



GEOGRAPHY OF TEXAS

Geography 305, Honors

Dr. Sarah W. Bednarz

11:10-12:25 T-Th, O&M 711

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Office Hours: T 8:30-10:00; W 9:00-10:00 or by appointment

<http://geog.tamu.edu/~sbednarz/honorstexas/>

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Texts: Dallas Morning News. 2005. *2006-2007 Texas Almanac*;

Benson & Company. 2001. *School Atlas of Texas*

Readings: The majority of readings are on electronic reserve at <http://library.tamu.edu/>; some are on line at the class web site.

Workbook: *Activities and Readings in the Geography of Texas* (ARGOT). Available as .pdf files on the web site: <http://geog.tamu.edu/~sbednarz/honorstexas/>

COURSE OUTLINE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

| Week | Topic | Readings/Activities |
|--|--|---|
| 8/29 | Thinking Like a Geographer | Activity 1: Climates |
| 9/12 | The Environment of Texas-And Human Interaction with It | <i>Geo-Texas</i> Chapters 2, 3, 10 <i>Texas Almanac</i> pp 602-612; 613-619; 69-134; 81-93; 114-134 (See Guide to Readings) |
| 9/21 Workbook Activity 1 due at the BEGINNING of class. | | |
| 9/26 & 9/28 Movie Research Opportunity Days | | Activity 5: Cinematic Views of Texas |
| 10/3 | The People of Texas-Today and in the Past | Activity 2: Population <i>Texas</i> Chapter 3 <i>The Changing Face of Texas</i> (.pdf on website) |
| 10/5 Movie Research Opportunity Day (see Activity 5) | | |
| 10/12 Workbook Activity 2 due at the BEGINNING of class | | |
| Test I , Bring Scantron (Test & Measurement) Will include information from ARGOT activities and readings as well as all class notes and lecture materials | | |
| 10/17 | The Migration, Settlement & Development of Texas: Texas to 1860; 1861 to 1900; 1900 to the Present | Activity 3: Ethnicity <i>Texas</i> Chapter 4, Chapter 9 (200-204) <i>Tejano South Texas</i> Chapter 4 <i>Texas Almanac A Brief Sketch of Texas History</i> , pp 45-68 <i>The Worst Hard Time</i> , pp 1-31 (.pdf on website) |
| 11/2 Workbook Activity 3 due at the BEGINNING of class | | |
| 11/7 | The Culture(s) of Texas-Change and Continuity: Religion, Language & Landscape | <i>Texas</i> Chapter 5, 6, 9 (the rest) <i>Deep East Texas</i> <i>Tejano South Texas</i> Chapter 9 <i>Nationalization of a Southernism</i> (.pdf on website) <i>Texas Almanac Religion</i> , pp 519-522 |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 11/14 | Politics in Texas | <i>Texas Chapter 7</i> <i>Texas Almanac Elections</i> , pp 382-411 |
| 11/21 | The Economy(ies) of Texas-Earning a Living | Activity 4: Visualizing Texas Geography <i>The Churn</i> <i>Texas Almanac Agriculture</i> , pp 624-42, <i>Business</i> , pp 567-68; 574-5 |
| 11/30 Workbook Activity 4 due. Movie Research Opportunity Day (see Activity 5) | | |
| 12/7 No class but Workbook Activity 5 due. | | |
| Self Study | Urban Texas-Cities and the Future | <i>Urban Texas Chapter 1</i> On-line self-paced learning |
| 12/8 Test II , 3:00-5:00 p.m. Bring Scantron (Test & Measurement) and Bluebook. Will include information from ARGOT activities, readings and lecture materials since last test. | | |

Course Requirements

1. Two examinations (40% of your grade).

The exams will cover class lectures, readings on Electronic Reserve, and knowledge and skills gained from completing the ARGOT activities and readings. The tests are not cumulative except for questions from ARGOT.

2. Activities and Readings in the Geography of Texas (ARGOT) activities (50% of your grade).

How much do you know and can do with geography? These activities are designed to give you hands-on experience in discovering more about the topics discussed in class. Take time to do well on these activities. Quality is important. You may wish to work with a study group to ensure accuracy and completeness but be sure the work you submit is your OWN. Check university regulations regarding plagiarism at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>. Each activity will count equally and be graded using a scoring rubric.

The five projects you will complete are:

- Activity 1: Climate Graphs of Texas
- Activity 2: Population Pyramids of Texas
- Activity 3: Ethnicity in Texas
- Activity 4: Visualizing Texas Geography
- Activity 5: Cinematic Views of Texas

Descriptions of each activity and complete directions are available at <http://geog.tamu.edu/~sbednarz/texashonors/argot.html>

3. Participation in the class seminar discussions (10% of your grade). This semester you will be expected to read one or two Texas newspapers on a daily basis and be prepared to discuss current trends and events in the context of the class topics and discussions. In addition, you should be prepared to ask and answer questions seminar style about the assigned readings.

Final grades are awarded by examining the distribution of grades at the end of the semester. The usual grade distribution is approximately:

- 12-15% A's
- 30-35% B's & 30-35% C's
- 12-15% D's and/or F's

4. Attend class.

It is imperative that you attend class on a daily basis in order to secure the knowledge necessary to succeed in this course. This is an inquiry class. The nature of your questions and participation are important and will influence your grade. **For each absence, please submit a written explanation (excused**

or unexcused) on your return to class. I will lower your grade if you have more than two unexcused absences. See the Student Handbook for definitions of excused absences.

5. Keep up with the reading.

The class discussions will be more meaningful and thus valuable if you keep up with the readings, contemporary events in Texas, and do ARGOT activities regularly. You may wish to discuss issues with members of your study group. Read the assigned articles carefully (unless other wise noted) and be prepared to share ideas gleaned from the articles. The Reader's Guide will help you to identify important information from the *Texas Almanac*.

| Electronic Course Reserve Title | Syllabus Title |
|---|------------------------------|
| 02: Physiographic Provinces of Texas | Geo-Texas Chapter 2 |
| 03: Population Geography | Texas Chapter 3 |
| 06 Texas Weather and Climate | Geo-Texas Chapter 3 |
| 09: Texas Environment | Geo-Texas Chapter 10 |
| 14 : Confluence of Cultures | Texas Chapter 4 |
| 16: Homeland Forged (Tejano South Texas Ch. 04) | Tejano South Texas Ch. 04 |
| 18: Linguistic Geography | Texas Chapter 5 |
| 19: Geography of Religion | Texas Chapter 6 |
| 25: Rural Settlement Geography | Texas Chapter 9 |
| 29: Political Geography | Texas Chapter 7 |
| 35: Rise of Urban Texas | Urban Texas Chapter 1 |
| 38:Tejano Cultural Province (Tejano South Texas Chapter 09) | Tejano South Texas Chapter 9 |
| Deep East Texas | Deep East Texas |
| The Churn | The Churn |

| Texas Almanac | Readers Guide |
|---------------|---|
| Pp 602-612 | History of Oil Discoveries in Texas. Read the summary captions of the other tables in this section. Note the map on page 607. |
| Pp 613-619 | Non-Petroleum Minerals. Note what, where, and the economic importance of each resource. |
| Pp 69-134 | Environment. Read the description of the regions of Texas, pp 70-73, and compare it to the <i>GeoTexas</i> chapters. Skims the section on soils, pp 77-80, asking yourself: What is the impact on agriculture of the pattern of soils? What are the various uses of the different soil types? Review the materials on plant life on pp 94-97 and compare to the class discussion. |
| Pp 81-93 | Water Resources. Pay special attention to the information on rivers, noting the location of each river (source, mouth, and drainage basin), past uses versus present uses, the impact of each river on the environment in different regions of the state, and any special characteristics, e.g., early Anglo American settlement along the Brazos River; the Canadian River bridge difficulties |
| Pp 114-134 | Skim the description of weather in 2003-2004. Look at the data on destructive weather, tornadoes and drought, reading captions of tables and summarizing patterns and generalizations. |
| Pp 519-522 | Glean the general trends and update what you read in Chapter 6. Note the increasing diversity of religions in Texas. |
| Pp 382-411 | Pay attention to the spatial patterns in voter turn out by county (compare to ethnic patterns), changes in VAP. Compare to results in the November 2006 elections, especially in gerrymandered Texas congressional races. |

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|---------------------|--|
| Pp 624-42 | Follow the trends in ag toward diversifying production and relate this to changes in the state's population. Pay attention to what is grown, where, and why trends are changing. |
| Pp 567-68; 574-5 | Where is it expensive to live? Why? What is the state of the Texas economy? |

Exam and Quiz Policy

If you are absent for an exam, a make-up will be offered only if (1) you contact me either by phone or in person within 24 hours of the date, and (2) you provide me with a written doctor's note stating that you were incapacitated and unable to attend the exam. I will not contact the Health Center, nor is it a sufficient excuse for you to have been at the Health Center and thus to have missed the exam. Check University regulations regarding excused absences. If in doubt, call.

Scholastic Dishonesty

Be sure all work is original or carefully cited. Please see the University Regulations regarding scholastic integrity at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>. I encourage you to work with a study group to complete activities and to learn the material. You will peer-review your classmates' work. Note, however, that providing answers for any assigned work or copying someone else's work, either with or without their permission, is considered unethical and a violation of the University Code of Honor. It will cause you to lose all activity credit for the semester. Work cooperatively in your group and contribute; do not copy blindly. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest issue of the *Texas A&M University Student Rules*, <http://student-rules.tamu.edu>, under the section "Scholastic Dishonesty."

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Equal Opportunities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall, or call 845-1637.

Web Resources

I encourage students to use technology to communicate with me and to learn more about this class and the geography of Texas. Please communicate with me via e-mail. I generally check my mail several times a day and will reply promptly to your inquiries. The web page for the honors GEOG 305 is: <http://geog.tamu.edu/~sbednarz/texashonors>.

I will send important messages to the class via neo.tamu.edu.

Classroom Behavior

Please turn your cell phone off when you enter the classroom. Please exhibit respect for your classmates and me through proper and appropriate classroom behavior.