GEOG 4381: The Parks Idea in North American Landscapes
Spring 2021

Angelo State University
Department of History

Instructor
Rob Briwa (he/him/his) | Office: Academic 210G | rbriwa@angelo.edu |

Course details
GEOG 4381 Lecture Section 001 | Classroom: Academic 225 | Tuesday/Thursday | 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Textbook and Required Reading Materials
There is no required textbook for this course. All required and optional readings will be made available on Blackboard as .pdf files on a rolling basis, at least one week in advance. Unless otherwise specified, you should complete course readings by Wednesday night in preparation for class discussions on Thursdays.

A tentative list of readings is listed in the syllabus schedule. Note that this list is subject to change: I may substitute more appropriate readings or eliminate readings, but never add additional, new papers. Note that some weeks have multiple readings listed. For those weeks, we will pre-arrange “Reading Groups,” and assign each group a subset of papers. Reading Groups will be determined through randomized drawing, and each Reading Group will be responsible to lead discussions on their assigned paper. My intention by taking this technique is that together, we will ‘piece together’ wider narratives about park landscapes through sharing our individual papers and perspectives.

Office hours
Briwa | Mondays 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. | Wednesdays 11 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. | Other times by appointment

Course description
From Grand Teton National Park’s towering peaks to San Angelo State Park’s O.C. Fisher Reservoir, parks are special parts of North American cultural landscapes. GEOG 4381 examines the national and regional parks idea as it evolved in North America. Major course themes include, but are not limited to, the following: the philosophical underpinnings of parks and protected spaces in North American landscapes; historical contexts driving the parks movement in North America; changing cultural meanings of parks in North American geographical imaginings; and parks’ historical and contemporary intersections with diverse political and socio-environmental issues. Note that this course fulfills advanced geography degree requirements or can serve as a substitute for GEOG 3302/3303.
This course is designed to address park landscapes and their major defining themes through a topical framework, rather than a chronological format that may be more familiar to students with experience in History courses. Additionally, it is designed to introduce students to a seminar experience through the development of discussion and critical thinking skills as a central component and learning outcome of the course.

Note: During this semester, GEOG 4381 is a hybrid course. This means that you will be able to take this course online as the need arises (for purposes of university-excused absences, quarantine, health concerns, etc.) through accessing course materials (e.g., lectures, discussions introductions) via Blackboard Collaborate videos, uploaded to Blackboard after the lecture during which they occur. This means that in the event students need to learn remotely, they will do so asynchronously. Similarly, all assignment guidelines and materials will be made available on Blackboard.

Currently (as of 1/22/2021), our classroom capacity is below the threshold that necessitates dividing the class into two sections. Therefore, unless circumstances change, we will meet together as a class Tuesdays and Thursdays during our scheduled time.

Learning goals
Upon completion of this course, students should have achieved the following goals:

- Understand the philosophical underpinnings and early development of national and state park systems in the United States;
- Gain a familiarity with key “wicked problems” facing historical park development and today’s park landscapes;
- Identify selected ways park landscapes are mobilized to promote discourses about national and regional identity;
- Develop critical thinking and reading skills required of upper-level coursework in university and graduate school settings;
- Apply geographical frameworks and concepts towards understanding park landscapes.

Prerequisites: None

You are not alone during COVID-19
This is an unusual semester. The way university education occurs is changing rapidly. In the fullness of transparency, I want to let you know that we are working through this together.

What does this mean for GEOG 4381?
First, I understand your university experiences may change unexpectedly because of factors beyond your control. Communicate with me promptly if changing circumstances impact your experiences of GEOG 4381. During the business week (M-F), I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours. There may be longer delays over the weekend.
Second, there are strategies I recommend for navigating this course successfully. While online assignments can be completed at any time prior to their due date, I strongly urge you to complete them with time to spare. I also recommend you make use of all resources available to you, both within the contexts of this course and beyond. For example, GEOG 4381 contains community message forums for discussing course concepts; troubleshooting logistical challenges; and engaging with your peers and instructor. Other critical resources include your instructor (I am happy to help you!), office hours, library services, and mental health services.

Similarly, because of social distancing guidelines and the need to accommodate remote learning students, our hybrid course employs self-guided learning materials, including PowerPoint materials, digital media such as video, web resources, .pdf documents, etc. Engaging in self-guided learning may be unfamiliar, but there are a number of strategies you can take to improve this process. I am available to discuss these topics with you.

Finally, students’ mental and physical health are my utmost concerns this semester. I encourage you to explore and make use of health services available to students. The University Health Clinic is based in the University Sports Medicine Clinic, Shannon Clinic - Jackson. The Health Clinic provides confidential services to ASU students who have paid the current Medical Services Fee. Students who are registered, attending classes, and have paid the medical services fee have access to unlimited visits to all Shannon Urgent Care locations for Basic Medical Care by board certified healthcare providers at no additional cost.

Similarly, ASU Counseling Services provides short-term therapy to ASU students. Whether you are suffering from issues like depression, anxiety, adjustment issues, relationship problems, academic concerns, emergencies, or trauma, ASU Counseling Services are there to help. Appointments can be made by calling 325-942-2371 or visiting Counseling Services, at 1901 Johnson St, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

You are not alone in navigating this semester. I am a resource for you.

Evaluation
Your performance is evaluated by projects, assignments, and discussion preparation. There are a possible 350 points for this course (not including extra credit points). Total points are tentative and subject to change, but I do not curve project scores or course point totals. Extra credit is not available on an individual basis.

Grades are not discussed over email, utilize office hours or schedule an appointment.

Grade Thresholds
A: 315 or more points
B: 280-314 points
C: 245-279 points
D: 210-244 points
F: Under 210 points

Incomplete Grade Policy
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Critical Thinking Checks (100 points): 10 @ 10 points each
In upper level Geography courses such as this one, my view is that learning takes place best through engaging with materials in ways that reflect a spirit of open-ended and exploratory knowledge seeking, with the instructor responding to students’ curiosity about the subject matter at hand. Therefore, I ask that you complete Critical Thinking Checks during the semester. These will require you to respond to questions and writing prompts on materials covered in readings, online materials, or lecture. Critical Thinking Checks will be due Wednesday evenings at 5 p.m. This ensures that I am able to review your responses and that you will be prepared to discuss readings in class. I will distribute Critical Thinking Checks on a rolling basis during the semester. You will always have at least one week to complete a Critical Thinking Check.

Free Write Learning Checks (100 points): 10 @ 10 points each
Geographers, historians, and others must synthesize vast amounts of information and communicate its key points in succinct ways. To encourage development of this skill and incentivize student engagement with course materials, I will randomly select 12 class lessons to implement Free Write Learning Checks, which will require you to reflect on that day’s materials and briefly respond to a writing prompt. You will always be able to complete Free Write Learning Checks within the class time during which they are distributed. If you are taking this course online for any university excused absence (quarantine, family or medical emergency) or pre-arranged online learning accommodations (contact me!), you will be able to complete an online version of the Free Write Learning Check on Blackboard. Note that there are 12 Free Write Learning Checks in this course. You are only required to complete 10. If you complete above and beyond the required 10, you will receive +10 extra credit points for each submission, for a maximum of +20 extra credit points to be added to your point total at the end of the semester.

Portraiture of a Park (50 points): 1 @ 50 points
One of the themes of this course is that parks—whether existing at the national or state scale—are both representative of a geographical pattern (that is, they exhibit shared characteristics with other parks) and are unique places, with individual histories, geographical features, and meanings. This assignment will require you to examine a park in-depth from geographical perspectives. I will provide further details and guidelines on Blackboard and in-class!

Placing a Park (100 points): 1 @ 100 points
As we progress through this course, we will learn the many uses of park landscapes and consider the factors—geographical, economic, social, and historical—that helped populate North American landscapes with state and national parks. This project will require you to consider these factors and create and place an imaginative geography of a park space of your own making and design in the United States. I will provide further details and guidelines on Blackboard and in-class!

**Missed assignments and late assignments**

**Late work is not accepted for credit.** Extensions and make-up exams are given only in cases where a valid/verifiable absence has been approved at least 24 hours in advance of the due/exam date (e.g., serious illness, a University-approved event). In the case of an excused absence without prior arrangements, you must notify me within 48 hours of the scheduled exam or homework due date.

**Blackboard**

This course makes use of Angelo State University’s Blackboard program. Please check our class site often. I will post all messages and documents relating to the class to the site, including this syllabus, study guides, project assignments, and other miscellaneous required and supplementary readings. Scores for labs and projects are tracked through Blackboard, including cumulative course totals. This allows you to stay aware of how you are doing at any point during the semester.

**Course policies and procedures**

**Disruptive behavior**

Disruptive behavior is defined as behavior that interferes with the learning environment of your fellow students. Immature, rude, and inappropriate behavior in the classroom is not tolerated. This includes talking during lecture, as well as personal use of digital communication devices during lecture including, but not limited to: text, instant or email messaging, social media, and web browsing. Disruptive students will be ejected from the class at my discretion, according to University policy, and will be given an unexcused absence regarding any missed coursework. All electronic devices must be switched off during class and headphones/ear-buds removed! I regard phone use, texting, or wearing headphones/ear-buds during tests as cheating.

**Required Use of Masks by Students in Class at Angelo State University**

As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be
asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.

Note: I will be a stickler for mask wearing compliance! Wear it properly, too. I’ve no need to see your nose, and I have no difficulty hearing you through layers of cotton or other fabrics. In Geography classrooms—and in the Academic Building and lab spaces—I view mask wearing as an essential courtesy and safeguard for your peers and professors, many of whom may have underlying conditions you are unaware about. It may be cliché, but we’re all in this together, and I want students in my classrooms to feel safe.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.
The College of Science and Engineering adheres to the Statement of Academic Integrity.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.
In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center.

Copyright Policy
Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

Student Disability Services
Angelo State University and the Department of History are committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAAA) and subsequent legislation. Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of
Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at www.angelo.edu/ADA. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

**Ms. Dallas A. Swafford**  
Director of Student Disability Services  
325-942-2047  
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu  
Houston Harte University Center 112

**Title IX at Angelo State University**  
Angelo State University and the Department of History are committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee, meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, you are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

**Michelle Miller, J.D.**  
*Title IX Coordinator*  
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210 325-942-2022  
michelle.miller@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic at 325-942-2171, Counseling Services at 325-942-2371 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.

The Office of Title IX Compliance also provides accommodations related to pregnancy (such as communicating with your professors regarding medically necessary absences, modifications required because of pregnancy, etc.). If you are pregnant and need assistance or accommodations, please contact the Office of Title IX Compliance utilizing the information above. For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

**Student Absence for the Observance of Religious Holidays**
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observation of Religious Holy Day for more information.

### Course schedule
(Tentative and subject to revision. All revisions explicitly announced in class and announced on Blackboard.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1/26/21</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Read the Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1/28/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2/2/21</td>
<td>Geographical Ways of Seeing</td>
<td>Lewis (1979); Meinig (1979)</td>
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<td>2/4/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>2/9/21</td>
<td>Philosophies Towards Parks: Wilderness as an American Idea</td>
<td>No Readings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2/11/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>2/16/21</td>
<td>Philosophies Towards Parks: Conservation v. Preservation</td>
<td>Portrait of a Park Guidelines Distributed on Blackboard</td>
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<td>2/18/21</td>
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<td>5th</td>
<td>2/23/21</td>
<td>Forging a National Parks System I</td>
<td>The Organic Act of 1916; Lane Letter of 1918; Nash (1970)</td>
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<td>2/25/21</td>
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<td>6th</td>
<td>3/2/21</td>
<td>Forging a National Parks System II</td>
<td>Keiter (2013) 1-11 ; Mackintosh et al. (2018) 1-27</td>
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<td>3/11/21</td>
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<td>8th</td>
<td>3/16/21</td>
<td>Failed National Parks</td>
<td>Dilsaver (2008); Dilsaver and Wyckoff (2009); Weber (2016)</td>
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<td>3/18/21</td>
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<td>3/25/21</td>
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<td>Portrait of a Park Due</td>
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<td>4/1/21</td>
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<td>Placing a Park Guidelines Distributed on Blackboard</td>
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<td>4/8/21</td>
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<td>12th</td>
<td>4/13/21</td>
<td>Visualizing Parks I</td>
<td>Wyckoff and Dilsaver (1997); Briwa and Bergmann (2020)</td>
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<td>4/15/21</td>
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<td>4/20/21</td>
<td>Visualizing Parks II</td>
<td>Bergmann and Briwa (2020)</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>13th</td>
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<td>4/29/21</td>
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<td>15th</td>
<td>5/4/21</td>
<td>Parks’ Prospects and Problems II</td>
<td>Abbey (1968)</td>
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<td>5/6/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finals Week</td>
<td>5/13/21</td>
<td>Final Exam Slot 10:30 – 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Placing a Park Due</td>
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I am happy to see you here in GEOG 4381: The Parks Idea. Welcome!!!