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HSS 404-056: Mapping the World

Kathleen Pullum

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HSS 404-056: Mapping the World

Professor: Dr. Kathleen Pullum

Meeting Time: Friday, 8:30-11:20 a.m.

Meeting Place: Central King, room 314

Office Hours: Tuesday, 1-2 p.m., Cullimore Hall, room 435b

Contact: kathleen.a.pullum@njit.edu [****** messaging through Canvas is preferred ******]

Course Description:

How was the world mapped? Who were the cartographers who did this work, when and in what places, and using what methods? How were different geographies represented at particular times/ places and to what effect? What can studying a map teach us about the history, politics, and scientific practices of a culture? How was space conceived and represented at different times? Further, what insights might this provide in the present? How can new mapping technologies illuminate (or distort) political, economic, environmental and other social issues?

In this course we will look in depth at the construction of select maps of the world and of specific geographies. We are concerned with the various technologies, semiotics and circumstances of map production, and how these are connected to social, political, historical and economic (among other) factors related to the particular place. In this way, the map is viewed as an object providing a lens into social and scientific practices, as well as a representation making a claim about reality. How can we “read” these complex images in their depth?

Course Objectives:

- To introduce students to basic elements of the map, including contemporary and historical mapping practices
- To acquaint students with approaches to cartographic history
- To develop the skills to analyze, evaluate, and critique the map as an object through investigating the details of its technological and social production, that is, how the map came into being
- To compare historical maps and geographic representations to contemporary examples

Required Text:

There are no required texts to purchase for this course, although students are required to register for a New York Times student account.

All assigned readings and video links will be posted on Canvas.

Grade Breakdown:

Final Project (30%) This will include a presentation and research paper on a particular map.

Map Notes (35%) These will be compiled research memos on maps that we have studied or related geographies (3-4 during the term).

Presentation (10%) Students will present a map once during the semester.

Participation (25%) Credit for this portion of the grade is assigned according to the amount that you are prepared for class and contribute *constructively* in some way to the discussion in class, to in-class activities. Significant absences and/or tardies will result in a proportionately lower participation grade.

Grading Scale:

A (90% and above)

B+ (87%-89%) **B** (80%-86%)

C+ (77%-79%) **C** (70%-76%)

D+ (67 to 69%) **D** (60 to 66%)

F (59% and below)

Late Work:

Assignments should be submitted on time, no exceptions.

Late work will receive an automatic -10 points each day and after one week will no longer be accepted.

Any accommodations or extensions on major deadlines must be arranged well in advance (one week minimum).

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend every class and to be on time. Beyond 2 unexcused absences, participation grades will be reduced by 5% per absence. For excused absences, it is the student's responsibility to send their documentation to the Dean of Student's Office.

Transport issues do not count as excused absences or tardies. If you find that you are consistently having trouble getting to class on time, it is your responsibility to work this out. It is extremely disruptive to the teacher and students in the classroom to have individuals entering the classroom once the class has started.

Once you have entered the room, you are there for the class. Students should not be going in and out throughout the lecture, or leaving early. There will be break time during the seminar.

Other Policies:

Mobile electronic devices should not be used in the classroom and should remain in your bag for the entirety of class time. Laptops may be used for note-taking and specific activities, but if I notice that you are not participating in the class as a result, I will ask you to put them away.

There will be no eating allowed in class, and drinking should be kept to an absolute minimum.

University Policy on Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at:

<http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu

Accessibility:

NJIT's Office of Accessibility Resources and Services works to provide students with reasonable accommodations for students. If you need reasonable accommodation to complete the course, please see the website for details (<https://www.njit.edu/student-success/accessibility>) or reach out to the office via email at oars@njit.edu or by phone at 973-596-5417.