



GEOG 4210: Geography of Utah

Spring 2015 Syllabus

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Office hours: Wednesday 1 – 3 pm or by appointment
Office: Natural Resources (NR) 218

Classroom: Biology & Natural Resources (BNR) 360
Schedule: Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00–10:15 am

Course description

In Geography of Utah we will explore the varied physical, cultural, economic, and social processes that shape the landscape of Utah, focusing on how the interactions of human and natural systems have created Utah's modern geography. This course is primarily a discussion-based seminar that will involve group activities, papers and presentations, and field trips. Students will engage in research projects that will draw from their own experiences and observations of living in Utah.

By emphasizing geographic patterns and processes, this course will move beyond simple memorization of geographic trivia. Instead, we will focus on learning to think geographically by closely observing and thinking critically about the forces that are shaping the Utah landscape.

What is Geography?

“Geography is the science of space and place on Earth’s surface. Its subject matter is the physical and human phenomena that make up the world’s environments and places. Geography asks us to look at the world as a whole, to understand the connections between places, to recognize that the local affects the global and vice versa. The power and beauty of geography lie in seeing, understanding, and appreciating the web of relationships among people, places, and environments” (National Council for Geographic Education).

Course objectives

1. Learn fundamental principles of spatial thinking, geographic theory and methods, and geographic literacy as applied to Utah and the Intermountain region.
2. Develop skills in written and oral expression.
3. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
4. Acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.

Course expectations

This is a reading-intensive course. You will be expected to read all assigned texts before each class session. Much of the class will be devoted to critically analyzing and discussing the assigned texts, which will include book chapters, journal articles, online sources, and maps. You should read critically: question the authors’ assumptions, the questions they ask or issues they raise, their methodology, and the conclusions they draw.

As with any university-level course, you will be expected to write professionally with proper spelling and grammar. All secondary sources must be properly cited and referenced using a standard author-date style for

in-text citations and references, such as APA or Chicago style. A helpful guide to style can be found at the Purdue writing lab (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). I strongly recommend using citation management software such as Zotero (free: <https://www.zotero.org/>) or EndNote to streamline the process of including citations and references in your papers.

For students who may be unsure about their writing I strongly suggest making an appointment with a writing tutor at the USU Writing Center (<http://writing.usu.edu/>).

Course materials

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Farmer, Jared. *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape*. First Edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008. (Available at the USU campus store).
2. A large-format paper map of Utah. There are two acceptable options, either:
 - a. The UDOT official Utah highway map. This is free at the locations listed on this page: www.udot.utah.gov/index.php/tid=346. It may also be available at the Cache Valley Visitors Bureau, 199 N Main St. Logan, UT, (435) 755-1890; or the Logan Ranger District office, 1500 East Highway 89, Logan, UT 84321, (435) 755-3620.
OR
 - b. The National Geographic Utah Guide Map. This can be purchased for less than \$10 on Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/159775014X/>) or the National Geographic store (<http://shop.nationalgeographic.com/ngs/product/maps/travel-and-hiking-maps/u.s.-state-and-region-maps/utah-guide-map>)

Additional required readings and maps will be posted online on Canvas.

CANVAS

We will use Canvas (usu.instructure.com) throughout the course for announcements, distributing materials, submitting assignments, group collaboration, and grade reporting. It is your responsibility to use the Canvas system. Questions about Canvas can be directed to the USU IT service desk (it.usu.edu, servicedesk@usu.edu, 435-797-4357).

COURSE FEE

There is a course fee of \$35. The course fee will be used to cover transportation on field trips.

Course structure

This is a seminar-style course, which means the format will consist mainly of discussion sessions supplemented by short lectures and student presentations. Course sessions may also include audiovisual material, such as videos, podcasts, and interactive maps.

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSIONS

You will be assigned to small groups to discuss each day's assigned readings. I expect all students to participate actively in these discussions. Discussions should focus on major questions or themes that group members have identified from their critical reading of the material as well as prompts from the instructor. Each group member will contribute to the discussion and may also have a specific assigned role for each day. Roles include: facilitator, recorder, timekeeper, and spokesperson.

Role responsibilities include:

- **Facilitator:** moderates group discussion, keeps the group on task.
- **Recorder:** takes notes summarizing group discussions and conclusions.
- **Timekeeper:** keeps the group aware of time constraints and deadlines.
- **Spokesperson:** serves as group representative to the class or instructor, summarizing the group's discussion and/or conclusions.

FIELD TRIPS

We will take one or two field trips during the semester, weather and schedules permitting. Students will complete an assignment for each field trip. Details of the field trips will be discussed in class.

Assignments and Grading

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In preparation for each class you will be asked to write three questions for discussion based on the readings for each session (no more than 300 words total). For example, these could include questions about the content of the material, questions about issues that the material raises, or questions for others in the group about how they interpreted the material. You should submit your questions on Canvas at least 12 hours prior to each class and bring your questions to class for your small-group discussion.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attending each class session is necessary to achieve a satisfactory grade in this course. If you miss class, do not e-mail the instructor to ask what you missed. It is your responsibility to obtain materials or notes from other students and Canvas. The instructor will take notes on each student's participation in discussions and assign a grade based on the amount and quality of the contribution. The participation grade may also include short activities assigned during class. In practice, a good participation grade is easily achieved if you have completed the assigned readings, responded to questions about the readings, and are prepared for class discussions.

QUIZZES

Short in-class or online quizzes on assigned readings, maps, and material discussed in class may be assigned during the semester. Quizzes will be included in the attendance and participation grade.

“BETTER KNOW A COUNTY” SHORT PRESENTATION

Each student will choose one of Utah's 29 counties and prepare a short oral presentation (about 5-6 minutes) on one interesting aspect of the geography of the county to share with the rest of the class. Presentations should not be a summary of the county as a whole, but should focus on specific feature of the county's geography (or a specific place within the county) that would be of interest to the class. For example, a presentation on Washington County might focus on why it became known as “Utah's Dixie,” or a presentation on Summit County might focus on how its landscape has been shaped by a combination of the mining industry and the tourist industry.

Presentations will start in the fifth week of the semester, with one or two presentations per class session.

Each student must schedule an individual meeting with the instructor no later than one week before his or her presentation to receive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Students will choose their preferred counties during the second week of class.

CRITICAL REFLECTION PAPERS

You will complete two short papers (about 6-8 pages double-spaced) over the course of the semester in which you will provide a critical reflection on an assigned topic, drawing from course readings and outside sources. **The first paper will be due on Feb. 24 and the second paper will be due April 2.** Instructions for the papers will be provided in class.

CAPSTONE GROUP PROJECT: ATLAS CHAPTER AND PRESENTATION

The capstone group project will be an in-depth analysis of one aspect or issue related to Utah's geography that goes beyond the material discussed in class. This may include original data collected by the group or analysis of existing data (such as interviews with Utah residents or analysis of historic photos or newspaper articles).

Groups will be assigned in the second week of the semester, and you will work with the instructor to identify the topic of your presentation. **A 1-page project proposal will be due on Feb. 5.**

The goal of this project will be to create a unique contribution to a class “Atlas of Utah” composed of each group's findings. The atlas chapter should include audiovisual materials such as map(s) or videos, photos, audio, etc. Each atlas chapter will comprise a paper (minimum 10 pages) describing the group's project along with the audiovisual materials. **The chapter will be due on April 14.**

Groups will present their projects in **25-minute presentations during the second-to-last week of the semester.**

RUBRIC

Students will be responsible for the following work:

	Percent of grade
Written discussion questions from readings	15%
Participation in discussions and quizzes	15%
Better-know-a-county presentation	15%
Capstone group project	25%
Critical reflection papers and field trip assignments	30%
	100%

GRADING SCALE

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
%	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	60-69	< 60

Course policies

COMMUNICATION WITH THE INSTRUCTOR

The best way to contact me is during my office hours, via e-mail, or via a Canvas message. I will try to respond to e-mails on the same day during the week.

LATE WORK

It is your responsibility to turn in all work on time. Grades for assignments will be reduced by 10 percent for each day late. No late work will be accepted more than 2 weeks after the due date.

USE OF COMPUTERS, TABLETS, AND MOBILE PHONES

Turn off or silence phones during class. Computers and tablets may be used only for taking notes or activities directly relevant to class material. Students should respect the rights of others to learn and minimize the possibility of distraction from the use of electronic devices. If the use of electronics presents a distraction to others during class, the student will be asked to stop using the device. If issues persist, the student will be asked to leave the class.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Everyone has the right to feel comfortable in the classroom. We are all adults in a college classroom, and we must be open to critical and academic discussion on topics that we may or may not agree with. I will treat you with respect, and I expect you to extend respect to me as well as to your classmates.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to produce original work. Plagiarism or falsification of any kind will be subject to disciplinary action. Offences will be referred to Utah State University Admissions office. The USU policy for academic honesty can be found at usu.edu/student-services/student-code/article6.cfm. Please review this document to understand the Utah State University policy on academic honesty. If you have questions or concerns about the policy, please contact your instructor or academic advisor.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism includes knowingly “representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged used of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” The penalties for plagiarism are severe. They include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment, probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, and denial or revocation of degrees.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the Disability Resource Center (435-797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor.

Course schedule

Your learning is my primary concern, so I may modify the schedule and assigned readings based on your progress during the course. Changes and readings to be determined (TBD) will be posted on Canvas.

Date	Wk	Topic	Required reading
Jan 8	Th 1	Course introduction and orientation	
13	T 2	Geographic literacy and themes of geography	Fisher, "Physical Geography of Utah." Farmer, "Introduction," p. 1-16 Maps: Utah Elevation, Utah Surface Water.
15	Th	Reading the Utah landscape	Lewis (1979), "Axioms for Reading the Landscape." Stegner (1942), excerpt from <i>Mormon Country</i> p. 21-51.
20	T 3	Origins of Utah	Grayson (2011) ch. 1 & ch. 2, p. 33-40 (section titled "The Ethnographic Great Basin") Fremont (1845) report excerpts. Maps: Escalante (1777); Fremont (1845); Fremont (1848).
22	Th	Origins of Utah (cont'd)	Farmer, p. 19-53.
27	T	Utah and the Mormon Culture Region	Meinig (1965), "The Mormon Culture Region."
29	Th 4	Utah and the Mormon Culture Region (cont'd)	Parera (2005), "Mormon Town Planning." Otterstrom and Jackson (2011), "The State of Deseret: The Creation of the Mormon Landscape in the Western U.S."
Feb 3	T	Human-environment geography in Utah <i>County presentations begin in class.</i>	Farmer, p. 54-138.
5	Th 5	Human-environment geography in Utah (cont'd) <i>NO CLASS – Dr. Howe at conference. Readings and discussion questions still required.</i> <i>Group project proposal due on Canvas.</i>	Jackson (1978), "Mormon Perception and Settlement." Farmer, p. 141-174.
10	T 6	Land ownership and land use patterns in Utah Guest speaker: Mark Brunson	Jackson (1995), "Federal Lands in the Mountainous West" Canham (2014) Salt Lake Tribune article Maps: Utah Land Ownership, National Atlas map of federal lands
12	Th	Place names and boundaries	Farmer, "Renaming the Land," p. 241-280; Stegner, excerpt from <i>Beyond the Hundredth Meridian</i> ;
17	T	NO CLASS (Monday class schedule)	
19	Th 7	Place names and boundaries (cont'd)	Comeaux (1982); Jackson and Hudman (1987); MacKinnon (2003)
24	T 8	Water and place <i>First critical reflection paper due on Canvas</i>	Bedford (2005), "Utah's Great Salt Lake." Trentelman (2011), "Place Dynamics in a Mixed Amenity Place." Map: Stansbury 1852.
26	Th	Perspectives on place	Solorzano (1998) TBD
Mar 3	T 9	Utah's urban geography	Video: "Salt Lake City: A Downtown Story"
5	Th	Population growth and change in rural Utah	Shumway and Otterstrom (2001); Winkler et al. (2007)
10	T	NO CLASS (Spring break)	
11	Th	NO CLASS (Spring break)	
17	T 10	Physical geography of Utah Guest speaker: Mark Larese-Casanova	Map: Ecoregions of Utah
19	Th	Environmental change	Gillies (2013) video; Schwinning et al. (2008).
24	T	Transportation geography	Alexander, "Mining and Railroads" Strack, "Railroads in Utah" Bartholomew, "Utah's Interurbans" Map: Cram's 1901 map of Utah
26	Th 11	Transportation and economic geography	Leonard, Glen M. "Suburbia and the Freeway" in Utah History to Go Utah Unified Transportation Plan 2011-2040
31	T	Economic geography	Shumway and Jackson (2008)

				Walholtz (2010) "Water fallout" <i>High Country News</i>
Apr	2	Th	Economic geography (cont'd) <i>Second critical reflection paper due on Canvas</i>	TBD
	7	T	12	Current issues in Utah geography (Energy) Utah profile page on www.eia.gov/state/?sid=UT Renewable energy in Utah: energy.utah.gov/renewable-energy
	9	Th	Current issues in Utah geography (Air quality) Frosch (2013) NYTimes article on Utah air quality Pemberton (2013) radio clip with C. Arden Pope Tribby et al. (2013) "Do air quality alerts reduce traffic?"	
	14	T	13	Group presentations
	16	Th		Group presentations
	21	T	NO CLASS (professor at AAG conference)	
	23	Th	14	NO CLASS (professor at AAG conference) <i>Group projects due by 5 PM Friday, Apr. 11</i>