

Geography 451-002: Spatial Behavior & Thinking
Course Syllabus – Spring 2013 – TR 9:30-10:45

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Course Description & Objectives: People make spatial decisions every day: these decisions help us navigate through space, understand routes, and even conceptualize how we think about the world. This course examines how people understand, think about, and behave in space. Successful completion of this course entails developing and demonstrating an understanding about spatial behavior and thinking, particularly as they relate to the discipline of Geography, including the ability to apply that understanding to real-world situations.

Texts: There is no textbook for this course; instead readings (peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and popular news articles) will be posted to Blackboard

Blackboard: Course materials (supplemental readings, assignments, lectures, and announcements) will be posted to Blackboard (<https://bb.siue.edu/>); be sure to check Blackboard regularly.

Course Mechanics: Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

Exams	Midterm	20%
	Final	25%
Final project	Presentation	20%
Field observations	2 assignments (@ 10% each)	20%
Discussion	Participation	10%
	Discussion questions	5%

Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, definition, short answer, and essay questions based on lecture material and assigned readings. A review sheet will be provided prior to each exam. Please note: the final exam is cumulative.

Make-up exams will only be granted if you (1) contact me within 24 hours of missing the exam, and (2) have a valid, University-sanctioned excuse. Exams taken on any day other than the scheduled exam day will be essay format.

Final project: Your final project will examine a specific topic on spatial behavior or thinking. The topic is your choice, but it must be approved by me ahead of time. During the last weeks of class, you will present your project in class; the PowerPoint will be submitted to me prior to your presentation. Your grade on this project will be a composite score that includes (a) a project proposal, (b) presentation delivery, (c) presentation content, and (d) references (quantity and quality). A detailed description of the project, and a grading rubric will be provided and discussed in class.

Field work assignments: There will be two field observations over the course of the semester, one on-campus and one off-campus. You will have the option to work in pairs or small groups. Results of your observations will be shared in class. Details for each assignment will be provided and discussed in class.

Discussion: A significant portion (15%) of your final grade is based on class discussion. Your discussion grade is based on two components: (a) participation and (b) discussion questions:

- a. Participation (10%): In both small groups and as a whole class, there will be ample opportunity for discussion. During small group discussion, I will visit each group to talk with you one-on-one about your thoughts and opinions on the week's readings. In addition, I will keep track of your participation throughout the semester. A grading rubric, posted to the course website, is used to evaluate your participation grade; be sure to take a look at it early on in the semester so that you know how you will be graded. From time to time, I will gauge your individual reading with short quizzes.
- b. Questions (5%): During the first week of class you will sign up for one discussion day (grad students: two days). You will be responsible for writing 3-5 discussion questions based on that day's readings. For each question, you must include (1) the author or title of the reading you are referring to, (2) the page number(s) where the question comes from, and (3) a brief answer/response to your question (a bulleted list is acceptable). The questions must be submitted to me via email one week ahead of the scheduled discussion date. Take time to carefully word your questions so that they are understandable and prompt discussion. The discussion schedule with due dates will be posted to Blackboard after the first week of class.

Graduate students: If you are taking this course for graduate credit, (1) you will complete the same course work as undergraduates; (2) you will be responsible for submitting discussion questions for two evenings; and, (3) you will submit a 10-page research paper for the final project as well as presenting your research findings to class.

Submitting assignments: Assignments can be submitted at any time before the assigned due date. Unless otherwise noted, assignments can be submitted as hard copy in class or via email (gacheso@siue.edu) as either a Word (.doc or .docx) or PowerPoint (.ppt or .pptx). Late assignments will incur a 5-point/day penalty.

Grade distribution: Letter grades will be assigned based on the following distribution: A (90% and above); B (80-89.9%); C (70-79.9%); D (60-69.9%); and, F (59.9% and below).

Attendance: Because discussion is a significant portion of your grade, attendance is important. Students that do not attend the first day of class will be dropped from class. Missing discussions in particular will adversely affect your discussion grade. In addition, more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a lowered final grade: five points from your final average for each additional day missed beyond the "free" misses. Please note: *you are responsible for all course material regardless of attendance.*

Discussing your grades: Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, I cannot discuss your grade with anyone other than you. Graded assignments will be returned promptly so that you know how you are doing in this course, and you are always welcome to stop by my office to discuss your grades and/or any of your work in this course. In addition, grades will be posted by a 4-digit personal identification number with your consent to do so.

Class Courtesy: It is important for each person enrolled in this course to be treated with, and to treat others, with respect and courtesy. To that end:

1. Come to class on time and stay for the entire class. If you must arrive late or depart early, do so quickly and quietly.
2. Turn your cell phone off (no calls, no text messaging).
3. Come to class prepared to listen and participate (in other words do not do other work, read the newspaper, sleep, or have private conversations while in this class – if you must do these things, then do not come to class).
4. Listen to each other's comments and opinions with an open mind.
5. Avoid using offensive speech. Inflammatory comments that provoke or insult anyone in this class will not be tolerated.

Scholastic Honesty: Each student enrolled is expected to earn her/his grade honestly, without cheating. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses; they will not be tolerated. Cheating of any kind will be dealt with according to the *Student Code of Conduct*. (See www.siu.edu/policies/1i6.shtml for more information.)

ADA Statement: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Disability Support Services at 650-3726.

Schedule and Readings: The schedule listed below is flexible and can be modified over the course of the semester. Readings associated with each topic range from 10-30 pages of reading per week and are posted to Blackboard.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
1/8	Introduction	
1/10	1. Spatial thinking & behavior (background)	
1/15		
1/17	2. Way finding & mental maps; technology	
1/22		
1/24	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 1 & 2
1/29	Field observation #1	Conduct first field observation
1/31	3. Risk & uncertainty	
2/5		
2/7	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 3
2/12	4. Consumer behavior	
2/14		
2/19	Present field observation #1 results	
2/21	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 4
2/26	Midterm prep & exam	<i>Tying it all together</i>
2/28		Midterm exam
3/5 - 3/7	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS!	

3/12	Conduct Field observation #2	Conduct second field observation
3/14	5. Disability & spatial behavior	
3/19		3/19: Project proposals due
3/21	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 5
3/26	6. Personal space & territoriality	
3/28	Present field observation #2 results	
4/2	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 6
4/4	7. Social space & crowding	
4/9		
4/11	Discussion	Complete readings for Discussion 7
4/16	Final project work time	
4/18	Project presentations	Final PowerPoints due on the day of your presentations via email
4/23		
4/25		
4/30	Final exam: 8:00-9:40 am on <u>Tuesday</u>	