

GEOGRAPHY 510
Economic Geography:
Constructing Knowledge Spaces in a Globalizing Era
(Spring 2007)

Instructor: Associate Prof. Kris Olds <olds@geography.wisc.edu>
Schedule: W 7:45 am to 10:45 am [8:15-10:45 am]; Room: 450 Science Hall
Credits: 4
Prereq.: Junior, Senior or Graduate Student or instructor consent

Description: The ubiquity of the ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘knowledge society’ discourse is not simply rhetorical; it represents changing understandings of the relationship between states, economies and individuals, and is giving rise to new spaces, practices and citizen-subjects. The state, in particular, has been actively involved in *constructing new knowledge spaces* at a range scales in the context of evolving conceptualizations of the ‘ideal’ economy and society. Examples of new knowledge spaces include innovative class room architectures designed to engender more creative learning and citizen-subjects; new universities in central cities or emerging regions; university-industry linkage development programs; global university consortia such as the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN); national-scale developments such as Brand New Zealand, Qatar Education City, or Singapore Global Schoolhouse; and regional initiatives such as European Higher Education Area (EHEA), or the ASEAN University Network. GEOG 510 will focus on enhancing our understanding of the broader forces (globalization, regionalism, and statecraft), underlying the emergence of these new knowledge spaces, as well as the evolving configuration and impacts of such spaces. We will devote particular attention to the emergence of new knowledge spaces in Pacific Asia and Europe, in both a comparative and a linkage sense, as well as to network-oriented initiatives that bind together even more disparate spaces of knowledge production. Please note that students with interests in these themes, though set in other geographical contexts (e.g., Africa, Middle East, North America, Latin America), are also welcome in the class.

Structure: This seminar is reading and discussion intensive, with interspersed workshops, lectures, and guest lectures (visiting speakers and via satellite and the Access Grid Node). Course requirements, while still being determined, are likely to include a research paper, research-oriented workshops, several book reviews, and a blog or website.

Who should take this course?: This interdisciplinary course is designed for students who are interested in debates about globalization, regionalism (e.g., the EU, ASEAN, APEC), and the relationship between the ‘knowledge economy’ and higher education restructuring. I welcome students from disciplines and programs as wide-ranging as anthropology, Asian studies, business, economics, education, geography, journalism, sociology, planning, political science, public policy, and so on. Email me at <olds@geography.wisc.edu> if you have any queries!