

Rural Economics of Place and People Applied Economics 240

Dr. Mallory Rahe (pronounced Ray)
Office: 240C Ballard Ext Hall
Office hours: By appointment
Office phone: (541) 737-1335
mallory.rahe@oregonstate.edu

Assistant: Mark St. John
Office Hours: Weds 1-3:00
stjohnm@oregonstate.edu

Course Catalog Description

AEC 240 Rural Economics of Place and People provides perspective on issues influencing rural communities and economic development in rural America. People, places and natural resources of rural communities play a vital role in economic vitality of the West, yet rural landscapes are changing faster than many urban counterparts.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course.

Communication

Dr. Rahe would prefer messages be sent via Canvas Inbox rather than email. Canvas messages and email will generally be responded to within 1 business day. Phone calls and voicemails are also welcomed.

Please contact the TA for Canvas access issues. Contact Dr. Rahe for questions about grades, course content, or any concerns about your abilities to succeed in class.

Canvas Inbox

The Canvas Inbox is located upon logging into Canvas on the left hand side menu. If you need further assistance, please use Canvas Help on the same menu or contact ecampus support.

WebEx Office Hours

Send an email to setup a time for virtual office hours with Dr. Rahe:

1. Have a computer with a microphone and speakers so we can talk to one another (camera optional)
2. At the appointment time go to this web address and dial into the system:
<https://oregonstate.webex.com/meet/rahemoregonstate.edu>

Course Materials

The course will use one textbook: Rural People and Communities in the 21st Century: Resilience and Transformation by David Brown and Kai A. Schafft. Published by Polity Press in 2011. This book is available for \$25.00 or less (as of June 2017). One copy of this book is also available at the library through course reserves. We will read 10 of the 11 chapters in this book, and you will be asked to take weekly quizzes based on the book material. You are encouraged to share a book with a classmate if you can accommodate each other's schedules.

Readings from Choices magazine (<http://www.choicesmagazine.org/choices-magazine>), news articles, and web resources will also be assigned through links provided on Canvas.

Course Description

With one of the nation's largest rural populations in resource-rich land, Oregon's economic prosperity is linked to its rural communities and to its rural development policies. Using Oregon and other western states as illustrative cases, this course provides perspectives on issues influencing rural communities and economic development in the 21st century and engages students in understanding and interpreting changing trends in rural people and rural places. Basic economic concepts will be introduced as they relate to issues and problems of contemporary regional development in rural America. Topics include: resource-rural economic dependencies, poverty and migration, drivers of economic change and economic opportunities, and the influence of federal and local policies on economic development, rural land use, and prosperity. This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities and assignments appropriate for 3 credits. This class will provide groundwork for further studies in rural development and rural policy, and provide tools to engage a new generation of rural community leaders and scholars.

Baccalaureate Core

Rural Economics of Place and People (AEC 240) fulfills the Western Culture component of the Baccalaureate Core. The Western Culture requirement emphasizes critical thinking, focus on a broad subject area and time period, study origins and evolution of important features of Western culture, examine events in a broad context, and demonstrate interrelationships with other subject areas. The rationale behind this requirement is that knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of Western culture are essential to a liberal education. Contemporary U.S. society in all its institutional, social, and cultural complexity is largely a product of Western culture. Understanding of Western culture and knowledge of its origin and evolution enable students to develop greater awareness of its past, present, and future.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Students will achieve the following learning outcomes associated with all Western Culture courses:

1. Identify significant events, developments, and/or ideas in the Western cultural experience and context.
2. Interpret the influence of philosophical, historical, and/or artistic phenomena in relation to contemporary Western culture.
3. Analyze aspects of Western culture in relation to broader cultural, scientific, or social processes. This course defines Western Culture as present day rural communities and economies in the United States with an emphasis on the U.S. West. In our study of these rural places we also consider their interactions with urban areas, and how both the national perception of rural and farm life and key federal policies have affected the development of these places and the people.

In addition, students will also achieve the following learning outcomes:

4. Demonstrate the role of federal policies affecting markets for agricultural products, rural residents' lives, and community growth.
5. Practice fundamental economic concepts of markets, incentives, scarcity and choice from the perspectives of rural people, firms and communities.
6. Assemble a data profile of socioeconomic conditions for a rural county in Oregon.

Canvas

All other assigned material other than the textbook is posted to Canvas. You are responsible for checking and completing all materials posted.

Assignments

Below I have provided a brief description of each type of assignment.

Weekly Reading Quiz (20% of Grade)

90 points total; 10 points a week for 10 weeks – lowest score will be dropped

Each week you will have a Canvas quiz to complete based on the assigned readings. Quizzes are a combination of dropdown fill in the blank, T/F, and select all that apply multiple choice. Quizzes are due Sundays on Canvas by 11:59pm.

Comprehensive Final Exam (22.2% of Grade)

The final will contain questions similar to the weekly quizzes. This timed 2 hour final exam is open note/open book. I will provide additional guidance on what material will be covered in Week 8. The exam will be worth 100 points, or 22% of your total grade.

Weekly Data Use and Communication Discussion Boards (44% of Grade)

200 points total; 20 points per week for 10 weeks

For 10 weeks students will receive small data sets for rural Oregon counties, students will work individually to interpret and communicate insights from the data while connecting to the class materials for that week. Data assignments will be posted on weekly discussion boards in order to facilitate group learning and peer feedback. Your original assignment discussion post is due Sundays at 11:59pm, 2 peer feedback responses will be due Wednesdays by 11:59pm.

Group Discussions (13.3% of Grade)

60 points total; 6 points a week for 10 weeks

In a discussion board format, students will connect with rural research and policy data each week responding to 1 or 2 open ended questions that draw on the course materials and deepen your understanding. This traditional discussion board requires a 7-10 sentence original post each week, due Sundays at 11:59pm and 2 responses of 5-7 sentences due Wednesdays by 11:59 pm.

Extra Credit (2.2% of Grade)

Students can re-do one of their weekly data assignments for up to 10 points of extra credit. This re-submission will be due Sunday of week 10 and will be graded if the student is between letter grades.

Grading

	Points	% of Total	Number of Units
Quizzes	90	20.0	10 quizzes, drop lowest
Data	200	44.4	10 data assignments
Group Discussion	60	13.3	10 discussions
Final	100	22.2	1 final exam
Total	450	100.0	
Extra Credit	10	2.2	

Assignment of letter grades for all students will be based on this scale:

A = 93.0 % and above	B = 83.0 – 86.9	C = 73.0 – 76.9	D = 63.0 – 66.9
A- = 90.0 – 92.9	B- = 80.0 – 82.9	C- = 70.0 – 72.9	D- = 60.0 – 62.9
B+ = 87.0 – 89.9	C+ = 77.0 – 79.9	D+ = 67.0 – 69.9	F = 60.0 % and below

Late Policy

Late assignments will be penalized 10%, but will be accepted until I have finished grading the assignment. I try to have everything graded a week after it is submitted – sometimes earlier, sometimes later. Please contact me if you are having trouble completing the course work on time to make other arrangements.

Course Content Overview

This class tries to establish a consistent weekly schedule – the fall term is somewhat challenging, the term starts on a Wednesday and contains key holidays. I have opted to front load the material to allow students greater flexibility around the Thanksgiving holiday. The class may feel difficult at first if you do not have prior data experience or exposure to economic concepts. This is an applied skill-based course, perseverance and diligence will serve you well.

Week	Topic	Readings and Quiz	Weekly Assignments
1	Why do rural places matter?	Chapters 1 & 2	Data Assignment: Population or Employment Discussion Board: Rural perceptions and experience
Understanding Economic Potential Weeks 2-6			
2	Population of a Place	Chapter 6 ERS Rural America	Data Assignment: Population Pyramid & Median Age Discussion Board: Components of Population Change
3	Proximity to urban areas	BLS: Unemployment Pew: Unemployment	Data Assignment: Unemployment, Labor Force Participation Rates & Educational Attainment by LF status Discussion Board: Measuring rural-urban dependence w/ commuting and earnings flows
4	History and the role of race in rural America	Chapter 7 Choices Immigration Reform	Data Assignment: Race and Ethnicity Discussion Board: Immigration and Econ Welfare
5	Community capacity and public services	Chapter 4 & Chapter 3 (pg 39-42)	Data Assignment: Health Outcomes and Health Risk Factors Discussion Board: Healthcare policy in rural America
6	Industrial specialization and restructuring	Chapter 8	Data Assignment: Employment and Wage Location Quotients Discussion Board: Rural economic restructuring
7	Environmental and Social implications of economic change	Chapter 5 Choices Fracking Overview Choices Fracking Impact	Data Assignment: Housing stability and affordability Discussion Board: Energy independence and rural places
8	Federal policies in Rural America: Farm Bill	Chapter 9 Choices Farm Bill Article 2014 Farm Bill Titles	Data Assignment: Census of Agriculture Discussion Board: Complicated goals of US Farm Bill
9	Federal Policies in Rural America: Social Safety Net	Chapter 10 CPBB Article on Spending CPBB Article on Revenue	Data Assignment: Poverty rates over time, median HH income Discussion Board: Rural dollars in the federal budget
11	Thanksgiving	Catch up week – review and discuss – extra credit due, no other assignments	
10	Future of Rural Economies	Chapter 11	Data Assignment: Income distribution and per capita income Discussion Board: Invest in Rural?
Finals Week			

Class Code of Conduct

As we study rural places we will be talking about different rural populations. Rural America contains many high poverty areas, and we will discuss government interventions to reduce poverty. We will also discuss other policies and how they have affected rural areas. This is not a political science course and during our discussions of government interventions you should refrain from discussing your personal

political feelings or making moral judgements about the behaviors and actions of others. When I ask you a synthesis or analysis question I expect you to draw upon the materials we have covered in class, and not solely your own opinion or feelings. Much of this course is discussion and group based, I ask all students to be respectful to me and all other students in the course. If you are unable to do so, you will be asked to leave and will need to schedule a meeting with Intercultural Student Services in order to return to class.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others are serious offenses and may be punished by failure on the exam or project, failure in the course, and/or expulsion from the university. Refer to the Schedule of Classes for more information on academic dishonesty. Student conduct guidelines can be found at <http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/regulations/>

Disruptive Behavior

Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the Student Conduct Program for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office.

<http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm>

Disability Access Statement

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at [541-737-4098](tel:541-737-4098) or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.