



Seminar in Geography Education

Geography 8040

How can geographic education contribute towards the development of civic-minded, critical thinkers, who are able to use spatial skills to address pressing human and physical problems at a local, state, and international scale? That is the question that geographic educators must constantly answer and reinforce as a means of reinforcing the relevance and necessity of geography as an academic discipline.

The modern teaching of geography blends academic research with best practices. With heightened emphasis on the use of geospatial technologies and real-world data, geography encourages students to build their knowledge of the physical and human processes that shape our planet through inquiry-based approaches. This course investigates modern theory and how those translate into best-practices to develop engaging and meaningful learning experiences for students in which students are active in the process of “doing” geography.

This course is not meant to be all encompassing, rather it’s primary purpose is to encourage students to evaluate the role of both student and teacher in the learning process and prepare students with the skills and knowledge they will need to be the “spatially competent” and “civic minded” that state and national initiatives demand.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

- demonstrate an understanding of...
 - current issues in geographic education
 - geography teaching methods such as active learning, problem- or inquiry-based learning, fieldwork and service learning/community engagement.
 - the issues in technology use in geography classrooms.
 - the scholarship of teaching & learning as it applies to geography
- select appropriate geography materials
- recognize the complexities in being a geographic educator and teaching others to think geographically.



Instructor Information

Instructor: Kyle Tredinnick, M.A.

Email: ktredinnick@unomaha.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-11:30 via zoom (or by appointment)

[Join Here](#)

Phone: 402-554-2662 (Office phone for Department of Geography/Geology)

Course Meeting Time: Tuesdays 5:00-7:45 (Virtually)
Thursdays (Asynchronously)

Skills

On completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Critically read scholarly papers
- Effectively lead class discussions
- Compose reading journal entries/critical summaries that :
 - reflect your thought-processes as you read the articles
 - effectively summarize the article
 - provide several points of critique
 - raise discussion questions
 - Apply geographic education best practices in curriculum design
- Review teaching resources
- Develop a structured unit plan for delivering curriculum in a geography class

Required Texts:

- Teaching Geography (3rd Edition) by Phil Gersmehl
- Spatial Citizenship Education: Citizenship Through Geography (1st Edition) by Euikyung E. Shin & Sarah W. Bednarz

Suggested Text

- Debates in Geography Education (1st Edition) Edited by David Lambert and Mark Jones

Classroom Expectations

Class Discussions

The course discussions are going to be where you will be able to test ideas, work towards clarification, make points of agreement or disagreement, and bounce ideas off fellow classmates and the instructor. You should come to class prepared to participate with specific questions to pose, passages you found interesting, and points you would like to include. Please have page numbers of corresponding readings ready to help point classmates directly to where your points are coming from. Each student will take turns leading one of the synchronous discussions. Their responsibility will be to thoroughly analyze all of the day's readings, and to prepare guiding questions to direct the day's discussion that connects to each reading individually, as well as questions that tie multiple readings together.

Virtual Attendance

As preferable as it might be, it is understood that students might not be able to attend every class in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Students who are unable to attend in-person are expected to still be present through Zoom.

Due to policies regarding COVID-19 it is understood that students may be out for weeks at a time. I plan on recording lectures and making those available to students who are ill or choose not to attend for legitimate medical reasons.

While attending virtually please abide from the following considerations:

- Please have your microphone muted unless you are needing to ask a question or contribute to the discussion
- Set yourself up in a distraction-free environment where you are able to focus on the course content
- Recognize that virtual attendance is not an “easier” and that it may require even more effort to remain focused and free from distractions. Plan accordingly
- Ask questions! Utilize the chat box or unmute yourself to interject for expanding or clarifying questions.

Course Grading and Structure

Grading Scale

98-100 (A+), 93-98 (A), 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-86 (B), 80-82 (B-), etc. < 59 (F)

Course Grading

Your course grade will be based on

- 1) Reading Journal and Discussion (55%)
- 2) Unit Plan (35%)
- 3) Resource Review (10%)



Please contact me with questions regarding your grade via email to set up a time to discuss your scores via zoom.

Reading Journals and Discussion (55% of Final Grade)

Each class (whether synchronous or asynchronous) will have a particular theme with accompanying readings to go with them. Students will be expected to complete the day’s required readings and then write up a 1-page reflection in which specific mention is made to content covered in the readings. Alternatively, students may develop a lesson plan for a 30-minute activity which includes a brief summary of how materials from the reading were incorporated into the development of the lesson.

During days in which students are meeting together synchronously students will participate in discussion regarding content covered in the materials. Students will also take turns leading one of the synchronous discussions (roughly 45 minutes). During asynchronous days, students will each be expected to pose and moderate one question strand and participate in the question strands of the other students with meaningful dialogue related to materials covered in the readings.

Students will be scored on their completion of the reading journals/lessons and their participation in the discussions. Discussions where students are online synchronously, students will be graded

on their participation. On Asynchronous days students will be graded on their participation in the online forum.

Discussions on Synchronous Days will be conducted in class. On asynchronous days students should follow the schedule below:

By Wednesday Evening of each week: Post one original discussion question (which you will moderate the responses too)

By Friday evening of each week: Post a response to each of the questions posed by classmates – **Reading Journals for the week are due on this day as well**

By Sunday evening of each week: Respond to all responses in the question you are moderating, and reply to one of the responses by a classmate in another thread

Unit Plan (35% of Final Grade)

Throughout the duration of the course students will be working on developing a unit plan for a 3-week unit for the geographic course of their choosing. As part of the unit plan students will include materials that will be covered throughout the course, such as standards and benchmarks, appropriate resources, teaching strategies, and other design elements. As part of the unit plan students will develop a day-to-day schedule with synopsis of materials to be covered by each lesson within the unit.

Resource Review (10% of Final Grade)

Online resources on a particular topic are usually fairly easy to find. Quality resources, however, can prove much harder to locate. Students will find and review a collection of resources that would be helpful in the teaching of geographic content or skills. You will be reviewing the resources for their credibility, accessibility, and quality of information, and presenting your findings.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity

The University takes the issue of academic integrity very seriously in the maintenance of a fair and equitable learning community. Any students found to be in violation of the Academic Integrity policy will be subject to academic and disciplinary sanctions. Violations include plagiarism, copying or cheating on exams and assignment, fabrication or misrepresentation of work's originality, or any of the other infractions outlined in the [University's Academic Integrity standards](#).

Violations will result in an automatic zero on the given examination or assignment. Repeated offense may result in dismissal (with a grade of F) from the course and potentially further referral to UNO administration.



Accessibility Services

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact ASC (Location: 104 H&K, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu.)

The Accessibility Services Center (ASC) recognizes that amidst the rolling transition back to campus, some students may still need to exercise physical distancing. Please contact the ASC if there are concerns about on-campus courses and programming related to COVID-19.

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Chapter(s)/Readings
Week 1: 6/1-6/4	Thinking Geographically: Teaching Spatially	<u>Required</u> : Kerski (2011), "Why Geography Education Matters" -and- Gersmehl (2014) "Chapter 1: One Perspective: A Way of Looking at the World" – Teaching Geography
	Perspectives of Geography (Human, Physical, and Regional)	<u>Required</u> : Gersmehl (2014) "Chapter 2: Two Blades of a Scissors Regional and Topical Geography" – Teaching Geography <u>Pick One</u> : Hawley, D. (2013) "What is the rightful place of physical geography?" – Debates in Geography Education -or- Gersmehl (2014) "Chapter 4: Four Cornerstones; Foundation ideas of Geography" – Teaching Geography -or- Murphy (2014) "Geography's Crosscutting Themes: Golden Anniversary Reflections on "The Four Traditions of Geography"
Week 2: 6/7-6/11	Teaching to the Standards	<u>Required</u> : Gersmehl (2014) "Chapter 5: Five Themes: Meeting the Standards" – Teaching Geography <u>Pick One</u> : Heffron & Downs (2012) "Geography for Life" -or- Nebraska Department of Education (2019) "Nebraska State Social Studies Standards"
	Rigor and Student Engagement	<u>Required</u> : Lambert D. (2019) "Chapter 3: Geography, Capabilities, and the Educated Person" – Spatial Citizenship Education <u>Pick One</u> : Bednarz (2016) "Placing Advanced Placement® Human Geography: Its Role in U.S. Geography Education" -or- Lyon, J. (2013) "Chapter 16: How does geography contribute to 'employability'?" - Debates in Geography Education

Week 3: 6/14-6/18	<p>Teaching with Geospatial Technologies</p> <p>(Guest Speaker: Dr. Joseph Kerski, esri)</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Baker et al. (2019) “Chapter 8: Geotechnologies and the Spatial Citizen” – Spatial Citizenship Education</p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Johansson (2003) “GIS in Teacher Education- Facilitating GIS Applications in Secondary School Geography” -or- Bednarz (2004) “Geographic information systems: A tool to support geography and environmental education?”</p>
	<p>Teaching Students to “Do” Geography with Skills</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Gersmehl (2014) “Chapter 6: Spatial Thinking: Geographic Skills”</p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Enser M. (2021) “Powerful Geography – Chapter 9: Doing Geography” -or- Pawson (2006) “Problem-based learning in geography: towards a critical assessment of its purposes, benefits and risks”</p>
Week 4: 6/21-6/25	<p>Guiding Instruction: The Geoinquiry Framework</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Love C. (2017) “Geo-Inquiry Process: Educator Guide, National Geographic Education”</p>
	<p>Teaching for Impact: Contributing to Civic Education</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Schlemper and Stewart (2019) “Chapter 7: Cultivating Student Citizens” – Spatial Citizenship Education</p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Hinde E. R. (2019) “Chapter 9: Informed Citizenry Starts in Preschool and Elementary Grades-and with Geography” – Spatial Citizenship Education -or- Bednarz & Bednarz (2019) “Chapter 5: Citizenship Education in a Spatially Enhanced World” – Spatial Citizenship Education</p>
Week 5: 6/28-7/2	<p>Getting Teachers and Students in the Field</p> <p>(class @ Omaha Henry Doorly Zoo Education Center)</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Kinder, A. (2013) “What is the contribution to fieldwork to school geography?” - Debates in Geography Education</p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Kenreich T. (2019) “Chapter 6: Rediscovering the local” – Spatial Citizenship Education -or- Hope (2009) “The importance of direct experience: a philosophical defence of fieldwork in human geography”</p>
	<p>Giving Educators the Tools to be Successful</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Gersmehl (2014) “Chapter 9: A Multi-wheeled Cart: Supporting Teachers” – Teaching Geography</p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Schmidt S. (2019) “Chapter 4: The Spatial Production and Navigation of Vulnerable Citizens” – Spatial Citizenship Education -or- Bednarz, Stoltman, & Lee (2004) “Preparing Geography Teachers in the United States”</p>

Week 6: 7/5-7/9	<p>Assessment in Geographic Education</p> <p>(Guest Speaker: Dr. Kelly Swanson, Metro State University (Minn.))</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Gersmehl (2014) <i>“Chapter 7: Three Kinds of Tests for Three Kinds of Meaning” – Teaching Geography</i></p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Weeden, P. (2013) <i>“How do we link assessments to making progress in geography?” - Debates in Geography Education</i></p> <p>-or-</p> <p>Digby, B. (2013) <i>“Examining Geography: What geography is examined in schools and colleges?” - Debates in Geography Education</i></p>
	<p>Geographic Education in the Post-Truth Era</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Lambert & Morgan (2010) <i>“Chapter 11: Geography, media and education”</i></p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Alderman (2018) <i>“Time for a Radical Geographic Literacy in Trump America”</i></p> <p>-or-</p> <p>Rawding C. (2013) <i>“How does geography adapt to changing times” - Debates in Geography Education</i></p>
Week 7: 7/12-7/16	<p>Challenges of a Broad Curriculum</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Mitchell, D. (2013) <i>“Chapter 17: How do we deal with controversial issues in a ‘relevant’ school Geography?” – Debates in Geography Education</i></p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Lambert & Morgan (2010) <i>“Chapter 9: Cultural understanding and Diversity: Promoting community cohesion?”</i></p> <p>-or-</p> <p>Shin E. E. (2019) <i>“Chapter 11: Spatial Citizenship in Geography/Social Studies Teacher Education” - Spatial Citizenship Education</i></p>
	<p>Research in Geographic Education</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Kerr et al. (2013) <i>“Teacher education and geography: Research perspectives”</i></p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Brooks (2010) <i>“Why Geography Teachers’ subject Expertise Matters”</i></p> <p>-or-</p> <p>Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy (2001) <i>“Teacher Preparation Research: Current Knowledge, Gaps and Recommendations” (Pages 31-37)</i></p>
Week 8: 7/19-7/23	<p>Leading the Revolution in Geographic Education</p>	<p><u>Required:</u> Gersmehl (2014) <i>“Chapter 8: Geography in the Curriculum: Surviving Top-Down Education Reform” – Teaching Geography</i></p> <p><u>Pick One:</u> Lambert & Morgan (2010) <i>“Chapter 12: A mind for the future”</i></p> <p>-or-</p> <p>Boehm et al. (2018) <i>“The Rise of Powerful geography”</i></p>
	<p>Work on Unit Plans</p>	

Week 9: 7/26-7/30	Presentations	Final Projects Due Monday July 26 th @ 5:00
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- Schedule & Topics are tentative and subject to change, see canvas course page for most up-to-date schedule and readings

Course Readings

- Alderman, D. (Feb. 2018) "Time for a Radical Geographic Literacy in Trump America." AAG Newsletter 02: n. pag. American Association of Geographers, 1 Feb. 2018. Web. 7 Feb. 2018. <http://news.aag.org/2018/02/time-for-a-radical-geographic-literacy-in-trump-america/>.
- Bednarz, S. (2004). *Geographic information systems: A tool to support geography and environmental education? GeoJournal*, 60(2), 191-199. Retrieved May 7, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41147881>
- Bednarz, S., Stoltman, J., Lee, J. (2004). *Preparing Geography Teachers in the United States*. International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education 13 (2): 176-183
- Boehm Richard G., Michael Solem & Joann Zadrozny (2018) The Rise of Powerful Geography, *The Social Studies*, 109:2, 125-135, DOI: [10.1080/00377996.2018.1460570](https://doi.org/10.1080/00377996.2018.1460570)
- Brooks, C. (2010). *Why Geography Teachers' Subject Expertise Matters*. *Geography* 95 (3): 143-148. <http://www.jstor.org/le0.lib.unomaha.edu/stable/20789364>.
- Enser, M. (2021) *Powerful Geography: A Curriculum with Purpose in Practice*, Crown House Publishing Limited, 2021, Pages 123-152
- Heffron, S., Downs, R. (2012). *Geography for Life: The National Geography Standards. 2nd Edition*. Washington, DC: Geography Education National Implementation Project (GENIP).
- Johansson, T. (2003). *GIS in Teacher Education - Facilitating GIS Applications in Secondary School Geography*. The 9th Scandinavian Research Conference on Geographical Information Science, 4-6 June 2003, Espoo, Finland. Proceedings, pgs. 285-293.
- Kerr, S. L., Collins, L., Jo, I., Monroe-Ossi, H., Ray, W., Whitcraft, A.K., Solem, M., & Stoltman, J.P. (2013). *Teacher education and geography: Research perspectives*. *Research in Geographic Education*, 15(2). 44-58.
- Kerski, J. (2011). *Why Geography Education Matters*, American Association of Geographers (AAG) Newsletter, Volume 46, Number 5, page 13.
- Love, C. (2017), *Geo-Inquiry Process: Educator Guide*, National Geographic Education, https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1BNdNoKOOmu8ukCPI_oJHwyUvHW0A8dE
- Heffron, S., Downs, R. (2012). *Geography for Life: The National Geography Standards. 2nd Edition*. Washington, DC: Geography Education National Implementation Project (GENIP).
- Hope, M. (2009) "The importance of direct experience: a philosophical defence of fieldwork in human geography" *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 33, 2 (2009): 169-182.
- Murphy, A. B. (2014). *Geography's Crosscutting Themes: Golden Anniversary Reflections on "The Four Traditions of Geography"*. *Journal of Geography* 133:5: 181-188.
- Pawson, E. et al., (2006) "Problem-based learning in geography: towards a critical assessment of its purposes, benefits and risks" *JGHE* 30, 1 (2006): 103-116.
- Wilson, S.M., Floden, R.E., Ferrini-Mundy, J. (2001). *Teacher Preparation Research: Current Knowledge, Gaps, and Recommendations*. Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, University of Washington. <http://ctpweb.org>. (Accessed February 24, 2018) Pages 31-37