

MBAC CED 5107 Economic Geography

All **economies are uneven** in nature. The capitalist economy in particular is inherently uneven. That is, inequality, expressed socially and geographically, is not only an unfortunate but inevitable output of the system; it is required and actively produced by capitalist development.

This course will examine the economy through a geographical lens. It will seek to uncover how the economy operates at a variety of scales and the implications of for particular places within the economy. In order to do so, the course will offer alternative ways of conceptualizing the economy (and social life more generally).

Upon completing this course, students should be able to understand the economy from a geographical perspective, be able to critique the economy and be able to analyze a particular community within its economic and geographic contexts.

Doug Lionais, PhD

Contact

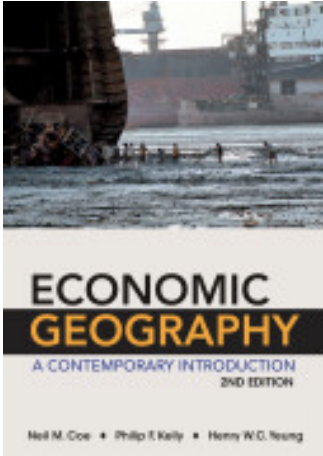
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Text



Coe, N., Kelly, P., & Yeung, H. W. C. (2012). *Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction, 2nd Edition*. Wiley Global Education.

Additional readings will be provided in a course pack.

Evaluation

Item	Weight
Participation	30%
Reflection Paper	10%
Production Network Analysis	30%
Community Analysis	30%

Course Policies

- 1) All assignments must be submitted by the due dates. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per working day late.
- 2) This class will have a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism. Students are expected to know the university policy on plagiarism as detailed in the CBU Academic Regulations (see the Academic Calendar for details). Any submission which has been wholly or partly plagiarized will automatically receive a mark of zero and further action will be taken if warranted.

If you feel somewhat unclear about what plagiarism is you should read through the relevant section of the Academic Calendar (page 37 of the current version).

<http://www.cbu.ca/sites/cbu.ca/files/pdfs/current-calendar.pdf>

York University also has a helpful tutorial on plagiarism that you may wish to review.

http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/

- 3) The functioning language in the classroom will be English. All in-class and small-group discussion should be conducted in English.

Student Accommodation

Students requiring special accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Support and resources for the differently-abled are available through the Jennifer Keeping Accessibility Centre at www.cbu.ca/jkac

Module Outlines

All supplementary readings are supplied through Moodle. You are expected to read all readings prior to class and to have prepared notes on each.

I - Introducing Economic Geographies

GOAL – To become aware of the discipline of economic geography, its history, its purpose and relevance to CED.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 1

II – Understanding the Capitalist Economy

GOAL – To understand the key components of the capitalist economy and how they interact.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpts 2 & 3



III - Economic Actors I: The State.

Goal – To consider the various roles of the state, at multiple scales, in the production of economies and economic geographies.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 4

IV - Economic Actors II: The Corporation.

Goal – To consider the various roles of the corporation in the production of economies and economic geographies.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 10

V - Economic Actors III: Labour Power

Goal – To consider the role of labour in producing economic geographies.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 6

VI – Finance and Uneven Development

GOAL – To understand the process of uneven development and the role of financial capital as a driver of uneven economic geographies.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 7

Further Reading

Harvey, D. (2011). Roepke Lecture in Economic Geography—Crises, Geographic Disruptions and the Uneven Development of Political Responses. *Economic Geography*, 87(1), 1–22. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-8287.2010.01105.x>

Hudson, R. (2016). Rising powers and the drivers of uneven global development. *Area Development and Policy*, 0(0), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23792949.2016.1227271>

VII –Commodity Chains.

GOAL – To understand the principles of commodity chains. What happens between raw material and the shelf?

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 8

Further Reading

Sweatshops You're your Clothes:

http://www.salon.com/2013/03/21/sweatshops_still_make_your_clothes/

Commodity Chain sleuthing and Trump's Ties:

<http://www.racked.com/2016/10/5/13165868/donald-trump-china-factories-neckties>

VIII – The Environment and the Economy

GOAL –To understand the role of the natural environment in the economy.

Read:

Economic Geography – Chpt 5

IPCC Assessment Report 5 – Summary:

https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/wg2/ar5_wgII_spm_en.pdf

IX - Spatial Variation I: Descriptive Measures

Goal – To explore measures of spatial variation that demonstrate the theories of uneven development explored in previous modules.

Lab Activity: Descriptive Statistics

X - Spatial Variation II: Geographical Tools

GOAL – To become aware of the empirical tools of measuring and describing spatial variation.

Lab Activity: Mapping

XI –Alternative Economic Geographies

GOAL – To explore alternative ways of thinking and practicing the economy that can lead to alternative economic geographies.

Read:

Gibson-Graham, J.K., et al (2017) Cultivating Community Economies. Next Systems Project. <http://thenextsystem.org/cultivating-community-economies/>

Student Deliverables

Handing in Assignments

All hand-in assignments should conform to proper academic writing styles. Please use the APA style guide for references. A short introduction to APA can be found here:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Please submit in MS Word format (.doc or .docx). PDFs are not acceptable.

Please label your file with your name and assignment title. For example: 'Joan Smith – MBAC 5107 reflection paper'.

Assignment 1 – Reflection Paper

Individual

Write a reflection paper on Modules 1 and 2 including the material in the assigned readings and lectures. The first two modules focus on understanding economic geography as a discipline and, through that perspective, understanding the economy. Reflect on how has the material challenged or changed your thinking regarding what is the economy? Your paper should critically engage with the material and demonstrate that you have thought deeply about the issue and describe how and why it has changed your opinions (or not). You need not address the entirety of the material; indeed you would be advised to focus on one issue or topic that particularly interested or provoked you. Note: the intention is to describe how the material impacted you, not to summarize the material.

Length: Maximum 650 words (approx. 2 pages).

Due Date: June 28, 2019

Assignment 2 – The Community in the Production Network

Individual

Using the production network perspective, identify a commodity produced in and exported out of a specific community (i.e. lobster fished in Inverness, potatoes farmed in PEI, tar sands oil in northern Alberta). Trace the production network that the product travels through and discuss the impacts and value of that chain to the community you have selected. You should seek to uncover what is hidden behind the commodity. Completing the assignment will require you to map the firms involved in the production process as well as any related government or NGO organizations (who are they and where are they located – a diagram is expected). You should note that the assignment is about the whole network, not one particular company. In your discussion, you should attempt to answer the following questions (see your text for more guidance).

1. What **value** is created in the selected community, how is it created, and where does it accumulate. Here you may wish talk about the labour process involved in local production and ownership of the firm.
2. Who has **power** in the network and how does that impact the community?

NOTE: You **cannot** use the iPhone or the examples we did in the mini-class assignments.

Length: Maximum 3000 words.

Due Date: September 16, 2019

Assignment 3 - Analysis of a Selected Community

Group

In a group of 3 or 4 people, perform an economic geographical analysis of a selected community. This should involve a descriptive examination of some of its main indicators, a description of its economic history, and a description of its current role in the global economy. While it is not the purpose of this assignment to develop an economic development plan for your selected community, your report should be useful for someone who wished to do so. You should apply concepts from both the theoretical and the applied components of the class. Applied concepts you could employ include tools such as location quotients, shift-share analysis and mapping. Connections to the theoretical components of the class would include describing the community's economic history, and explaining how it fits into global production networks.

Length: Maximum 4000 words.

Due Date: October 18, 2019

Submit by email, make sure all group members are cc'd on the email.

This assignment usually involves some graphs and charts. See here for helpful tips when creating your charts:

<http://flowingdata.com/2010/07/22/7-basic-rules-for-making-charts-and-graphs/>