

GEOG 216 – GEOGRAPHY OF THE WORLD ECONOMY
(Fall 2023)

PROFESSORS

Prof. Oliver Coomes, 415 Burnside Hall
Ph: 398-4943, Office Hours: Monday 3:00-4:00 pm
Email: oliver.coomes@mcgill.ca
Course email: gwe216@gmail.com

Prof. Sébastien Breau, 417 Burnside Hall
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:30-1:30 pm
Email: sebastien.breau@mcgill.ca
Course schedule: MWF, 8:35 to 9:25 am, McIntyre Med Bldg 522

COURSE OVERVIEW

The object of the course is to provide you with a broad understanding of the dynamics of the world economy. In particular, we seek to understand how this system affects our lives and the lives of people in other parts of the world. The course has been divided into five sections. In *Section I*, we introduce you to certain basic concepts and trends of the world economy. In *Section II*, some significant processes in the emergence of a global economy are highlighted. *Section III* looks at the spatial concentration of resources used for economic activities while *Section IV* examines the spatial organization of the new world economy. Finally, *Section V* covers key contemporary topics that reflect changes in the growing economic interconnectedness of world regions, i.e., multinational corporations, trade institutions, food supply, inequality and the COVID pandemic.

COURSE READINGS

The required readings for this course are located on MyCourses and organized by lecture date. We recommend that you read the articles for each lecture before and after class so that you come to the lectures prepared and then connect what you have learned in class back to the readings. **Students will be evaluated on their knowledge of both the readings and lecture materials, unless otherwise advised. The readings are meant to complement the lecture material and should not be seen as a substitute. Class attendance is required as full lecture notes are not posted on WebCT.**

COURSE EVALUATION

Test I	25%	Friday, September 29 (in class)
Test II	25%	Wednesday, November 8 (in class)
Final Exam	50%	TBA in Examination Period (on campus)

In accord with [McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. Note also that, in the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

COURSE ADMINISTRATION

The Student Contact Teaching Assistant (TBA) for this course is always the first point of contact for all course-related questions regarding the readings, assignment, tests and final exam. Student correspondence to TAs and Instructors via email should require a short answer only. Students should use office hours or make personal appointments if questions require a longer answer.

In-class tests are to be taken at the scheduled time; no make-up tests will be offered. In the case a test is missed, with valid reason (e.g., medical note, etc. provided), its value will be added to the next test. Requests for test reassessments must be made within 10 working days after the exam is released to students. For information on university and department policies for student assessment, please go to <http://www.mcgill.ca/geography/studentassessment>.

The course outline is a contract among students, instructors and McGill University. In compliance with McGill regulations, the evaluation scheme shall be applied uniformly to all students in the class. Under no circumstances can this distribution of grades be reweighed nor can special arrangements be made with any individual student.

As the instructors of this course, we are committed to maintaining a teaching and learning space that is respectful and inclusive for all. Mutual respect is expected at all times amongst instructors, TAs, support staff and students. Additional information on student rights and responsibilities can be found [here](#).

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#) (see also [McGill's guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., lectures, handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

Section 1: Basic concepts and trends		
<i>August</i>		
Wed 30	Course introduction and overview	(OC/SB)
<i>September</i>		
Fri 1	Geographies of global change (Reading 1)	(OC/SB)
Mon 4	<i>Labour Day (no class)</i>	
Wed 6	The structure and organization of economies (Reading 2)	(OC)
Fri 8	Growth and development: concepts and measures (Reading 3)	(OC)
Mon 11	Mapping the world economy (Reading 4)	(SB)
Wed 13	Recent patterns and trends: A global perspective (Reading 5)	(SB)
Fri 15	Recent patterns and trends: A Canadian perspective (Reading 6)	(SB)
Mon 18	Why countries trade (Reading 7)	(SB)
Section 2: Emergence of a world economy and economic development		
Wed 20	Early commercial expansion (Reading 8)	(OC)
Fri 22	The colonial world economy (Reading 9)	(OC)
Mon 25	Development theories and pathways (Reading 10)	(OC)
Wed 27	Summary and Review	(OC/SB)
Fri 29	Test 1 (25%)	(OC/SB)
Section 3: Population and resources		
<i>October</i>		
Mon 2	Global population dynamics (Reading 11)	(OC)
Wed 4	Population and migration (Reading 12)	(OC)
Fri 6	<i>Fall break (no class)</i>	
Mon 9	<i>Thanksgiving / Fall break (no class)</i>	
Wed 11	<i>Fall break (no class)</i>	
Fri 13	Natural resources and primary commodities (Reading 13)	(OC)
Mon 16	Population & resources I: food and agriculture (Reading 14)	(OC)
Wed 18	Population & resources II: oil and minerals (Reading 15)	(OC)
Section 4: The spatial organization of the new world economy		
Fri 20	The diffusion of the industrial revolution (Reading 16)	(SB)
Mon 23	The changing organization of industry: Fordism (Reading 17)	(SB)
Wed 25	The changing organization of industry: post-Fordism (Reading 17)	(SB)
Fri 27	PBS Video – ‘Commanding heights: The new rules of the game’	(SB)
Mon 30	Geography of the division of labour (Reading 18)	(SB)
<i>November</i>		
Wed 1	On externalities, transactions and firm linkages (Reading 18)	(SB)
Fri 3	Agglomeration and new industrial spaces (Reading 18)	(SB)
Mon 6	Summary and review	(OC/SB)
Wed 8	Test 2 (25%)	(OC/SB)
Section 5: Special topics		
Fri 10	The resource curse and Dutch disease (Reading 19)	(OC)
Mon 13	Global food systems (Reading 20)	(OC)
Wed 15	The global land rush (Reading 21)	(OC)
Fri 17	Tropical deforestation (Reading 22)	(OC)
Mon 20	Rain forest livelihoods in Amazonia: Myths and realities (no reading)	(OC)
Wed 22	Global trade institutions and agreements (Reading 23)	(SB)
Fri 24	Local-global geographies of the financial crisis (Reading 24)	(SB)
Mon 27	The economy-environment interface (Reading 25)	(SB)
Wed 29	The world of the city (Reading 26)	(SB)
Thu 30	Globalization and inequality (Reading 27) [takes a Monday schedule]	(SB)
<i>December</i>		
Fri 1	Deglobalization? The world economy after COVID-19 (Reading 28)	(OC/SB)
Mon 4	Summary and review	(OC/SB)
TBA	Final exam (50%)	(OC/SB)