



GEOP1030

Sydney and the Great Australian Dream

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Andrew Burrridge

andrew.burrridge@mq.edu.au

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Mapping is a critical method applied by geographers. While often presented as unbiased, critical geographers have demonstrated the means by which mapping can be employed as a tool of power. In response, methods of counter-mapping and other experimental practices provide alternative understandings of space, expose power and progress socio-spatial justice while new technologies allow participation by 'nonexperts'. In both a historical and contemporary context, this unit asks how can we define and understand Sydney through a critical geographical lens, and whether the archetypal 'Australian dream' still exists? The unit will focus upon methods of counter-mapping Sydney and other cities, and explores what a critical geographical mapping to develop a 'People's Guide to Sydney' might comprise.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Demonstrate an understanding of the contested representations of the 'Australian dream' and its relevance to Sydney.

ULO2: Critically examine the history of mapping, and its use by geographers to explore and visualise contemporary urban problems.

ULO3: Identify and discuss the diverse political motivations, methods and implications of mapping and counter-mapping.

ULO4: Analyse the potential of counter-mapping to reveal different lenses through which

to understand and define cities.

General Assessment Information

Late Assessment Submission Penalty

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends).** After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). **Late submission of time sensitive tasks** (such as tests/ exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) **will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.**

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
The lies and power of mapping	30%	No	30/08/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Countermapping essay	40%	No	04/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
A People's Guide to Sydney	30%	No	01/11/2026	Individual and Group	No	Open

The lies and power of mapping

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20.00 hours

Due: **30/08/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

A 1000 word review comprised of weekly readings to explore the lies and power of mapping.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically examine the history of mapping, and its use by geographers to explore and visualise contemporary urban problems.
- Identify and discuss the diverse political motivations, methods and implications of mapping and counter-mapping.

Countermapping essay

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **04/10/2026**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

1500 word essay discussing and critiquing different approaches to mapping and countermapping and their wider implications

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and discuss the diverse political motivations, methods and implications of mapping and counter-mapping.
- Analyse the potential of counter-mapping to reveal different lenses through which to understand and define cities.

A People's Guide to Sydney

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **01/11/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual and Group

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

Group and individual work to and map/counter-map and produce a People's Guide to Sydney'. Students will produce an individual output in the form of an annotated map of Sydney based on a specific lens of analysis and present as a group on their lens and approach to (counter)mapping.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the contested representations of the 'Australian dream' and its relevance to Sydney.
- Critically examine the history of mapping, and its use by geographers to explore and visualise contemporary urban problems.
- Identify and discuss the diverse political motivations, methods and implications of mapping and counter-mapping.
- Analyse the potential of counter-mapping to reveal different lenses through which to understand and define cities.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Lectures and Tutorials

Learning and teaching activities comprise a mix of recorded lectures, tutorials and discussion activities. Please see iLearn for further details.

Recommended Texts and/or Materials

There is no set textbook for this unit; however, independent reading and tutorial discussions are integral to GEOP1030 and a full reading list will be made available on iLearn, with readings accessible via Leganto. Students are expected to complete the required weekly set readings before each tutorial.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>).

[du.au](#)) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study

- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2026.01R of the [Handbook](#)