

The Geography of Long Island: Geographic Issues facing Long Island, NY

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SYLLABUS

HUNTER COLLEGE GEOGRAPHY Geography of Long Island

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- **Geog. Lab:** Room 1090B North Bldg.

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PURPOSE

This course focuses on the geographic and environmental issues of the 4th largest island of the US and the largest island outside of Alaska and Hawaii.

The goals of the course are to:

- (1) learn about the geography of Long Island – its physical attributes, the distribution of its people and their activities, and the interrelationships between people and the environment;
- (2) explore, navigate through, and use the geographic information available on the Internet, especially the information provided by the State of New York, City of New York, and Nassau and Suffolk counties; and
- (3) become geographically literate when dealing with issues affecting Long Island and its people as we plan for the future.

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GRADING

- **1. Exams (30%):** 2 exams (15 pts each)
- **2. Discussion Papers (40%):** Five short write ups of geographic issues facing Long Island residents (2-3 pages long plus citations discussing 1 physical, 1 historical, 1 population, 1 environmental, and 1 economic topic; 8 pts each).
- **3. Term Paper (30%):** One research paper that explores a past, current or potential issue from an analyst's or planner's point of view.
- **4. Extra Credit Options:** Extra credit may be earned for seminar presentations, documented individual field work, documented individual museum visits, and/or a special project relating to the study of geography of Long Island.
- **5. Lateness hurts.** Late submission of an assignment will lower the earned score.
- **6. Class participation helps.** Contribution to classroom discussion can only benefit your grade.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Content of all lectures, reading assignments and handouts.
2. Have access to Geography Dept.'s Home Page and to Blackboard.
3. Attend class lectures.
4. Take all exams and submit all required work for grading.
5. Get approval of topic for term presentation.
6. Neat presentation of discussion papers, term paper and exams.
7. Knowledge of college rules and regulations which are strictly enforced.
8. Awareness that cheating and plagiarism are grounds for failure and disciplinary action by the College.
9. Registration with the AccessAbility Office to qualify for accommodation.

CALENDAR for Spring 2011

- **Mon., Jan. 31** - First class meeting.
- **Mon., Feb. 21** - President's Day – College is closed (**no class for us**).
- **Wed., Feb. 23** - CUNY follows a **MONDAY** schedule (**class for us**).
- **Mon., Apr. 11** - Proposal for term paper due no later than tonight.
- **Mon., Apr. 18** - Spring recess (**no class for us**).
- **Mon., Apr. 25** - Spring recess continues (**no class for us**).
- **Mon., May 02** - Semester resumes for us.
- **Mon., May 16** - Last lecture.
- **Mon., May 23** - Final exam; last day to turn in all work (tentative).

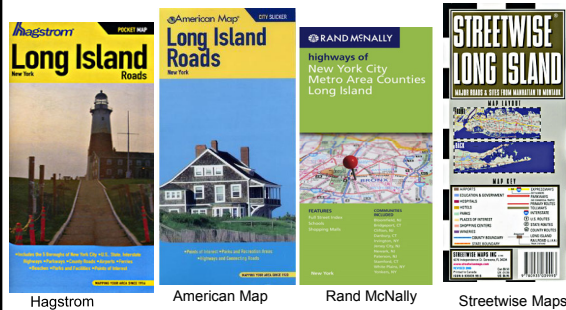
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List of Major Topics

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Physical Characteristics of LI
- 3. Historical Geography of LI
- 4. Settlement on Long Island
- 5. Population Issues
- 6. Environmental Issues
- 7. Planning for the Future

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Long Island Road Maps



Hagstrom

American Map

Rand McNally

Streetwise Maps

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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?

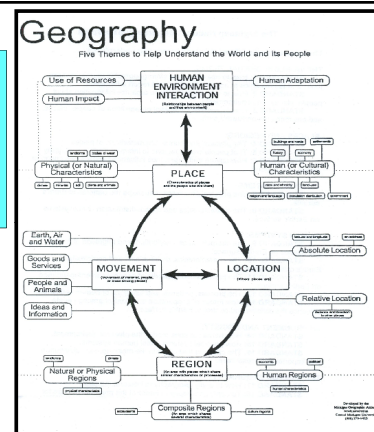
- All of this is done within the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography as developed by the NCGE and AAG.

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

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Flow Diagram of the Five Fundamental Themes of Geography

Source: Michigan Geographic Alliance



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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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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What is Long Island?

- **Geographically**, Long Island is the landmass off the coast of New England, separated from it by Long Island Sound and stretching from New York Harbor to Block Island Sound.
- **Politically**, it is an area of NYS consisting of Kings (Brooklyn), Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties, and including all the smaller islands associated with these counties.
- In **vernacular Newyawkcityese**, especially from those living in Brooklyn and Queens, Long Island is just Nassau and Suffolk counties! "I'm going to visit my cousin on the island."

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Vital Statistics

- **Area:** 1,723 sq mi of which 1,379 sq mi is land (118 mi long/12-20 mi wide)
- **Total Population:** 7.8 mil (2009 est.)
- **Ave. Pop. Density:** 5,656 people/sq mi
- **Distribution:**
87% of the land is in Nassau and Suffolk
62% of the people are in Brooklyn and Queens.

COUNTY	LAND AREA (sq mi)	2009 est. POP. (mil)	DENSITY (per sq mi)
Kings	71	2.6	35,211
Queens	109	2.3	21,101
Nassau	287	1.4	4,878
Suffolk	912	1.5	1,645

If Long Island was a US state, it would be the 10th largest state.

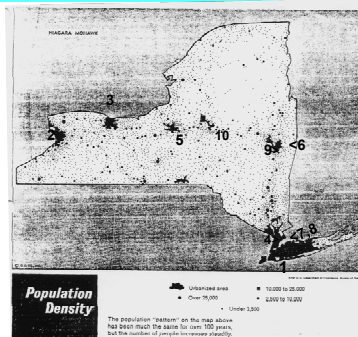
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Counties of Long Island



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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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Geography Discussion Paper

- A **discussion paper** is an essay that looks at a question, a point of view, or findings about a situation - past, present or future. Its purpose is to ponder a situation and get dialog going.

It is **not** a detailed research report, a broad summary of the topic, a collection of questions or observations, a criticism of a point of view or situation, or your personal feeling (off the top of your head) about the topic. Pros and cons are put forward.

- A **geographic discussion paper** addresses the impact on people or earth environment within the framework of the five fundamental themes of geography. In addition, it puts the topic within a political, cultural, economic and/or social context.

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What are some of the issues facing Long Island, NY?

- Let's make a list within each category:
 - Physical landscape issues
 - Historical issues
 - Economic Issues
 - Population Issues
 - Environmental Issues

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Physical Geographic Issues

- aquifers
- barrier islands
- beach erosion
- coastal lowlands
- coastal storms
- dealing with natural processes
- erosion
- flooding
- glacial features
- global warming
- groundwater supply
- hurricanes
- island setting
- planning for the future
- recharge zones
- salt water intrusion
- sand and gravel deposits
- sea level rise
- soils
- storm surge
- tidal marshes
- tsunami
- water pollution
- water table
- weather events
- wetlands

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Historical Issues

- automobile
- bedroom communities
- changes in land use
- eminent domain
- Gold Coast
- governance
- jurisdictions
- museums
- Native American lands
- original site development
- Peconic County movement
- planned communities
- planning for the future
- preservation of historical areas
- regional planning
- suburbanization
- The Hamptons
- transportation routes
- urban sprawl
- urbanization
- whaling
- zoning

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Economic Issues

- agriculture
- amusement areas
- east end developmt
- east end seaport
- fisheries
- flood zones
- insular setting
- jobs
- local vs. NYC
- malls
- mass transit
- mining
- orientation
- planning for the future
- recreation
- shell fishing
- tax base
- tidal power
- tourism
- waterfront use
- whaling
- wind power
- wineries
- zoning

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Population Issues

- aging
- cancer clusters
- congestion
- crime
- demographics
- disease
- eastward sprawl
- freshwater supply
- health care
- health issues
- immigrant populations
- Native American lands
- natural hazards
- planning for the future
- poverty
- schools
- segregated communities
- transportation needs

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Environmental Issues

- agricultural land
- air pollution
- aquifers
- automobile
- barrier islands
- biozones
- dealing with natural processes
- fisheries
- Great South Bay
- groundwater recharge
- invasive species
- Jamaica Bay
- land pollution
- land reclamation
- Long Island Sound
- nesting birds
- open space
- parkland
- Peconic Bay
- pine barrens
- planning for the future
- sand dunes
- shell fishing
- superfund sites
- tidal zone
- waste water treatment
- water pollution
- water quality
- water table
- wildlife

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Resources

- www.longisland2035.org/ - NYMTC vision for Long Island
- www.longislandindexmaps.org/ -RPA mapping site
- <http://www.rpa.org/pdf/LIProfile.pdf> -RPA LI Profile
- <http://www.rpa.org/pdf/LongIslandVisioning.pdf> - Development Projections
- http://www.liipc.org/3.2010-12-02_LI2035StrategiesReport.pdf - Planning Report from Long Island regional planning council
- <http://tripatlas.com/Long%20Island%20Rail%20Road> -LIRR site
- <http://www.longisland.com/museums/> - museums on Long Island
- <http://www.discoverlongisland.com/> - LI Convention and Visitors

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