

Contact information

Owen Dwyer, PhD
Department of Geography
Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI

Office: Cavanaugh 213C
Phone: 274-8808

The best way to contact me is via OnCourse mail or speak to me before / after class. I am typically available in or around the office between 9am and 3pm, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Please let me know if you're going to stop by and I'll be waiting for you.

Class meets at 2:30pm in CA 211 on most Mondays of the semester. Check the schedule for exact dates.

[Click here for information about the Geography Department](#)

Required texts and resources

1. **Joel Kotkin**, *The New Geography*, Random House. Your midterm exam will be on this book. See the Schedule for details.

2. **Larry Ford**, *Cities and Buildings*, Johns Hopkins University Press. You'll read this book and take quizzes on it while you complete the Indianapolis field study.

3. **Peirce Lewis**, *New Orleans*, **2nd edition only!**, Center for American Places. This will be one of the two books covered in your final exam.

4. **Doreen Massey, John Allen, and Steve Pile**, *City Worlds*, Open University Press. This is the second book for your final exam. It was published in the UK and is on back-order at the bookstore. As of January 5, they had 12 copies of it and have promised to find more copies by the end of January. I'd recommend picking up a used copy online at half.com, bookfinder.com, amazon.com, etc.

The next two texts are not specific to urban geography; rather, they have more to do with effective professional communication. They are required texts in the sense that your reading quizzes will include questions from them.

5. **Edward Tufte**, *The Cognitive Style of Powerpoint*, Graphics Press. Powerpoint slide shows can be pretty dull; read Tufte to avoid a similar fate when you make your presentation to the class in May.

6. **Joe Schall**, *Style for Students*, Outernet Press, Read the following: Chapter 1, pp 18-21, 31-34; Chapters 2 - 4; Chapter 9. I predict that Schall's book will become a basic item in your intellectual toolkit. Have a long look at the Table of Contents: essays and term

papers, technical reports, style, grammar, resumes, sources, cover letters. It's all there. I assign Schall's book for most of my 300-level classes; I think what he has to say is that important.

7. Pdf articles posted to the OnCourse Schedule.

8. Several rolls of film, gas money, and access to powerpoint in order to complete the field studies. Feel free to use a digital camera if you have one.

9. A quality map(s) of Indianapolis.

10. Access to OnCourse

Course description

Geography 314, "Urban Geography," is a three credit course. As a social science course, G314 investigates the spatial patterns and processes that characterize cities. As you may recall, the word "geography" is derived from the Greek "geo", meaning earth, and "graphos" meaning description or depiction. Thus, geography is the art and science of earth writing or drawing. In this course the focus is on "earth drawing and writing" about cities, mostly from North America. The course is concerned with three fundamental questions: How are the economic, social, and cultural aspects of cities spatially arranged? Why are they organized in this manner? How do cities interact with the world around them? This course emphasizes the acquisition of basic geographic concepts (e.g., how to observe and analyze urban landscapes). You will be graded on a series of quizzes, two exams, and two projects.

Importantly, this course incorporates several of IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning. Communication skills related to quantitative analysis are stressed in a map interpretation exercise and the project. Critical thinking skills associated with the analysis and synthesis of information are called upon, for instance, when comparing and contrasting residential segregation in different places. Finally, a better understanding of American society and culture is promoted via assignments which explore the links between local and global issues affecting cities around the world.

It is essential for your success in this course that you have regular and reliable access to a computer and the internet. The quizzes for this course are self-administered via OnCourse. If you don't know how to use OnCourse, now is the time to learn. You can read the student guide to OnCourse, take an online tour of the package, or attend a free introductory class about OnCourse. Call 274-HELP (the University's technology assistance center) to learn more about these options and other sources of getting assistance with OnCourse.

Before class: Preparation

G314 requires a considerable amount of work outside of class. Before each class I expect that you will check the OnCourse Schedule. Be certain to do this inasmuch as I

occasionally shorten or otherwise change the reading assignment.

Then, I ask that you complete the assigned readings and the pre-class quiz. Pre-class quizzes are a bit unfamiliar to most people. There are ten quizzes; check the schedule with religious devotion to make sure you don't miss one of them. Unsubmitted quizzes earn a zero; see my policy regarding make-up quizzes below.

The quizzes consist of objective format questions, i.e., matching, multiple guess, and true/false questions. There will be at least one question about each assigned reading. Each quiz is worth ten points.

So, you might ask yourself, why give a quiz before class? That's simple: To provide you an appropriate incentive to prepare for class as well as lay the groundwork for an insightful class discussion.

The pre-class quiz will be available via OnCourse between Thursday and Monday. It is your responsibility to submit your quiz before Monday at 9am. After this time you will not be able to complete the quiz and you will receive a zero.

You will have one opportunity to take each quiz. It is self-administered and there is one-hour time limit. You may use your notes, readings, and even teach one another. That said, each student is required to submit an individual quiz.

Sounds easy, right? Wrong.

I assume that you've read the material and understand it, and that you've attended class and actively participated. If you have questions while you're reading, just drop me a note in OnCourse. We can meet in person or talk over the phone (274-8808). The questions are designed to challenge you. They will discriminate between those who really understand the material and those who do not.

Other things to know: The quizzes are cumulative and may draw on both your reading assignments and previous in-class presentations.

If you are anxious about multiple choice questions and their ilk, check out the links below for some helpful handouts to improve your study and test-taking skills.

[Click here for tips regarding study skills and exam-taking strategies](#)

After you've arrived at the University College site use the navigation bar on the left to choose the Helpful Handouts link under the Bepko Learning Center.

[Click here for a test anxiety self-assessment](#)

[Click here for tips on understanding test anxiety](#)

[Click here for tips on dealing with test anxiety](#)

You might also find these three documents helpful for dealing with test anxiety. They come by way of Dr. Julia Lash. She works at the university's office for Counseling and Psychological Services. You can call CAPS, 274-2548, and schedule a consultation if you are anxious about tests or just life in general. In most cases, IUPUI students can visit with a counselor for free.

Finally, don't hesitate to contact me with any questions on the assigned readings. I'll do (almost) everything possible to help you come to class prepared to make the most of the opportunity. I cannot overemphasize the importance of out-of-class preparation for success in this course. The readings are time consuming and require thoughtful consideration.

During class: Inquiry

During class we will typically discuss and review any assignments or quizzes that preceded it. On occasion we'll view a film and discuss it. Related concepts will be presented and discussed. I expect that you will come to class having read and completed the assigned materials and that you will be prepared to ask and answer questions. Class participation is expected in G314; see the grading scale for more details.

Indianapolis Field Study

The field study is worth 25 points, or 12.5% of your grade. In it you will produce a digital slideshow that illustrates (with photos that you take) the concepts from our readings with examples from Indianapolis. You'll need money for film and gas as well as access to a car. You are required to complete the field study with a partner (groan!), so choose wisely. More details can be found on the attached document (COMING SOON!).

Policy regarding late projects and make-up quizzes

No make-up quizzes will be made available. Make-up quizzes may be given in extreme circumstances, at my discretion, if you have contacted me in advance of the quiz and the absence can be documented by a physician or university office. Late projects will be penalized one point for every business day they are tardy.

Grades

Your grade in this course derives from your performance on several activities:

- Ten pre-class quizzes (50% of final grade);
- The midterm and final exams (25%); and
- The topographic map project and the field study (25%).

Make a point of checking the Schedule to see when things are due.

Class participation will be subjectively evaluated and used in cases of border-line grades.

The following guide will give you a better sense of what is expected of you.

Class participation rubric

Excellent class participation consists of doing all or almost all of the following:

- Takes a voluntary, thoughtful, and active role in learning
- Consistently demonstrates a desire to learn and share ideas
- Initiates discussions, asks significant questions
- Takes risks, can assert and support opinions, listens actively to others
- Demonstrates thorough knowledge of readings and understanding of relevant issues

Good class participation consists of doing most or many of the following:

- Takes an active role in learning
- Regularly participates in class discussion
- Frequently volunteers ideas, asks thoughtful questions
- Listens actively to others and will share and defend opinions when asked
- Demonstrates knowledge of readings

Average class participation consists of doing most or many of the following:

- Occasionally takes an active role in learning
- Volunteers ideas and participates in class discussion infrequently
- Hesitates to share opinions and may not listen to others
- Demonstrates limited knowledge of readings

Poor class participation consists of doing all or almost all of the following:

- Rarely takes an active role in learning
- Joins in class discussion only when called on
- Cannot support opinions and may be dismissive of others
- Demonstrates little or no knowledge of readings

There are a total of 200 possible points. Your current grade will be posted in the gradebook after each quiz, exam, and project.

The lowest point totals and percentages for each grade are as follows:

A+ = 194 (97%)

A = 186 (93%)

A- = 180 (90%)

B+ = 174 (87%)

B = 166 (83%)

B- = 160 (80%)

C+ = 154 (77%)

C = 146 (73%)
C- = 140 (70%)
D = 120 (60%)

Rights and responsibilities

For my part, I will begin and end class on time. I will be available for consultation by appointment during the semester. Information concerning your grade will be kept confidential.

Your responsibilities include the following. If you celebrate a religious holiday and as a result will miss class, notify me in writing at the beginning of the semester. It is inappropriate to interrupt or in any way disturb your fellow students as they attempt to take notes and participate in class. Not only is it rude to do so, it is also expensive inasmuch as your colleagues are paying money to attend lecture. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to get copies of the notes from one of your colleagues. I will not make my notes available.

Importantly, I expect that you will check OnCourse before class for any course announcements or mail I may have posted.

The University requires that I track of your attendance. Obviously, it will be extremely difficult to complete this course without regular attendance.

A special note concerning plagiarism and other forms of cheating. The vast majority of students do not cheat. Their honesty is to be commended. So that their honesty is not compromised, I will not tolerate cheating on the part of the small number of students who, for whatever reasons, choose to do so. The work you submit for grading must be your own. Plagiarism or other forms of cheating will result in a failing grade for the course and a report being filed with the Dean of Students. You are referred to the IUPUI Student Code for further information.

I strongly recommend taking the quizzes while you are on campus given the speed of the network and lack of distractions. Taking a quiz at home is complicated by the fact that your computer may occasionally be disconnected from OnCourse – usually because of a slow modem connection. In these cases, immediately reconnect with OnCourse and resume the quiz – do not postpone the quiz until a later time. Upon completing the quiz, send me a brief note via OnCourse mail explaining the situation. My OnCourse log tracks how long it takes a student to submit his test. When your connection is interrupted, the log will note that you received a second copy of the quiz. Without an explanation, I'll presume that some form of cheating is afoot and begin an investigation. Likewise, a pattern of broken connections will be interpreted as cheating and be dealt with as outlined above.