

**GEO 3411**  
**MAPS & MAPMAKING**  
**Spring 2025**

**COURSE INSTRUCTOR**

Heather Swienton

**E-mail:** has41@txstate.edu

**Office Location:** ELA 399 (middle hallway of the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor by the vending machine)

**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 9:00 – 11:00 am, in person

\*Email instructor to meet via Zoom or to schedule an appointment for times outside of office hours

**LAB INSTRUCTORS**

[Redacted] [Section 1]

**E-mail:** [Redacted]@txstate.edu

**Office Location:** ELA [Redacted]

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00 – 3:00 pm in person and via Zoom

**Zoom Link:** [Redacted]

[Redacted] [Section 2]

**E-mail:** [Redacted]@txstate.edu

**Office Location:** ELA [Redacted]

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 1:00 – 3:00 pm in person and via Zoom

**Zoom Link:** [Redacted]

**LECTURE:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 – 12:20 pm, ELA 315

**LAB:** Section L01 - Tuesdays, 9:00 – 10:50 am, ELA 122  
Section L02 - Wednesdays, 9:00 – 10:50 am, ELA 122

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Lecture Textbook: There is **no textbook** required for this course's lecture.

Lab Textbook (optional): Adobe Illustrator Creative Cloud Revealed (2nd Edition) by Chris Botello, Print ISBN: 9780357541777, 0357541774 (available online).

Additional reading materials may be provided in class or through Canvas. PDFs of the lectures will be uploaded to **Canvas**.

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION AND COURSE STRUCTURE:** An introduction to reference and thematic map use and design. The course introduces basic cartographic mapping techniques for quantitative and qualitative data, teaches about geospatial analysis and interpretation, and enables students to design basic maps.

## COURSE GOALS

- Understand and distinguish between basic concepts in cartography and map design.
- Explore topics including the history of cartography, geographic data presentation, thematic map use and design, basic cartographic mapping techniques for quantitative and qualitative data, etc.
- Apply the basic concepts of map reading during lab sections and use *ArcGIS Pro* and *Adobe Illustrator* as mapping and design tools to create maps.
- Combine the theories and techniques to apply to problem solving through a final project in the lab.
- Improve confidence to effectively communicate and present ideas through a cartographic map.
- Learn the ethics code as a map producer.
- Become a flexible software user and adapt to different map design tools.

## GRADING

● Midterm Exam:	200 points
● Final Exam:	200 points
● Lecture Attendance:	50 points
● Map Show and Tell:	50 points
● Lab Final Project:	200 points
● Lab Assignments:	270 points
● Lab Attendance:	30 points
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>1000 points</u>

The final grade letter will be determined as follows:

- A = 900 – 1000 points
- B = 800 – 899 points
- C = 700 – 799 points
- D = 600 – 699 points
- F = less than 600 points

## COURSE POLICIES

**Lecture Attendance:** Attendance will be taken at the start of each lecture and will count towards 50 points of your final grade. Student participation is strongly encouraged, as is courteous, respectful, and engaged class behavior. If you find yourself unable to attend lecture(s), please email your course instructor in advance.

**Map Show and Tell:** 50 points of your course grade will come from the “Map Show and Tell” assignment and presentation. We will discuss this assignment during class as indicated on the schedule. You will be tasked to choose two maps and, following the rubric, complete a detailed write-up for each as well as present a critical assessment of one of the maps to the class via PowerPoint.

**Lecture Quizzes:** Following each major lecture topic, you will be given 10 minutes at the start of class to take a quiz on Canvas based on information from previous lecture content; these quizzes serve as a personal check-in with how well you are understanding and retaining course materials but will not be for a grade. You may use your course notes and work with your classmates to complete the quizzes.

**Midterm and Final Exam:** There are two exams over lecture content that are each worth 200 points of your final grade. If you are unable to attend class during the exam days posted on the schedule, please communicate with your course instructor well in advance. A doctors note or documentation of required absence are required for make-up exams.

**Lab Attendance and Assignments:** Attendance in lab will be taken for a grade. In the lab, students will complete 10 lab assignments using *Adobe Illustrator* and *ArcGIS Pro* worth up to 270 total points. The remaining 30 points will make up the Lab Attendance grade. All labs will be assigned and submitted through Canvas. Labs are ALWAYS due by the start of the following lab meeting (1 weeks' time).

Late work—including the final project—will be graded *only* if it is submitted within 5 working days of the due date. Please note that each late day, including weekends, will be subject to a 10% reduction in the grade for that assignment. For example, an assignment due on Tuesday but submitted on Sunday is five days late. Consequently, the final mark of the assignment will be reduced by 50%. Exception to this rule will be granted only in exceptional and documented circumstances.

Please be in contact with your lab TA accordingly and respectfully if you are not able to attend lab(s) or have questions or issues with your grades.

**Final Project (Lab):** For their final project, students will individually create an accurate and well-designed map on a topic assigned by the instructor. Details on the final project will be discussed later in the semester (see schedule). *The best way for students to prepare for the final project is to attend all lab meetings and gather a personal understanding for the ArcGIS Pro and Adobe Illustrator tools and functions learned throughout all of the lab assignments.*

## COURSE COMMUNICATION

All course files, grades, resources, announcements, etc. will be through Canvas, **so please have your notifications on**. The best way to contact me is via **email** (I will only correspond with @txstate.edu emails), but you can also reach me via Canvas messaging. I will typically respond within 24 hours with the exception of weekends and holidays. You are also welcome to use our Canvas site's **discussion board** to post course-related questions or inquiries for other students (and your instructor/TA) to see and respond to. **There is no such thing as a stupid question!**

## LAB POLICIES

All lab assignments will use Adobe Illustrator and/or ArcGIS Pro to reinforce concepts discussed during the lectures. Although lab time is provided for the completion of the assignments and the final project, **students should expect to spend additional time working on these tasks outside of the scheduled lab sessions**. Open lab hours are posted on lab doors throughout ELA (weekdays only). Alkek Library also has GIS software in the *GeoSpace*. The course and lab instructors will be available to assist students during lab times, office hours, and additional appointments as needed. Please also note:

- **A USB/Flash drive with at least 8 GB of storage space is required for the lab.**
- Food and drinks are absolutely prohibited in the lab.
- Report any problem with equipment or software to the department computer laboratory coordinator: Charles Robinson ([crobinson@txstate.edu](mailto:crobinson@txstate.edu)).
- You will have access to Adobe Illustrator only in the department labs (ELA120, 121, 122, 123) and in the computers at the Alkek Library. Information about the license of Adobe Illustrator is available at: [Adobe Creative Cloud : IT Assistance Center : Texas State University \(txst.edu\)](#). **Please note that you will not have free (\$) access to Adobe software on your personal computers, so please plan accordingly to complete all lab materials on campus.**
- Do not change or modify computer or network configurations. Such changes may interfere with the next student using the computer.
- Log on using your account only (your NetID and password). If someone has forgotten to log out, please log them off.
- Printer usage is monitored and metered. Each student has been assigned a credit limit for printouts. Use your printer resources wisely.

## IMPORTANT RESOURCES

As a graduate student myself, I am aware of the stress that college classes and student life may bring. My door is always open to all students seeking a safe space or resources including but not limited to the counseling center, student health center, academic resources, etc. **Please feel free to reach out to me!**

**TXST Counseling Center:** <https://www.counseling.txstate.edu/>

**Crisis Hotline:** 512-245-2208

**Bobcat Safe Rides/Campus Safety Escort (nighttime):** 512-245-1689

The Dean of Students Office manages [Here to Help](#) to assist students experiencing crises or emergencies or displaying concerning behaviors. Submissions are received directly by the Dean of Students Office's [CARE Center](#). This process takes an individualized and holistic approach to assessing submissions and determining an appropriate course of action or referral based on the information provided in the submission.

The [Counseling Center](#) provides counseling, tele-mental health, and educational workshops and videos for students. For students, the [Student Health Center](#) provides evaluation and medical management of these common mental health issues and others.

[Bobcat Balance](#) serves the legal, financial, and mental health needs of faculty and staff. [LinkedIn Learning](#) is available to all faculty, staff, and students and includes resources on well-being, career development, time management, and other skills and knowledge.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **ADA Statement:** Students with special needs (as documented by the Office of Disability Services, <https://www.ods.txst.edu/>) that will require compensatory arrangements must contact the instructor no later than the 4th class period to discuss specific arrangements and logistics. Students who have not already done so will be required to contact the Office of Student Disability Services located at LBJ 5-5.1 (512.245.3451). Texas State University is dedicated to providing these students with necessary academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to facilitate their participation and performance in the classroom.
- **Academic Testing for Students with Disabilities:** Students who are approved for testing accommodations have the option of using Academic Testing for Students with Disabilities (ATSD) office to take in-class tests or quizzes with their accommodations. Any student who schedules a test(s) with ATSD must schedule tests during the in-class scheduled test time (or seek an exception from the instructor) and are expected to take the test at ATSD. If a student schedules to take test with ATSD but decides that they will take the test in the classroom, the student will be responsible for notifying the ATSD and the instructor prior to the class start time. <https://www.txstate.edu/temc/services/attd.html> for up-to-date information.
- **Academic Honesty and Academic Integrity:** Honesty and integrity are essential university values. Please see the Code of Student Conduct at (<https://studenthandbook.txst.edu/rules-and-policies.html>) and the Honor Code at (<https://www.txst.edu/honorcodecouncil/Academic-Integrity.html>) for definitions, policies, procedures, and sanctions.
- **The Bobcat Pledge:** Being part of our Bobcat community means we respect each other and commit to helping create a healthy and safe learning and working campus environment. Every student, faculty and staff member must take responsibility for practicing healthy behaviors and following the health and safety guidelines established by Texas State to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on campus and in the surrounding community.

- **Civility in the Classroom:** Civility in instructional settings is fundamental to an effective educational process and is everyone's responsibility. The university's shared values, sense of community, and collective commitment to respect, civil dialogue, and the free exchange of ideas are the cornerstones of successful teaching and learning. If students have questions about appropriate behavior in a particular class, they should address them with their instructor first. Although rare, disciplinary procedures may be implemented for refusing to follow an instructor's directive, disrupting classroom activities, or disregarding university policies. For more information regarding conduct in the classroom, please review policies at [AA/PPS 02.03.02](#), Section 03: Courteous and Civil Learning Environment, and [Code of Student Conduct](#), number II, Responsibilities of Students, Section 2.02: Conduct Prohibited.
- **Emergency Management:** In the event of an emergency, students, faculty, and staff should monitor the [Safety and Emergency Communications web page](#). This page will be updated with the latest information available to the university, in addition to providing links to information concerning safety resources and emergency procedures. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to sign up for the [TXState Alert](#) system.
- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (SB17):** During the 88th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature, [Senate Bill 17](#) was passed and signed into law, effective January 1, 2024. SB 17 addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives at public higher education institutions. For an explanation of SB17's provisions along with questions and answers, please visit the [Texas State University System's General Counsel Guidance on Implementation of Senate Bill 17](#).
- **The University Mission:** Texas State University is a doctoral-granting, student-centered institution dedicated to excellence and innovation in teaching, research, including creative expression, and service. See <https://universityplan2023.avpie.txstate.edu/overview/Texas-State-Mission--Goals--and-Initiatives-.html> for additional information.
- **Sexual Misconduct Reporting (SB212):** Effective January 2, 2020, state law (SB 212) requires all university employees, acting in the course and scope of employment, who witness or receive information concerning an incident of sexual misconduct involving an enrolled student or employee to report all relevant information known about the incident to the university's Title IX office. According to SB 212, employees who knowingly fail to report or knowingly file a false report shall be terminated in accordance with university and system policy. Please access the webpage of the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX](#) for more information.

## TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE – GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECT MATTER

NOTE: This outline is subject to modification.

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Lab
1	January 14	Introduction to the course	<b>No labs this week</b>
	January 16	History of Cartography 1	
2	January 21	History of Cartography 2	Lab 1: Getting Started with Illustrator
	January 23	Geodesy	
3	January 28	Cartographic Projections 1	Lab 2: Layers in Illustrator
	January 30	Cartographic Projections 2	
4	February 4	Cartographic Generalization 1	Lab 3: Projections, Brushes, and Symbols
	February 6	Cartographic Generalization 2	
5	February 11	Charts 1	Lab 4a: Generalization and Transformations Part 1
	February 13	Charts 2	
6	February 18	Data Classification 1	Lab 4b: Generalization and Transformations Part 2
	February 20	Data Classification 2	
7	February 25	Thematic Maps 1	Lab 5: Data Joins, Classifications and Charts
	February 27	Thematic Maps 2	
8	March 4	<u>Midterm Exam Review</u>	Lab 6: Point Symbol Design
	March 6	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
9	March 11	Spring Break: No Class	Spring Break: No Labs
	March 13		
10	March 18	Cartographic Symbolization 1	Lab 7: Map Export and Data Symbolization
	March 20	Cartographic Symbolization 2	
11	March 25	Cartographic Lettering	Lab 8: Lettering in Illustrator
	March 27	Midterm Grades, Final Project Discussion, Assign Map Show and Tell	
12	April 1	Map Elements and Composition	Lab 9: Map Layout and Inset
	April 3	<b>Map Show and Tell Presentations</b>	
13	April 8	<b>Map Show and Tell Presentations</b>	Final Project Work
	April 10	Color in Cartography 1	
14	April 15	Color in Cartography 2	Final Project Work
	April 17	Real World Applications of Cartography	
15	April 22	Research Cartography	Final Project Work
	April 24	<u>Final Exam Review</u> (last day of class)	
	April 25 (Friday)	<b>Final Project Due:</b> 11:59 pm	
	May 1 (Thursday)	<b>Final Exam:</b> 11:00 am - 1:30 pm	