

Geography 15000-04: World Regions in Global Context

Spring 2025

Hybrid Course:

Mondays & Thursdays 10:00AM - 11:15AM

Mondays - online via zoom: <https://gc-cuny-edu.zoom.us/j/89778575692?pwd=2QZ5YT3AlaJRms4b8bSaBiqdhDvTlm.1>
Thursdays - HN 510

Instructor: Michele Cannon

Email: mcannon@gradcenter.cuny.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:30AM-12:30PM

Course Overview

In this course, students will survey the socio-political and economic makeup of global world regions, exploring throughout the applicability of several key concepts in critical geography such as *racial capitalism* and *uneven development*. Moving around the world, we will consider how different regions interact, as well as the link between space and societies. We will also consider how the unique histories of specific places are tied to broader, more general experiences, and vice versa—in other words, how the particular and the universal are indelibly linked through globalization. By the end of the course, students will have begun developing the tools to answer what Ruth Wilson Gilmore identifies as the fundamental question of the geographer: “Why do things happen where they happen?”

All required readings and materials will be provided via Brightspace.

Grading

Student-led discussions (20%): In groups of 8-10, students will participate in a fishbowl-style discussion. Each student will participate once during the semester. The discussion will center on the readings and other materials that correlate to that particular week’s region or topic. On discussion days, students who are “inside the fishbowl” are expected to come to class prepared not to *answer* questions but to *ask* them of other students in the discussion group (and the professor). Students outside the fishbowl will listen and take notes. Partway through the class, we will open the discussion to everyone; however, only students inside the fishbowl will be graded based on their level of **preparation and participation**. Keep in mind that you will not be graded on “right” answers. Rather, you will be evaluated on your willingness and ability to engage your curiosity, intellect, resourcefulness, and listening skills. Finally, it is important to be respectful of your fellow students, even when you may disagree with their perspective.

Students will sign up for their desired discussion week during the first 2 weeks of the course using this [google document](#). **After Feb. 7**, please speak with me to join or change discussion groups.

Midterm (40%) and Final (40%): As a midterm and final assignment, students will write one essay and complete one multiple choice exam. Students may choose in which order to do these assignments.

Exam: The exam will be made up of forty multiple-choice questions relating to the texts and content covered in class sessions, both lectures and discussions. It will be open book, open note, and administered remotely through Brightspace. If taken at the midterm period, the exam will include material from Units 1 – 6. If taken during the finals period, the exam will include material from Unit 1 and Units 7 – 11.

Essay: Students will choose two texts from the syllabus, using one as a theoretical framework through which to read the other and write a 1000-word essay that explores one or more of our course's key concepts. If choosing this option, **consult me about your chosen texts for approval no later than March 17 (midterm) or April 21 (final)**. You may do this in person after class at office hours, or over email. Essays will be **due on May 21** (by midnight), but students are encouraged to submit them at any time; for both your sake and mine, don't wait until May! You can include other source material if you would like. **Don't forget to cite your sources – both in text and in a works cited page.** You can use any standardized citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.), as long as you use one. If you have doubts about how to do this, the [OWL Purdue](#) website is very thorough. Finally, **read the “note on AI”** on the following pages and respect those guidelines when writing.

*Attendance is not evaluated as part of the final grade. However, the exams will include material from class lectures and discussions as well as course readings and texts.

Grading Distribution

A+	97.5-100 percent
A	92.5-97.4
A-	90-92.4
B+	87.5-89.9
B	82.5-87.4
B-	80-82.4
C+	77.5-79.9
C	70-77.4
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Policy on the Giving of IN as a Grade - No incompletes (IN) for this course are given unless there are exceptional and documented individual circumstances. If you miss an exam, you must provide a documented reason and make arrangements to make up the work. If you have a documented extended absence due to illness or family emergency, you must make arrangements to complete an appropriate alternative assignment to the in-class discussions.

Credit/No Credit Policy - To receive a CR/NC you must have completed all course requirements (exams, quizzes, etc.) and request the CR/NC option prior to beginning the final exam. Based on your final score you will be assigned a letter grade based on the numerical standards that can be found on the Hunter College homepage at <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/advising/how-to/filecredit-no-credit-cr-nc> (where you can also download a copy of the Credit/No Credit form) or in the undergraduate catalog at <http://catalog.hunter.cuny.edu/content.php?catoid=37&navoid=10489>.

Communication with instructor

If there is anything you would like to discuss with me, I encourage you to speak to me in person after class on Thursdays, which is when I hold office hours for students. Or, you can direct questions about assignments or other course related questions/comments to **the Q&A discussion board**. It is likely that someone else has the same question, and this way everyone will be able to see questions and answers. If you need to email me, include **Geo 150** in the subject line, which will filter your email out of my general inbox and into the class folder. This will help me respond to you more quickly. Otherwise, your communication might get lost among the many, many emails I receive every day. Finally, please consult the syllabus and Brightspace before getting in touch, as I update course information and content regularly.

Learning Environment

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. You are expected to treat participants in the course with courtesy and respect in all interactions.

Commitment to a Safe Space

More than one-third of CUNY students were born in another country. Many more have immediate family members who were. I am committed to doing everything I can to ensure that every student, regardless of immigration status, is safe in this classroom. The university's [website](#) affirms, "As the nation's largest urban public university system, CUNY is dedicated to educating and advocating for the immigrant students and families who make up the lifeblood of our city and state." I will not create or maintain records that could be used by federal agencies to implicate members of our community as undocumented. The Professional Staff Congress (the faculty and staff union) provides important links to [free legal support and other resources](#) through the union's Immigrant Solidarity Working Group. CUNY has an extensive [list of legal and other resources](#) to support undocumented students. Students may also consult the "[Know Your Rights](#)" information provided by the New York Immigration Coalition.

Names and Pronouns

Everyone has the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity. In this class, you will have the chance to indicate the name that you prefer to be called and to identify pronouns with which you would like to be addressed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly and support classmates in doing so as well.

ADA Policy

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: [\(212\) 772- 4857](#) or [\(212\) 650-3230](#).

Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are resources available at Hunter College to assist you. The Counseling and Wellness Services division at Student Affairs offer free and confidential short-term counseling to students. Please visit their website for all contact information: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/cws/counselingservices/welcome>.

Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off

campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

For the full CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/diversityandcompliance/repository/files/cuny-policy-on-sexualmisconduct.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

An Important Note on “AI”

If you are struggling with an assignment to the point of using ChatGPT or other such software, please consult with me instead: I will be happy to help you make sense of what is being asked and think together about how you might answer. I would rather your work reflect your own thoughts, work and voice than it be ‘polished’ or ‘correct’. It is not difficult to tell when students have used AI without processing what is generated alongside other resources and writing in their own words. If I see AI reflected in your work I will not hesitate to grade harshly, or even assign a zero.

Course Schedule

Syllabus schedule and course materials are subject to change in which case students will be given advance notice from the instructor and changes will be noted in a revised syllabus as well as on Brightspace.

Week 1

- Monday, January 27 – Course introduction

- Thursday, January 30 – Unit 1 Lecture: Geographical theories and concepts

Week 2

- Monday, February 3 – Unit 1 Lecture: Geographical theories and concepts
- Thursday, February 6 – Unit 1 Discussion: Geographical theories and concepts

Neil Smith, “Ch 3: The Production of Space” in *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*, pp 92–131. University of Georgia Press, 1990.

Anne Godlewska, “Ch 2: Napoleon's geographers (1797-1815) : imperialists and soldiers of modernity” in *Geography and Empire*, Blackwell, 1994.

Trevor Paglen, “Introduction” pp 3 - 21, “Ch 6: Unmarked Graves” pp 243 - 289 in *Blank Spots on a Map*

Week 3

- Monday, February 10 – Unit 2 Lecture: Europe
- Thursday, February 13 – Unit 2 Discussion: Europe

Cedric Robinson, “Ch 1: Racial Capitalism” and “Ch 2: The English Working Class as the Mirror of Production,” *Black Marxism* , University of North Carolina Press, 1983.

Silvia Federici. *Caliban and the Witch*. First edition. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia, 2004. – chapters/pages tbd

Silvia Federici: [Social Reproduction Theory Signature Lecture: "Patriarchy of the wage"](#)

Week 4

- **Tuesday, February 18** – Unit 3 Lecture: The Russian Federation, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasus (College closed on Monday, February 17)
- Thursday, February 20 – Unit 3 Discussion: The Russian Federation, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasus

China Miéville, “The Prehistory of 1917,” *October: the story of the Russian revolution*

Video: Johnny Harris, [“Why Georgia fears being swallowed by Russia”](#)

Video: Crash Course European History #35, [“The Russian Revolution Russian Revolution and Civil War”](#)

Video: Vox, ["It's time to draw borders on the Arctic Ocean"](#)

Popular Front podcast, "Real Trouble in the Arctic" Two links:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/real-trouble-in-the-arctic/id1364539980?i=1000659232264>

<https://player.fm/series/popular-front/real-trouble-in-the-arctic>

Week 5

- Monday, February 24 – Unit 4 Lecture: Middle East and North Africa
- Thursday, February 27 – Unit 4 Discussion: Middle East and North Africa

Laleh Khalili, Ch 5 "Mechanic, Merchant, King" and Ch 8 "The Bounties of War" in *Sinews of War and Trade*

Antony Loewenstein, *Palestine Laboratory* : "Introduction" and "Chapter 1: Selling Weapons to Anyone Who Wants Them"

Hiba Bou Akar, *For the War yet to Come : Planning Beirut's Frontiers*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2018. pp 2-10 in "Prologue"

Week 6

- Monday, March 3 – Unit 5 Lecture: Sub-Saharan Africa
- Thursday, March 6 – **No class, classes follow a Wednesday schedule**

Week 7

- Monday, March 10 – Lecture: special topic TBD
- Thursday, March 13 – Unit 5 Discussion Sub-Saharan Africa

Walter Rodney, Ch. 7 "The Historical Roots of African Underdevelopment," *Decolonial Marxism*

Amilcar Cabral, Ch. 14 "The Weapon of Theory and Ch. 15 "National Culture" (pgs 119 – 156), *Unity and Struggle*

Ruth First, "The Limits of Nationalism" pp 45 – 56 and "The Mozambican Miners: A Study in the Export of Labour" pp 57 – 73, *Selected Writings*

Week 8

- Monday, March 17 – Unit 6 Lecture: The U.S. and Canada
- Thursday, March 20 – Unit 6 Discussion: The U.S. and Canada

○ **Deadline for midterm essay topic and text approval**

Manu Karuka, Ch. 3 “Railroad colonialism,” Ch. 4 “Lakota,” and **Ch. 5, “Chinese,”** *Empire’s Tracks*

Sara Clarke Kaplan, “Introduction: Toward a Black Feminist Politics of Freedom,” pp 1 – 28 in *The Black Reproductive*, University of Minnesota Press, 2021.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Ch 14 “Abolition Geography and the Problem of Innocence,” pp 225 - 240 in *Futures of Black Radicalism*. Johnson, Gaye Theresa, and Alex Lubin, eds. London ; Verso, 2017.

[Geographies of Racial Capitalism](#) with Ruth Wilson Gilmore – An Antipode Foundation film

Deepa Kumar, “Terrorcraft: empire and the making of the racialised terrorist threat,” *Race & Class*, Vol. 62(2) 34–60

Week 9

- Monday, March 24 – Unit 7 Lecture: Latin America and the Caribbean
 - **Midterm exam available on Brightspace**
- Thursday, March 27 – Unit 7 Discussion **CLASS WILL BE HELD ONLINE**

Jason Colby, Ch 1 “Enterprise and Expansion, 1848-1885” and Ch 5 “The Rise of Hispanic Nationalism, 1921-1929”, *The Business of Empire*

Fernando Tormos-Aponte, “[Neoliberal Disaster Management Is Forcing Puerto Ricans to Create Their Own Recovery](#),” *Jacobin*, Oct. 1, 2022 ***Read before listening to Code Switch podcast**

Code Switch, “[Bad Bunny, Reggaeton and Resistance](#)”

Week 10

- Monday, March 31 – **NO CLASS**
- Thursday, April 3 – Lecture: special topic TBD
 - **Midterms due (essay or exam)**

Week 11

- Monday, April 7 – Unit 8 Lecture: East Asia
- Thursday, April 10 – Unit 8 Discussion: East Asia

Pun Ngai, “Introduction” and Ch 2 “Marching from the Village,” *Made in China*

Janet Abu-Lughod, Ch 10 “All the Silks of China” and Ch 11 “Restructuring the Thirteenth Century World System” pgs 316 - 372, *Before European Hegemony*

Charlie Hailey, “Ballast” in *Making Things International 1* (pp. 98-). University of Minnesota Press.

Spring Recess April 12 – April 20

Week 12

- Monday, April 21 – Unit 9 Lecture: South Asia
- Thursday, April 24 – Unit 9 Discussion South Asia
 - **Deadline for final essay topic and texts approval**

India and agriculture :

1. Morning Edition excerpt “‘Green Revolution’ Trapping India's Farmers In Debt” – 7 minute listen: <https://www.npr.org/2009/04/14/102944731/green-revolution-trapping-indias-farmers-in-debt>

2. Vox Video (watched in class on Tuesday) “India’s huge farmer protests, explained” (8 minute video):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHpZV7ro7IU>

Indian nationalism and post-colonial conflict:

3. Al Jazeera English Video “The creation of modern India” (5 minute video):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_FSUcZfcx0

4. Al Jazeera English Start Here “What’s going on in Kashmir?” (8 minute video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nNwwX2s1IM>

5. Throughline podcast “Savarkar and India” (30 minute listen)
<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/11/814602594/savarkars-india>

Afghanistan after the US:

Up First podcast “Left Behind, a War Story” (24 minute listen)
<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/18/1087658063/left-behind-a-war-story>

Week 13

- Monday, April 28 – Unit 10 Lecture: Southeast Asia

- Thursday, May 1 – Unit 10 Discussion: Southeast Asia

Empire Podcast Ep. 176, “The Vietnam War: The Rise of Ho Chi Min”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ct_V1j-7qW0

Wesley Attewell, “Just-in-Time Imperialism: The Logistics Revolution and the Vietnam War”

Lamb et al., “Trading Sand, Undermining Lives: Omitted Livelihoods in the Global Trade in Sand”

Week 14

- Monday, May 5 – Unit 11 Lecture: Oceania
- Thursday, May 8 – Unit 11 Discussion: Oceania

Alison Mountz, “The Enforcement Archipelago”

Up First podcast, “Mining’s New Frontier”

<https://www.npr.org/2024/11/17/1213718585/minings-new-frontier>

Hannah Della Bosca. “Comfort in Chaos: A Sensory Account of Climate Change Denial.” *Environment and Planning. D, Society & Space*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2023, pp. 170–87.

Week 15 Course review

- Monday, May 12 – Course review/TBD
- Thursday, May 15 – Course review/TBD
- Friday, May 16 – **Final exam available on Brightspace**

Week 16 Finals week

- Wednesday, May 21– **Final exam or essay due by 11:59p**