



[\(toc.html#courses\)](#) | Matthew H. Edney

GEO 307, The History of Anglo-American Cartography

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Course Description | The study of cartography -- a complex practice which links technology, science, art, and literature -- provides an alternative approach to cultural and social history with its focus on the creation, dissemination, and control of spatial knowledge. It encourages questions such as, which social institutions (broadly construed) promoted the creation and use of maps? What cultural expectations defined the character of geographic knowledge? Conversely, how have those social institutions and cultural expectations been shaped by the practices of map-making? These issues will be explored in an analysis of the similarities and differences of map-making in Britain and North America, from ca.1500 to 1917. Particular attention will be paid to the territorial aspects of the modern state, to the economic foundations of map-making, and to the cultural ideology of geographical knowledge.

Validity of this Document | This document is not a valid contract with students currently enrolled in this course. It is offered here for informational purposes only. In each semester, the precise syllabus, readings, and manner of assessment will vary. Students must refer to the **printed** syllabus handed out at the start of the semester. Even then, I reserve the right to change the *printed* syllabus as necessary.

Required Readings | There are no texts required for this course.

The essay readings associated with each course topic are listed in the *printed* syllabus and are available in a course anthology. Most come from journals and books which can also be consulted in the Osher Map Library or the regular stacks of the USM libraries.

For the week prior to each class (starting Saturday morning), particularly relevant maps and 'thought-provoking questions' are available for examination by students in the Osher Map Library. These are not compulsory, but will help the student's comprehension of the course.

Office Hours and Communication | Please refer to the section of my homepage on [how to contact me \(whereiam.html\)](#) for current office hours, addresses, etc.

Academic Integrity | Students are expected to make themselves familiar with USM's Student Academic Integrity Policy. Copies of the policy may be obtained through the Office of Student Judicial Affairs, 125 Upton Hall (tel. 780-5242). If you are in **any** doubt regarding the requirements -- or if you do not understand the meaning of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or other academic misconduct -- *please* consult with me before you begin any projects or examinations required for the course. Failure to abide by the established policy will result in the award of zero points for the exam or project; if the failure is conscious, then I will award an F for the entire course. Any penalties will be made in accordance with USM policies.

A special component of academic integrity that pertains to this course is proper behavior in special libraries. To complete the papers, most students will use the collections of the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education; some students might also use the library of the State Historical Society or another special library. Such libraries are governed by strict codes of conduct necessary to preserve their historic and rare materials. A copy of the regulations for the map library is attached. You must obey any directions of the library staff and you must follow the *spirit* of their specific regulations. Following the letter of the regulations is insufficient. That is, you must respect the materials which you consult. Under no circumstances should you deface or damage them, either directly or indirectly through negligence; you must treat all materials with great care. Failure to do so will result in the award of an F for the course.

Citations and the Referencing of Sources | On an issue closely related to academic integrity, students are expected to be competent in the identification and citation of sources. Citations will be in note form. Please refer to the [brief style guide \(citationstyle.html\)](#), although this is not comprehensive. The adequacy and quality of references and citations in each paper will contribute to grades. Again, if you have questions, please ask!

Paper Presentation | As befits a course which is intimately concerned with aesthetics, submitted papers will adhere to a high quality of presentation design. The wide availability of word processors means that there is no excuse for the submission of poorly laid-out or incorrectly spelled documents. All papers will meet [specific physical requirements \(paperformat.html\)](#).

Assessment | Assessment is through two papers (30% and 40% respectively) and a take-home final (30%). Because they are essential components of any essay, the papers will be evaluated according to their presentation, grammar, spelling, and syntax in addition to content. The exam will be (short) essay questions. Because of its nature, the exam may be hand-written and will not be judged for grammar, etc., in as strict a manner as the papers.

Course Syllabus and Readings |

Week 1 | Introduction. Cartographic "modes" and general historic trends.

| §1. The Early Modern Period, incl. the Eighteenth Century

Week 2 | Navigation, exploration, charting

Week 3 | Chorography, consumption, and literacy

Week 4 | Large-scale surveys: property ownership and the state

| §2. The Enlightenment

Week 5 | Mathematical cosmography: geodesy, longitude, and precision

Week 6 | Chorography, natural history, and geographical description

Week 7 | Military engineers and topographical mapping

Week 8 | Political and cartographic revolutions: rationalization of space

| §3. The Nineteenth Century

Week 9 | Systematic surveys: the Ordnance and U.S. Coast surveys

Week 10 | Exploration and mapping of the American west, to 1879

Week 11 | Federal and State Rights; the U.S. Coast and Geological surveys

Week 12 | The 'lithographic revolution': cartographic commercialism

Week 13 | Geography, the hand-maiden of imperialism