GRY 581-001
TEACHING THE GEOGRAPHY OF NEW YORK STATE
(CRN 94298)

Instructor: J. W. Darlington
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No matter how you look at it, New York State is one of the richest and most diverse states in the United States. In all sorts of ways it had or has the honor of being ranked foremost among its forty-nine sister states. From environmental diversity to the nation's largest city, from industrial dynamo to immigrant diversity, from agricultural production to banking and finance New York State stands out. After all, this place most of you call home didn't earn the nickname the "Empire State" for nothing! Furthermore, it is impossible to clearly comprehend how and why these developments took place without having an understanding of the geographic influences.

The intent of this course is to raise the awareness of some of the ways a geographical perspective can shed a different light on aspects of New York State's environmental, cultural, social, and economic landscapes and how this perspective can be utilized in the classroom.

READING MATERIAL:

John H. Thompson, *The Geography of New York State* (hereafter JHT) is on library reserve. Despite being over forty years old, this book remains a standard reference for the State of New York. (For anyone inclined good used copies are available from Abebooks on the net at modest price.)

All other readings are accessible via the library's internet reserve connection (PASSWORD: Darlington481) or via the internet (Google addresses provided, e.g., Brookings, The 2% Solution).

A packet of maps -- three blank, the rest on various thematic topics -- will be passed out on the day of class. Put them in a binder and bring it to class. Study the thematic maps. Make additional copies use them for note taking and studying.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

In accordance with national standards, objectives for this course include:

- Challenging learners to examine, interpret, and analyze the interactions of human beings and their physical environments;
- Challenging learners to consider, compare, and evaluate existing alternative uses of resources and land in communities, regions, nations, and the world;
- Having learners illustrate how individual behaviors and decisions connect with global systems;
- Locating, distinguishing, and describing relationships among varying regional and global patterns of geographic phenomena.
- Having learners explore the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface;
- Helping learners see how human actions modify the physical environment;
- Enhancing learners abilities to ask questions and to acquire, organize, and analyze geographic information so they can answer geographic questions as they engage in the study of substantive geographic content;
- Enabling learners to explain how language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements can facilitate global understanding or cause misunderstanding; and
- Helping learners to explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS:

To do well in this course, a student needs to do the following:

- attend class (Since this is a graduate class any unexcused cut will result in one letter grade deduction in course grade).
- **read** assigned material **prior to** coming to class. This course will only work if you and your fellow students contribute to the discussion and being familiar with the material is essential for that to happen.
- **come to class prepared.**
- **participate** in class discussions, ask questions, offer examples, contribute ideas.

Assigned class presentations associated with exercises and assigned reading material will be evaluated on the basis of the student's ability to identify the major objectives, critical points, and findings of that material and the ability to present that information in a clear, succinct, thoughtful, and organized manner to the class.

Participation will be considered on a weekly basis according to the following three-tier scale of: Active, Limited, None.

Participation in this regard refers to voluntary contributions to class discussion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

It is unfortunate but nonetheless the case that violations of academic integrity are an all too common occurrence on university campuses, including SUNY Cortland. In fairness to the large majority of students who respect themselves and their fellow classmates all transgressions will be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance to the definitions, rules, and procedures set forth in Chapter 340 which begins on page 48 of the *College Handbook.* If you are not already, familiarize yourself with this chapter.

SPECIAL NEEDS:

All students at SUNY Cortland are entitled to be treated and evaluated in a fair manner. Any students with learning or physical disabilities should notify me and Student Disability Services (B-1 Van Hoesen Hall) as soon as possible to ensure that all necessary accommodations are made. Also, any students for whom English is a second language should see me at the beginning of the semester to discuss potential problems and possible solutions.

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Periodically throughout the course information such as test questions, class updates, assignment clarification, and other pertinent announcements will be communicated to you via email. Therefore, it is essential that you check and confirm that the email listed as yours on Banner Web is indeed the one you use. If it is not, **it is your responsibility** to see to it that any corrections or updates are made.

GRADING:

Grades for the course will be assessed according to the following formula:

Map quiz	10%
Vernacular Region Exercise	10%
Mid-term exam:	20%
Town report:	20%
Population Mapping Exercise	10%
Class Participation/discussion:	5%
Final Exam:	25%

There will be a full letter grade deduction penalty imposed for each day a project is late.

There will be no extra credit options, so please do not ask.

A study guide will be passed out before the mid-term and final exams. It will contain, among other information, the specific essay question(s) that will appear verbatim on the respective exams.

The exams themselves will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, map, and essay questions. A few questions may center on photographic slide images previously presented and discussed in class.

Class Schedule

		TOPICS	READINGS
Week 1:	(09-01)	Introduction / Landforms	Darlington, Landforms
Week 2:	(09-08)	Pleistocene landforms / Climate and vegetation	Barclay, Ice ages
Week 3:	(09-15)	Native Americans / Looking at localities	JHT - ch. 6; Starna, Mohawk Iroquois Population; Starna, *et.al.* Northern Iroquois Agriculture
Week 4:	(09-22)	MAP QUIZ / Colonial New York / Post-Revolutionary frontier	JHT - ch. 7; Taylor, Settling the Forest;
Week 5:	(09-29)	Transportation and the economy	JHT - ch. 8 pp. 140-71;
Week 6:	(10-06)	The Erie's impact / Burned-over District VERNACULAR REGION	McKelvey, Erie Canal Mother of Cities; TBA
Week 7:	(10-13)	The Rise of New York City	www. economics.harvard.edu/pub /HIER2073 (Urban Colossus) pp. 1-22
Week 8:	(10-20)	MID-TERM EXAM/ Identifying New York's Culture Regions	
Week 9:	(10-27)	Technology transforms geography / Evolving rural scene	Dinsdale, Spatial Patterns of Technological Change; Darlington, Agriculture
Week 10:	(11-03)	Rise of BIG Industry	JHT – ch. 9; Hurley, Creating Ecological Wastelands
Week 11:	(11-10)	Preserving Wilderness / Making Forests CLASS PRESENTATION / DISCUSSION	Duryea, P. *et. al.*, Our Forest Preserve;Darlington, From Hardscrabble Farms . . .
Week 12:	(11-17)	City Growth / Urban Wilderness / Mass Transit	Riis, How the Other Half Lives; Krase, Vernacular Landscapes in Brooklyn
Week 13:	(12-01)	The Automobile Transforms the State **TOWN REPORT DUE**	TBA
Week 14:	(12-08)	Rise of the Suburbs, GROWTH EXERCISE DUE w CLASS DISCUSSION	www/Brookings, Sprawl Without URBAN Growth; www/ Brookings, The 2% Solution; www/ Brookings, Affluent, but Needy
Week 15:	(12-08)	The Rise of the Rust Belt / Globalization **REGIONAL POPULATION PAPER DUE**	www/City Journal/ Can Buffalo Ever Come Back; Newman, From Love's Canal to Love Canal; www/ NYFRB, A Brain Drain …
Week 16:	(12-15)	FINAL EXAM	