



## GEOG 3315: GEOGRAPHIES OF ARKANSAS

Dr. David Lee Baylis

### Section 1: Course Information

#### **Contact Information:**

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Office Hours: Mondays, 11am-1pm or by appointment

#### **Course Materials:**

1. Textbook: None. Readings provided as PDFs on Blackboard. We will only be using selections from various sources. A source list is provided in case you want to engage in further reading from these texts.
2. Software: QGIS - <https://qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html>
3. Software: Google Earth - <https://www.google.com/earth/versions/#download-pro>
4. Software: Google MyMaps - <https://www.google.com/maps/about/mymaps/>

**Official Course Description:** Study of Arkansas' natural and cultural environments with emphasis on how various groups, past and present, interact with the state's natural regions. Geologic, climate, soil, and vegetation patterns are examined. Settlement patterns; economic activities, including agriculture, forestry, mining, and industry; and population distributions are analyzed and placed together with the state's natural regions. Three credit hours.

**Core Course Objectives (per Course Unit):** This course is comprised of 5 course units and a final project. As an online, *asynchronous* course (i.e. students aren't all required to be present at the same time), students will have a fair amount of freedom to complete assignments as each course unit is several weeks long. Course unit length is as follows: unit 1 (2 weeks), unit 2 (3 weeks), unit 3 (3 weeks), unit 4 (3 weeks), unit 5 (3 weeks), final project/conclusion (2 weeks).

**Course units will provide students with the information and tools necessary to:**

- A) *Review and recall the five themes of geography (location, place, human-environment interaction, region, movement) as well as the core sub-fields of human geography (historical, cultural, political, economic, population);*
- B) *Explore and apply web-mapping tools and free and open source (FOSS) Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for the creation of basic maps that can be used for storytelling and visual communication, display, and dissemination of data and ideas;*
- C) *Investigate the historical production of narratives about Arkansas as a place and how those geographical imaginaries diffused, shaped, and continued to shape contemporary understandings of Arkansas;*

- D) *Use a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources (Census, Bureau of labor, Geological Survey, historical archival materials) to identify and complicate regionalization within Arkansas, and the regionalization of Arkansas within the wider United States;*
- E) *Use a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources (Census, Bureau of labor, Geological Survey, historical archival materials) to explore and explain patterns of cultural, economic, and demographic change within Arkansas (and/or involving or originating from Arkansas).*
- F) *Use data to critically assess both generalized stereotypes and contested representations of Arkansas;*
- G) *Produce basic maps and infographics to visualize spatial patterns and processes.*

## **Assignments and Grading**

**Summary:** This course is comprised of 5 unit quizzes, 5 unit mapping assignments, weekly conversations, and a final “Atlas of Arkansas” course summary project. As this is an asynchronous online course, all unit assignments will become open and available when a unit opens. Plan accordingly and take note of the late policy below.

**Unit Quizzes:** Each unit will contain one quiz based on both content from the introductory unit lectures as well as unit readings. Each quiz is worth 25 points. In total, quizzes are worth 25% of the final course grade (125/500 points).

**Arkansas Voices (Weekly Conversations):** For each Arkansas Voices (AV) weekly conversation, I will create a discussion prompt in the current unit and week's discussion board. Students are required to actively engage each weekly discussion board. Grades for the weekly conversations will be based on the following criteria:

**A).** An original response thread that contains a detailed answer (at least 50 words) to the question or challenge I post in my prompt. For example, I may ask you to provide examples based on a theme from the readings, seek out data, post images or maps, etc. Students will post their response as a new thread within that week's discussion board. Their detailed answer should be substantive (meaningful and relevant to the question, unit topic, readings, etc.) and provide evidence (citations/sources). Images, anecdotes, and other embellishments are encouraged but substance and evidence are required.

**B).** Following the upload of at least one original response thread to my prompt, students should then keep up with the conversation and classmates' subsequent postings (and my responses) by providing at least 2 additional responses to the thread. Additional responses should aim to continue the conversation. For example, simply posting “I agree”, etc., will NOT be considered a meaningful and substantive response. Posts that ask relevant questions, provide additional detail, stimulate debate, etc. will be considered meaningful and substantive responses. Quality over quantity matters here. Each initial response is worth up to 6 points. Each follow-up post will be scored a 0, 1, or 2. A complete weekly AV conversation in a single weekly thread is worth up to 10 points. **Students who wait until 24 hours before the closing date to make an initial post will only receive half credit on the entire thread.**

Weekly AV conversations will happen during weeks 3-14. In total, these DG assignments are worth 24% of the final course grade (120/500 points).

**Unit Mapping Activity:** Each unit will culminate with a Mapping Activity (MA) of increasing difficulty. Individual instructions are provided for each unit MA on Blackboard. MA 1 is worth 30 points. MA 2 is worth 30 points. MA 3 is worth 40 points. MA 4 is worth 50 points. MA 5 is worth 50 points. In total, the mapping activities are worth 40% of the final course grade (200/500 points)

**Mini Atlas of Arkansas:** For the final course project, students will rework the maps that were generated for Units 2-5, clean up any issues and respond to my feedback, and add additional materials (introductory reference map title page, table of contents, 3 page double-spaced summary of all content). The final atlas will be submitted as a single PDF and will be a minimum of 9 pages in length. The final atlas is worth 16% of the final course grade or 80/500 points.

**Late Policy:** students will be assessed an initial 50% grade reduction on any late initial discussion board posting. Quizzes will not be re-opened if a student misses one without at least a 24 hr prior notification (unless in the case of a documented medical emergency). Plan ahead if you know of a scheduling conflict. This is an online course in which unit assignments open early; just because assignment due dates are Sunday night does NOT mean that you need to wait until Sunday night to complete an assignment.

A = 450 - 500 points

B = 400 – 449 points

C = 350 – 399 points

D = 300 – 349 points

F = 299 points or fewer

## **Section 2: General Course and University Policies**

**Online Courses and Technology Problems:** As this is an online course that makes use of some external software applications (Google Earth Pro, QGIS), you should be prepared to deal with technology-related problem-solving issues now and then. It is likely you will experience problems related to the software, internet access, or Blackboard access at some point during the term. I am happy to assist when I can, however, make note of other resources as well: IT services can assist with basic troubleshooting. ESRI has various support services for technical questions as well. Finally, as a burgeoning GIS professional you need to learn how to problem solve on your own – this means seeking out training and advice to assist with your specific research problems and areas of interest. Links to several of these troubleshooting services are found on the blackboard main page in the menu.

**Library GIS Space:** while we will be using the free and open source mapping and GIS software, QGIS, for the assignments in unit 3, you may be interested in playing around with ArcGIS. This is the industry standard in computer mapping software and I teach several courses focused on its use and application (Intro GIS, etc). We have a lab that runs ArcGIS (SCLB 165). In addition, there is a small GIS lab in the library. See the details below:

***Access to 101B (main floor of the library in the back):*** Key to 101B available for checkout at the Operations desk; only UA Little Rock students/faculty. Computer use only for GIS-related assignments.

***Library GIS Availability Hours*** (\*\*times set to accommodate building opening/closing routines\*\*)

Monday-Thursday      9 am -10 pm

Friday and Saturday    9 am-4 pm

Sunday                    2 pm-10 pm

**Email Policy:** Before emailing me, please review the syllabus and Blackboard first and make sure that any questions you intend to ask are not already addressed. Otherwise, email away!

**Name and Pronoun Policy:** Please feel free to contact me at the start of the semester to let me know how you want to be identified (name, pronouns, etc).

**Attendance Policy:** see grading discussion in section 1.

**Plagiarism:** See university policies in section 3 (I follow the university policies and procedures here). Don't plagiarize – I will automatically fail the first plagiarized assignment and initiate the university procedures for academic probation in the event of a second act of plagiarism.

**Classroom Decorum:** In online courses, we need to be especially attentive to tone and how we present ourselves. People don't always agree, and that is ok. However, please always use respect and professional decorum in this course (not necessarily "civility" – impassioned discussion can be fruitful. Disagree but don't be rude and avoid all ad hominem attacks\*). In addition, if you make an argument, have facts to support it and be prepared to share sources. Everyone is entitled to an opinion but that does not mean that all opinions are equally valid. Statements and arguments without factual support and empirical evidence to back it up are useless, at least in this classroom.

*\*Note: by "ad hominem attacks" I mean an argument that solely relies upon insults and tends to ignore the facts of the discussion; e.g. "well, he has a mustache and people with mustaches can never be trusted". This is merely an instructional example that veers toward the ridiculous. Ad hominem attacks are a type of informal fallacy. While this is not a logic class, it never hurts to promote the rules of logic when talking about discussions and arguments (straw man, slippery slope, tu quoque, etc).*

**Academic Integrity:** For the full University Academic Integrity Statement, see policy 501.13: <https://ualr.edu/policy/home/student/academic-integrity-and-grievance/> As UALR student, you should make sure to review the student handbook to make sure that you understand both your rights and responsibilities at UALR. For this class, let me emphasize one key academic integrity matter: plagiarism (see below). (UA Little Rock Policy 510.13)

**Attendance:** Each faculty member has the prerogative of setting specific attendance requirements for classes. In some courses, active student participation is an integral part of the course, and the instructor may base a portion of the students' grades on attendance and participation. In general, students are expected to attend class regularly. Students who miss class are responsible for finding out about the material covered, homework assignments, and any announcements or examinations. On the 10th day of classes, students who have not attended in class will be administratively withdrawn by the instructor. Students may be administratively withdrawn from a class by the instructor for excessive absences during the semester (UA Little Rock Policy 404.4).

**Inclement Weather Policy:** During inclement weather, UA Little Rock will decide whether to close based on all available information:

1. The chancellor will decide whether conditions warrant canceling classes and activities and closing the campus or whether classes and activities will be canceled but with specified campus offices open. Online or web-enhanced classes will continue as scheduled at the discretion of the faculty member.
2. The [UA Little Rock website](#), UA Little Rock email, the university's main telephone number (501.569.3000), and the Rave campus alert notification system are the official means of communicating information concerning weather-related closings.
3. When necessary, the university will announce a separate decision about canceling night classes (those classes starting at 4:20 p.m. or later) by 2 p.m., if possible.
4. Ordinarily, sites remote from campus such as the the Bowen Law School, the Arkansas Studies Institute, and the Benton Center will close or cancel classes and activities whenever the university does so. In some circumstances, however, a separate decision may be made whether or not a site remote from campus will be open or closed, and this decision will be announced through the university's official means of communicating weather-related closings. Vice chancellors are responsible for seeing that necessary services are provided in their respective areas when the university is closed. Employees required to provide such services will be identified by their supervisors. Classified employees who must report to work when the university is closed due to inclement weather will be allowed compensation time of

1.5 hours for one hour worked. Persons who are not required to work when the university is closed will be granted authorized absence. Employees who do not report to work when the campus is open will be charged annual/compensatory leave or leave without pay. The Payroll Department will prescribe payroll reporting and timekeeping.

5. The Policy Advisory Council of the University Assembly will recommend to the chancellor if and when missed undergraduate and graduate class days should be made up. In the event that the university is closed during a final examination day, the provost, in consultation with the Faculty Senate president, will reschedule any missed graduate or undergraduate final examinations with the exception of online exams which will continue as scheduled.
6. Weather and road conditions vary from place to place. Employees and students are expected to exercise good judgment regarding the safety of travel when road conditions are affected by the weather. (UA Little Rock Policy 215.1)

**Non-Discrimination:** UA Little Rock adheres to a policy that enables all individuals, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, or disability, to work and study in an environment unfettered by discriminatory behavior or acts. Harassment of an individual or group will not be condoned, and any person (student, faculty, or staff member) who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Harassment that is considered discriminatory includes actions or conduct (verbal, graphic, gestural, or written) directed against any person or group with the intent to demean or create a hostile or threatening environment. It is not the intent of this policy to infringe upon or limit educational, scholarly, or artistic expression. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the Office of Human Relations to obtain assistance and information concerning the filing of a complaint. At the same time the university prohibits discriminatory practices, it promotes equal opportunity through affirmative action. Non-discriminatory affirmative action equal opportunity policies apply to recruitment, hiring, job classification and placement, work conditions, promotional opportunities, demotions/transfers, terminations, training, compensation, choice of contractors and suppliers of goods and services, educational opportunities, disciplinary action, recreational and social activities, use of facilities, housing and university-sponsored programs.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism has various forms but is essentially the unattributed use of someone else's ideas (in writing or otherwise): <https://ualr.edu/writingcenter/plagiarism/>. Passing off someone else's work as one's own is a serious academic offense. In addition, it is the fastest way to lose my respect. I want to see each individual student's own ideas. As such, avoid plagiarism at all costs or face the consequences (starting with an automatic zero on that assignment and ending with the filing of an official report). If you have questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, the University Writing Center is a great place to start: <https://ualr.edu/writingcenter/>

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability (or need to document a disability) and need an accommodation, please contact me privately as soon as possible so that we can discuss with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) how to meet your specific needs and the requirements of the course. The DRC offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process among you, your instructor(s) and the DRC. Thus, if you have a disability, please contact me and/or the DRC, at 501-5693143 (V/TTY) or 501-683-7629 (VP). For more information, please visit the DRC website at [ualr.edu/disability](http://ualr.edu/disability). (UA Little Rock Policy 404.9)

## Section 3: Course Schedule

|  | Dates         | Topic   | Readings   | Assignments  |
|--|---------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Unit 1: Geographic Concepts, Tools, and Techniques</b>  |               |   |  |  |
| <b>Week 1</b>  | 8/19 – 8/25   | Human Geography in a Regional Context                               | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 1, Week 1 Folder                | <b>Quiz 1:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/1   |
| <b>Week 2</b>  | 8/26 – 9/1    | Basic Map Design and GIS Skills: QGIS, Google Earth, Google My Maps | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 1, Week 2 Folder                | <b>Mapping Activity 1:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday 9/1  |
| <b>Unit 2: Constructing Arkansas: Historical Geographic Narratives of Place, Landscape, People</b>               |               |   |  |  |
| <b>Week 3</b>  | 9/2 – 9/8     | Place, Landscape, Historical Geography                              | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 2, Week 1 Folder                | <b>Quiz 2:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/22<br><b>AV 1:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/8                |
| <b>Week 4</b>  | 9/9 – 9/15    | Arkansas Travel Narratives, 19 <sup>th</sup> Century                | <i>Arkansas Traveler</i> , Introduction and Ch 6 – Found in Blackboard Unit 2, Week 2 Folder | <b>AV 2:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/15  |
| <b>Week 5</b>  | 9/16 – 9/22   | Arkansas Travel Narratives, 19 <sup>th</sup> Century                | <i>Arkansas Traveler</i> , Introduction and Ch 6 – Found in Blackboard Unit 2, Week 2 Folder | <b>Mapping Activity 2:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday 9/22<br><b>AV 3:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/22    |
| <b>Unit 3: Locating Arkansas: Categorization, Regionalization and the Geographies of Belonging and Exclusion</b> |               |   |  |  |
| <b>Week 6</b>  | 9/23 – 9/29   | “Southering”: Regional Categorization and Cultural Geography        | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 3, Week 1 Folder                | <b>Quiz 3:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/13<br><b>AV 4:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 9/29              |
| <b>Week 7</b>  | 9/30 – 10/6   | From the Ozarks...  | Selections from <i>Hill Folks</i> – Found in Blackboard Unit 3, Week 2 Folder                | <b>AV 5:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/6  |
| <b>Week 8</b>  | 10/7 – 10/13  | ...to the Delta   | Selections from <i>Defining the Delta</i> – Found in Blackboard Unit 3, Week 3 Folder        | <b>Mapping Activity 3:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/13<br><b>AV 6:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/13 |
| <b>Unit 4: Who is an Arkansan? Whose Arkansas?: Hillbillies, “Hipbillies”, or...?</b>                            |               |   |  |  |
| <b>Week 9</b>  | 10/14 – 10/20 | Political Ecologies & Geographies: Landscapes as Contested Spaces   | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 4, Week 1 Folder                | <b>Quiz 4:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/3<br><b>AV 7:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/20              |
| <b>Week 10</b>   | 10/21 – 10/27 | Who is an Arkansan?   | Selections from <i>Arkansas/Arkansaw</i> – Found in Blackboard Unit 4, Week 2 Folder         | <b>AV 8:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 10/27   |

|   |               |  |  |   |
|---|---------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Week 11</b>  | 10/28 – 11/3  | Whose Arkansas?                          | Selections from <i>Hipbillies</i> and <i>Unnatural State</i> – Found in Blackboard Unit 4, Week 3 Folder           | <b>Mapping Activity 4:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/3<br><br><b>AV 9:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/3    |
| <b>Unit 5: Between Bible Belt and Sunbelt: Arkansan Geographies of Connection and Isolation</b> |               |  |  |   |
| <b>Week 12</b>  | 11/4 – 11/10  | Geographies of Mobility and Connectivity | Lectures and Supplemental Materials Found in Blackboard Unit 5, Week 1 Folder                                      | <b>Quiz 5:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/24<br><br><b>AV 10:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/10             |
| <b>Week 13</b>  | 11/11 – 11/17 | The Spirit Moves/Family Values           | Selections from <i>Bible Belt to Sunbelt</i> and <i>To Serve God and Wal-Mart</i> – Found in Unit 5, Week 2 Folder | <b>AV 11:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/17   |
| <b>Week 14</b>  | 11/18 – 11/24 | Arkansas Atlas Workshopping              | Arkansas Atlas Workshopping  | <b>Mapping Activity 5:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/24<br><br><b>AV 12:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Sunday, 11/24 |
| <b>Course Conclusion/Arkansas Atlas</b>   |               |  |  |   |
| <b>Week 15</b>  | 11/25 – 12/1  | Fall Break                               | Fall Break   | Fall Break  |
| <b>Week 16</b>  | 12/2 – 12/6   | Work on Atlas                            | Work on Atlas  | <b>Arkansas Atlas:</b> Due by 11:59pm, Friday, 12/6   |