -- at times, these readings may be quite difficult, but it is my responsibility to simplify and explain the readings. Students are required to read the assigned material **before** the class in which material is to be discussed; **note-taking** on the assigned reading is strongly recommended. Lectures are prepared based on the assumption that students are prepared for class. Based on experience, students who prepare inadequately for class are unlikely to perform well or at the level of their ability, and they are likely to fall behind and find themselves unable to effectively catch up. **Regular and punctual attendance is required.** Students are responsible for any course material that is missed.

All required readings will be posted on Canvas.

Course Requirements:

- (i) You will have to take a midterm examination, a final examination, and write a 6-page op-ed¹ essay that involves some amount of research and draws upon concepts learnt in class – in other words, your op-ed must be embedded in the sub-discipline of Economic Geography.
- (ii) You are expected to be on time, thinking and ready for every lecture. If you are not going to attend a class, tell me in advance and give a very convincing reason, else it will affect your grades (there are points attendance and for classroom participation).
- (iii) **If you bring your cell phone to class, make sure that it is turned off.**
- (iv) Take-home exercise is due on the date and time stated/determined.
- (v) I do not want you to work in groups (copying from one another) for any of the assignments/examinations – unless I suggested so. If I detect that you have done this, you will be awarded F grade for the class. It is official college policy that plagiarism is outlawed, banned! You can avoid such charges by always citing work you have used in your take-home paper assignment.
- (vi) I reserve the right to make reasonable and responsible changes in the syllabus based on our progress, and any special requirement that may arise as the semester progresses. You will be notified about these changes well in advance.

Grades:

The course grade will be based on the following components: mid-term examination – 25%; End-term take-home examination – 25%; op-ed piece – 25%; participation in classroom discussions 10%; attendance – 15%. Your points will be added up at the end of the semester and grades will be awarded as follows (or adjusted based on a curve):

A	85 to 100
B	75 to <85
C	65 to <75
D	55 to <65
F	< 55

¹ And op-ed is typically an essay piece that is published by a newspaper or magazine, which expresses the opinion of its author.

Points for attendance

<i>Attendance Percentage</i>	<i>Points (out of 15)</i>
95% and above	15
90 % and above but less than 95%	13
85 % and above but less than 90%	10
75 % and above but less than 85%	8
70 % and above but less than 75%	5
Less than 70%	0

Important Dates:

March 5: mid-term examination

April 13: Op-ed piece due

April 30: Final exam

Late submissions of op-ed or change in date of exam is not allowed unless there is a documented case of illness, family emergency or/and university event for which university provides documentation or special excuse.

Disability Accommodation:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Lecture Outline and assigned readings:

January 13: **Introduction**

Part I: Foundations of Economic Geography

Dates	Topics	Source
Jan 15	Why Study Economic Geography	Why is economic geography good for you? Barnes & Christophers (2018, 1-22)
Jan 20 & 22	History of Economic Geography	Ontologies & progress. Scott (2000) Barnes & Christophers (2018, 50-75)
Jan 27 & 29	Methods in Economic Geography	Method and Methodology; A history of methods and methodology in economic geography; contemporary methods in economic geography. Barnes & Christophers (2018, 132-155).

Part II: The Rise of the Core Economies:

Dates	Topics	Sub-topics
Feb 3	Pre-Industrial Foundations	Beginnings; Emerging imperatives of economic organization; The Emergence of the European World-System. Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 93-115).
Feb 5 & 10	Modes of Production	Wolf (2010, 73-100)
Feb 12	Evolution of the Industrial Core Regions	The industrial revolution and spatial change; Machinofacture and the spread of industrialization in Europe; Fordism and North American Industrialization; Japanese industrialization: two economic miracles; emergence of organized capitalism; lessons from the industrial era. Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 116-144)
Feb 17	International Trade and comparative advantage	Peet (2009)
Feb 19 & 24	Globalization of Economic Activities	The transition to advanced capitalism; patterns and processes of globalization Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 145-176)

Part III: Spatial Transformation of Core and Periphery:

Dates	Topics	Sub-topics
Feb 26 & Mar 3	Spatial Reorganization of the Core Economies	A context for urban and regional change; spatial reorganization of the core economies; old industrial spaces; new industrial spaces; regional inequality in core economies Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 177-212)
Mar 5	Mid-term exam	
Mar 17 & 19	Freedom in the new economy	Curtis, A. 2007. The Trap. London: BBC (Documentary to be screened in class)
Mar 24	Dynamics of interdependence: transformation of the periphery	Colonial economies and the transformation of global space; economic mechanisms of enmeshment and maintenance in the colonial world economy; influence of colonial administration on interdependence; mechanisms of cultural integration; changing global context of interdependence; alternative models of development? Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 213-244)
Mar 26	Industrialization: The path to progress?	National and global stimuli to industrialization; limits to industrialization in the periphery; geography of industrialization in the periphery; rise and fall of the Soviet model of industrialization; China's rise in the world economy Knox, Agnew & McCarthy (2014, 274-312)

Part IV: Adjusting to the World Economy?

Dates	Topics	Sub-topics
Mar 31 & Apr 2	Post-Fordism, Retail and openness paradigm	Ettlinger (2014)
Apr 7	Finance capital	Peet (2011)
April 9	Techno-capitalism or Techno-feudalism	Yanis Varoufakis on Techno-feudalism what killed capitalism (UNFTR Media 2024)
Apr 14	Immigrant Workers in Tech Industry	(Roy 2024), (Cassidy 2025)
Apr 16	Military-Industrial-Complex	Watterton (2023), Sachs (2023)
April 21, 23 & 28	Economic crisis, Climate Change and the future of Capitalism	Harvey, D. (2010) Organizing for the anti-capitalist transition. <i>Human Geography</i> , 3, 1-17. (Available on Canvas)
April 30	Final Exam	

References:

Barnes, T. J. & B. Christophers. 2018. *Economic Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Cassidy, J. (2025) Why the MAGA Fight Over H-1B Visas Is Crossing Party Lines. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-financial-page/why-the-maga-fight-over-h-1b-visas-is-crossing-party-lines> (last accessed January 11, 2025).

Ettlinger, N. (2014) The openness paradigm. *New Left Review*, 89, 89-100.

Knox, P., J. Agnew & L. McCarthy. 2014. *The Geography of the World Economy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Peet, R. (2009) Ten pages that changed the world: deconstructing Ricardo. *Human Geography*, 2, 81-95.

--- (2011) Inequality, crisis and austerity in finance capitalism. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 4, 383-399.

Roy, R. (2024) Covert carcerality for "high-income cheap labor": Indian tech workers in the United States. *Sociological Forum*.

Scott, A. J. (2000) Economic Geography: The Great half-Century. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 24, 485-504.

UNFTR Media. 2024. Yanis Varoufakis on Technofeudalism and the End of Capitalism. <https://youtu.be/n6Akbt0XTtc?si=mYInxlwcHD50fluE>. YouTube.

Wolf, E. R. 2010. *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.