



Department of Geography and Geoinformation Science

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GGS 900
Colloquium in Earth Systems Sciences

1. General Information

Instructor: Dr. Dieter Pfoser
Where: Thursday 4:30-6pm, Innovation Hall 215G
When: Fall 2016
Course website: Blackboard
Credits: 1.0

**Instructor's
Office Hours:** Tuesday 3-4pm

2. Course Structure

In this course students prepare for, attend, and reflect on topics (varying from week to week) in Geography and Geoinformation Science. The purpose of this course is to help your professional development as a researcher. Contemporary scholars will present students with material designed to engage their critical thinking and further their professional development. Students will either write short reflections or meet with the instructor for post- colloquium discussions. I expect all students to participate actively in our class discussions and to contribute their thoughts, ideas, and questions to our collective exploration. I especially encourage you to bring your questions to class.

3. Textbooks

Reading might be supplied by presenters.

4. Course schedule (tentative)

Overall, we will **meet 10 times** (finishing before Thanksgiving).
Talks will be announced as speakers confirm.
The first four meeting dates are 9/1, 9/8, 9/15 and 9/22.

5. Grades

Students will be graded in the following manner:

Attendance	10%
Reflection/discussion	90%

Grades generally follow 90/80/70 with plus/minus being within 3 percent of the cutoffs. I reserve the right to alter the exact boundaries at the end of the semester. Reflection assignments are due at the **beginning**

of the following class. Late assignments will be marked off 20% per complete weekday they are late, starting at the beginning of class on the day they are due

6. **Assignments:**

After each course you will write an up to 1.5 page essay expressing your reaction to the presentation. In these reflections you will discuss the content and delivery of the presenter. Besides the information in class, you will incorporate one of two other sets of content into your reflection:

- Aspects of your personal research profile or goals. Here, it is a personal observation, experience, activity, or event that stimulates a response. Feel free to draw upon your outside experiences in crafting your reaction essays.
- Aspects of the domain field the speaker's talk draws from. In other situations, you can place the presentation within the speaker's field to

Producing finely polished products regularly is less important than expressing *your* thoughts and ideas (this is NOT a cliff notes / book report of what you saw). I am looking for agility, flexibility, and creativity in expression. You should seek interesting ways to express ideas through word choices, analogies and metaphors, phrasing, and varying sentence structure..

Assignments should be done **through the Blackboard course website.**

7. **Electronic communication:**

All course related email correspondence, including submission of assignments, should be made through the course Blackboard website. Please DO NOT send emails to the instructors' @gmu.edu address.

8. **Student Expectations:**

- **Academic Integrity:** Students must be responsible for their own work, and students and faculty must take on the responsibility of dealing explicitly with violations. The tenet must be a foundation of our university culture. [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/distance/>].
- **Honor Code:** Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- **MasonLive/Email (GMU Email):** Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. [See <https://masonlivelogin.gmu.edu>].
- **Patriot Pass:** Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web, Virtual Computing Lab, and WEMS. [See <https://password.gmu.edu/index.jsp>].
- **University Policies:** Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>]. Responsible Use of Computing - Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing>].
- **University Calendar:** Details regarding the current Academic Calendar. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/index.html>].
- **Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].
- Students are expected to follow courteous Internet etiquette at all times; see <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html> for more information regarding these expectations.

9. **Student Services:**

- **University Libraries:** University Libraries provides resources for distance students. [See <http://library.gmu.edu/distance> and http://infoguides.gmu.edu/distance_students].
- **Writing Center:** The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>]. You can now sign up for an Online Writing Lab (OWL) session just like you sign up for a face-to-face session in the Writing Center, which means YOU set the date and time of the appointment! Learn more about the [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#).
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu>].
- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the "Buckley Amendment," is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. [See <http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy>].

Disclaimer: Any typographical errors in this Course Outline are subject to change and will be announced in class. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported by the instructor.

Note: Recording is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.