

# Geography of New York State

Prof. Anthony Grande



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## SYLLABUS

### OBJECTIVES

- 1. To learn about the geography of NYS – its physical environment, the distribution of its people and their activities, and the interrelationships between the people and the environment in NYS - and to apply geographic principles and reasoning to a real world situation where NYS is used as an example of regional analysis.
- 2. To explore, navigate through and use the geographic information available on the Internet, especially that provided by the State of New York.
- 3. To learn how to interpret this information geographically.
- 4. For those in the education sequence, in addition to 1 and 2 above, to gather and use information about NYS within the guidelines of the national geography standards for presentation at a grade-specific level.

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## SYLLABUS

### HUNTER COLLEGE GEOGRAPHY

Geography of New York State  
GEOG 260 (code 1439)  
GEOG 62151 (code 3811)  
Tu/Th 5:35 – 6:50 PM

- Instructor:** Anthony F. Grande
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- Office:** Room 1032 North Building
- Telephone:** (212) 772-5265 or 5266
- Mailbox:** Geography Dept., Rm. 1006 North Bldg.
- Office Hours:** Before and after class; also by appointment.
- Classroom:** Room 1022 North Bldg.
- Computer Lab:** Rm 1090B North Bldg

### GRADING for GEOG 260/62151 students

- 1. **Exams (28%)**
  - 2 exams (midterm and final) worth 14 pts each.
- 2. **Thematic exercises (72%)**
  - 12 required internet-based homework exercises worth 6 pts each.
- 3. **Extra Credit Options**
  - Extra credit take-home question for the midterm and final exams.
  - Extra credit definitions on exams.
  - Extra credit thematic exercises.
  - Extra credit 5 page research paper
- 5. **Class participation**
  - Can only benefit your grade.
- 6. **Late submission of an assignment will lower the earned score.**

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## SYLLABUS

### RESPONSIBILITIES

- Content of all lectures, reading assignments and handouts.
- Have Internet access to Geography Department's home-page.
- Attend class lectures.
- Take all exams and submit all required work for grading.
- Get approval of topic for any work.
- Neat presentation of homework, extra credit and exams.
- Knowledge of college rules and regulations -- which are strictly enforced.
- Awareness that cheating and plagiarism are grounds for failure and disciplinary action by the College.
- Registration with the **AccessAbility** Office to qualify for accommodation.

### CALENDAR for Fall 2012

- Aug. 28 First NYS class meeting.
- Sept. 18 NO class
- Sept. 25 NO class
- Oct. 04 Meet in the HC Library (tentative)
- Oct. 16 Midterm exam (tentative date)
  - > Last day to hand in Part I extra credit exercises.
  - > Last day to hand in the extra credit for the Midterm Exam.
- Nov. 22 Thanksgiving Day. NO classes.
- Dec. 11 Scheduled last NYS lecture.
- Dec. 18 **FINAL EXAM 5:20 - 7:20PM**
  - > Last day to hand in Part II extra credit exercises.
  - > Last day to hand in the extra credit for the Final Exam.
  - Don't make Holiday Travel plans for this day!

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## List of Topics

### 1. Introduction

- Course requirements
- Fundamental themes

### 2. Map Reading and Interpretation

- Intro to the GeoLab
- New York in maps

### 3. Physical Characteristics of NYS

- Paleogeography, physiographic regions, seismicity, glaciation
- Mineral deposits, land reclamation
- Climate controls, climate regions, climate change, air quality, wind energy
- Soil
- Water Resources: surface, groundwater, coastal zone, water quality

### 4. MIDTERM EXAM

### 5. Historical Geography of NYS

- Native Americans in pre-European times
- European "discovery," exploration, settlement
- NYS and the American Revolution
- Post-revolutionary period: settlement pattern, canals; railroads, industrialization, urbanization

### 6. Population Geography

- Trends
- Aging of NYS
- Health issues

### 7. Rural NYS

- Biozones, land classification system; wildlife; conservation issues
- Forestry
- Agriculture

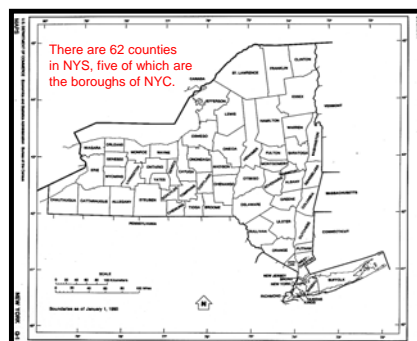
### 8. Urban NYS

- Development of the urban-economic landscape, industrial location and manufacturing
- Original site location of the major cities
- Geographic city, economic base and variables; trends
- Post-World War II period to the present
- Nassau and Suffolk counties
- New York City

### 9. FINAL EXAM

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## Counties of New York State



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## List of Exercises

Each student will be assigned three counties which are the focus of these exercises.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. County Summary (R)           | 12. Military Geography (R)  |
| 2. Political Map of NYS (R)     | 13. Canals of NYS (E)   |
| 3. Map & Imagery Resources (R)  | 14. Population Issues (R)   |
| 4. Physiographic Regions (E)    | 15. Wildlife Management (E)   |
| 5. Mineral Resources of NYS (R) | 16. Agriculture in NYS (R)  |
| 6. Climate Regions of NYS (R)   | 17. NYS Economy (R)   |
| 7. Air Quality in NYS (E)       | 18/19. Malls, Farms and the River<br>– Orange County Field Trip (E;<br>this is worth double extra credit) |
| 8. Wind Power Potential (E)     | 20. Museum Visit (E)  |
| 9. County Literature Search (R) |   |
| 10. Watersheds of NYS (R)       |   |
| 11. The Iroquois Village (R)    |   |

R= Required E=Extra Credit

Exercises are due by the date shown  
on the exercise header.  
Additional exercises may be added  
for extra credit.

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## What is Geography?

- Geography is the study of people living on the surface of the earth.
- It studies the interaction of people with the physical elements of the natural environment.
- The result is the creation of the cultural environment or the “human imprint on the natural environment.”

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## What is Geography?

- All of this is done within the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography as developed by the NCGE and AAG.

1. Location
2. Place
3. Movement
4. Region
5. Human-Environment Interaction

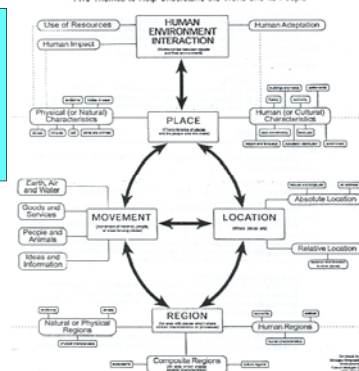
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## Geography

Five Themes to Help Understand the World and Its People

### Flow Diagram of the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography

Source: Michigan Geographic Alliance



## Five Fundamental Themes

### 1. LOCATION

- Addresses the question: Where?
- Absolute location = site
- Relative location = situation

### 2. PLACE

- Addresses the special features of location that make it unique.
- Includes size and physical and human characteristics (landscapes)

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## Five Fundamental Themes

### 3. MOVEMENT

- Addresses the idea of mobility to, from and within a location.
- Studies the relocation, flow and change of position of people, goods and ideas.
- Analyzes diffusion (or spread) from a point of origin (routes and methods).

### 4. REGION

- Addresses the unifying factors of location.
- Identifies similar characteristics.
- Studies formation and change over time.

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## Five Fundamental Themes

### 5. HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION

- Addresses the relationships within locations between people and the physical environment.

- > Perception
- > Technology
- > Land use decisions
- > Impact

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## Five Fundamental Themes

To the Five we add the

### Earth Science Tradition of Geography

- Addresses the processes, cycles and systems that constantly modify the natural world and therefore influence people.
- These include
  - > geologic and atmospheric processes.
  - > seasonal and ecological cycles.
  - > biomes and ecosystems.

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## The National Standards

- For those in the education sequence, there are **18 geography national standards** that have been developed for inclusion into the curriculum at various grade levels to enable students become geographically informed people.
- World in Spatial Terms (standards 1,2,3)
- Places and Regions (standards 4,5,6)
- Physical Systems (standards 7,8)
- Human Systems (standards 9,10,11,12,13)
- Environment and Society (standards 14,15,16)
- Uses of Geography (standards 17,18)

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## Geographic Methodologies

- Geographers study the earth from a number of different points of view.

### Time reference:

- Past
- Present
- Future

### Opposing views or dualisms:

- Human vs. physical
- Topical vs. regional
- Descriptive vs. analytical

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## Geographic Methodologies

### Geography of the Present

- Studies current conditions, interrelationships and happenings.
- It focuses on today.
- It goes back in time to set the scene.
- It evaluates the present for future interactions.

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## Geographic Methodologies

### Geography of the Past

- *Historical Geography* looks at and analyzes the conditions that have led to or influenced the actions of people over time.
- It emphasizes developmental processes.
- It studies change.

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## Geographic Methodologies

### Geography of the Future

- *Regional and Urban Planning* uses the knowledge gained from the past and present to make assumptions about the future.

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## Geographic Methodologies

### All three (past, present and future)

- are studied from **geographic dualisms**  
**point of view**: human vs. physical, topical vs. regional, descriptive vs. analytical
- use **geographic research methods to gather and analyze data**: field work, library research, remotely gathered information, and data analysis software programs.
- use **cartographic methods and GIS to portray information spatially**: mapping

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## What is a Region?

- A **region** is a part of the earth exhibiting **similar traits**. Dividing the world up into regions helps us to bring order to a diverse planet.
- **All regions have**
  1. Location
  2. Spatial Extent
  3. Boundaries

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## What is a Region? (cont'd)

### All regions also have

4. Categorization
  - a) formal
  - b) functional
  - c) vernacular
5. Hierarchical Arrangement
  - a) major
  - b) minor

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## NYS is a Region

- It has **location** – both site and situation
- It has **spatial extent** – about 54,470 sq mi
- It has **boundaries** – political designation of authority
- It can be **categorized** – it is a formal region
- It has **hierarchical arrangement** – it is part of larger regions and has many smaller regions within it.

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## Physical Regions



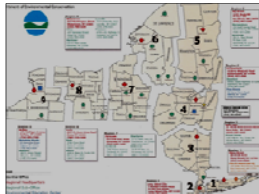
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## Cultural Regions

## NYS Tourist Regions



## NYS DEC Regions



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## Political Regions



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## Development of the Cultural Landscape

1. The natural landscape sets the scene by influencing (not controlling) people.
2. People have an awareness of their environment (surroundings).
3. People interact and exploit their environment (use what is available to them).
4. The result is the formation of the cultural landscape (man-made environment) that gives personality to the area.

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## Geographic Axiom

*The quality of location  
changes with time.*

As we study the historical geography of NYS, it will become evident how true this statement is.

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What is your **perception** when you hear the words “**New York**”?

- Urban area
- Tall buildings
- Congestion
- Many people
- Little open space
- New York City
- Business and finance
- People with money

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## What do we **find** in NYS?

- 84% of the state is rural (62% forested; 22% agriculture).
- NYS has the most ski areas of any state.
- Lake Placid is one of only three US Winter Olympic sites.
- NY is an agricultural state.
- NY is a mining state.
- Adirondack Park is the largest state park outside of Alaska.
- There are high poverty levels in upstate areas
- Shrinking towns.
- Depopulation of rural areas.

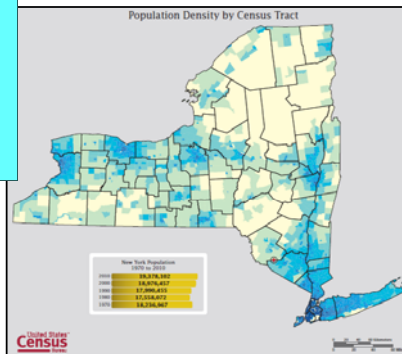
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## Vital Statistics

- **Area:** 54,471 sq. mi. (27<sup>th</sup> in size)
- **Population:** 19.5 mil (2011 estimate; 3<sup>rd</sup> in size)
- **Pop. Density:** 411 persons per sq mi (7<sup>th</sup> most densely populated state)
- **Pop. Distribution:** 65% (12.5 mil) live in and around NYC; 42% (8.2 mil) live in NYC; 13% (2.5 mil) live in Brooklyn.
- **NYS has 62 counties**
  - In area (largest/smallest):
    - St. Lawrence (2768 sq. mi.)
    - New York County "Manhattan" (23 sq. mi.)
  - In population (largest/smallest):
    - Kings (pop: 2,504,700)
    - Hamilton (pop: 4,836)
  - In density (most/least):
    - New York County (69,500/sq mi)
    - Hamilton (3/sq mi)

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## NYS Population Density by Census Tract - 2010



2010 Census tally = 19,378,102 people

2011 Census est. = 19,465,197 people

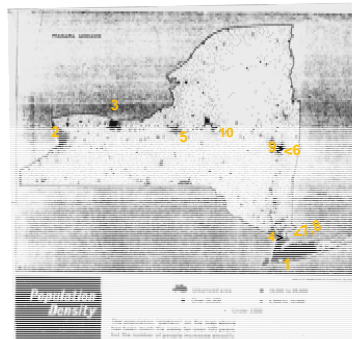
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## New York City

- **NYC is the largest city of the US** (8.2 million).
- **It is the only city that is not part of a county.**
- **It is the only city made up of more than one county.**
- **There are 5 counties within its political boundary:** Bronx, New York, Queens, Kings and Richmond. The 5 counties are coterminous with the 5 boroughs.
  - New York County is the Borough of Manhattan.
  - Kings County is the Borough of Brooklyn.
  - Richmond County is the Borough of Staten Island.
  - Queens County is the Borough of Queens.
  - Bronx County is the Borough of The Bronx.

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## Population Density Map of NYS



- Largest Cities**
1. New York City
  2. Buffalo
  3. Rochester
  4. Yonkers
  5. Syracuse
  6. Albany
  7. New Rochelle
  8. Mt. Vernon
  9. Schenectady
  10. Utica

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