"Landscapes mirror and landscapes matter...Our human landscape is our unwitting autobiography, reflecting our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears in tangible, visible form."

- Peirce F. Lewis

"Landscape is best seen as both a work (it is the product of human labor and thus encapsulates the dreams, desires and all the injustices of the people and social systems that make it) and as something that does work (it acts as a social agent in the development of a place)." Don Mitchell

This course will be an introductory exploration into the various ways that landscapes get produced and can be "read." We will be looking at landscapes as the actual places that people live in and at the literary and artistic representations of the landscape. In both senses, special attention will be paid to considerations of culture and identity from historical as well as contemporary perspectives. Our course materials will focus primarily (but not exclusively) on the United States and will be made up of a wide variety of texts (paintings, poetry, fiction, film, academic literature, etc.). Our explorations will sometimes take us outside of the classroom to the museums, parks, and neighborhoods of New York City.

**Required texts:**
- All texts are available in soft cover.

**Assignments and Grading:**
- Class discussion (20%)
- Two (2) short writing assignments (20% each)
- Final project (30%)
- Class presentation on final project (10%)

**Course Structure:**
- Introduction to Reading the Landscapes
- Bruce Chatwin’s *Songlines*
- "Axioms for Reading a Landscape," Lewis
- "Alternative Axioms for Reading a Landscape," Don Mitchell
- Robert Alan Jamieson’s *Nort Atlantik Drift*

New York Landscapes (readings provided by instructor through Blackboard)
Giles, Judy. *The Parlor and the Suburb.* [selections]
Lewis, Pierce. "Axioms for Reading the Landscape."
Mitchell, Don. "Alternative Axioms for Reading a Landscape."
Mitchell, Don. *Critical Introduction to Cultural Geography.* [selections]
Spivak, G.C. *The Post-Colonial Critic.* [selections]
Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass.* [Selections]

**Films:**

**Hunter College Policy on 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.