

GEOG*2260: Applied Human Geography

Winter 2021 **PROVISIONAL**

University of Guelph

Instructor:	Dr. Amanda Hooykaas
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Teaching Assistant:	TBD
TA Office Hours:	By appointment

Human Geography is an increasingly important, interdisciplinary field that examines the complexities of environment-society relations. Human geographers work at the intersection of fields like ecology, anthropology, politics, economy and sociology and investigate a diverse range of important topics including for instance climate change, food security, city life, environmental justice, resource rights, community livelihood, and environmental sustainability. Their research draws on a wide range of insights and methodological practices from what might appear to be very diverse fields. This course is designed as an applied, practical introduction to qualitative research in human geography, and aims to expose students to the basic elements of research design, research methods, field-work and critical thinking in the field. Through a combination of fieldwork, hands on exercises, lectures, and a group research project we will: consider how to craft and operationalize a research question; critically explore a range of qualitative data gathering and analytical techniques; and reflect on some of the theoretical assumptions, approaches, and issues that underwrite geographical research and knowledge production.

Course Aims:

The focus of this course is on qualitative research in human geography (though we will briefly engage some of the basics of quantitative research). This course aims to:

1. Familiarize students with methods and techniques used in human geography, as well as limitations;
2. Develop a basic set of skills with which to conduct geographical research;
3. Promote thoughtful, critical, evidence-based engagement with geographical issues and problems;
4. Develop the ability to critically evaluate geographical research, arguments and information; and develop an understanding of *community engaged research and scholarship* in which the imperatives for research are grounded in the realities of communities.

Course Structure:

This is a collaborative, learner-centred course that actively engages all students in discussions and activities. The course requires careful reviewing of all requirements and material placed on the website including this syllabus. Each week will generally consist of 1) theory, 2) case studies, and 3) skill development. Perhaps the most important aspect of this process is the sense-making – you will be expected to not only review course material, but also engage meaningfully and substantively, recording your experiences in your blog. Your capstone project will be a digital storytelling project.

Required Textbook:

Hay, I. (2015). *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (4th ed.). Toronto, On. Oxford University Press. Additional required readings available on CourseLink.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, it is expected that students should be able to:

- I. Craft and operationalize a research question;
- II. Make informed choices about research design and development;
- III. Understand the distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research;
- IV. Design an environmental research project;

- V. Understand and incorporate ethical concerns and responsibilities into research;
- VI. Understand and address positionality in the research process;
- VII. Identify and critically evaluate different primary data gathering techniques;
- VIII. Identify and critically evaluate different techniques for analysing and interpreting data;
- IX. Conduct basic fieldwork;
- X. Understand the relationship between evidence and argument;
- XI. Critically assess the strengths and limitations of geographical research; and
- XII. Critically evaluate geographical arguments and information.

Assessments*:

Evaluation Component	Value	Responsibility	Due Date (all due at 11:59pm)
Sense-Making Blog			
Initial Submission	15%	Individual	Sunday, January 31
Midterm Peer Evaluation	5%	Individual	Wednesday, February 3 (to peers and DropBox)
Final Submission	30%	Individual	Sunday, April 11
Digital Storytelling Project	25%	Group	Wednesday, April 7
Consultation/Proposal	15%	Group	Consultations Week of February 8 Proposal due Sunday, February 14
Reflection	10%	Individual	Sunday, April 11

* Both assignments address all learning outcomes.

Course Components:

Sense-Making Blog (Individual) (Check-In/Peer Evaluation: 20%; Final: 30%): You are to create a strong, persuasive blog and thus your work should be reflective of your experience in the course and should be created while being mindful of the lens of the course. Your blog is expected to show strong reflection on your experiences, provoke conversation, and provide insight into geographic research methods. Your blog will be virtual and created as a Tumblr site (it must be registered as “YOURINITIALSGEOG2260”).

You will be asked to make several directed entries, and you will also make many independent entries as you reflect upon this course and its content. Directed entries will be responses to specific and varied prompts. These prompts will be released at the beginning of each week (Mondays at 8:30am); you must post blogs and responses by the end of the week (Sundays at 11:59pm) – late penalties will apply. *You are required to post at least one original post (prompt response) on your blog per week (which should be approximately 500 words in length);* this will result in 10 posts. Additional substantive posts may receive additional credit as will posting early in the week (this provides your peers with opportunity to engage with your posts). There are a number of ways to approach the open-ended posts: consider readings in relation to their historical or theoretical contexts; write about an aspect of the content you don’t understand or that jars you; formulate an insightful question about a resource you have discovered on your own and attempt to answer your own question; or respond to another student’s post, building upon it, disagreeing with it, or re-thinking it (within your own blog and in addition to your comment on their blog). In any case, strive for thoughtfulness and nuance. The quality and depth of posts should increase as the term/your understanding develops. Beyond this, *you must also monitor your peers’ blogs and must post a 250-word response to at least one post per week* (vary the people you respond to). This may then become a longer conversation – and that is fine!

The important part of the blog is to analyze and reflect—substantively and frequently. The principal constraint is that the entries must somehow relate to the course’s content. Other than this constraint, what you write about is often up to you. You should express your true feelings or opinions. Agreement or disagreement with the instructor’s opinions will *NOT* influence grades. Don’t assume you don’t know enough to write something decent. Start by reflecting on what you are learning. Your entries will likely improve with time. Commit yourself to filling in your blog with articles, etc. relevant to this course.

Digital Storytelling Project (50%): In groups of 3-4, you will use your research skills to define and discuss the

following prompt: “What is _____ Geography?” This will require you to conduct research on the history of the field and the relevance of it today, and then create a digital story to help present what you’ve found, which may be featured on the department’s website. *You will need to propose a specific type of geography your group would like to explore and get this approved by your Teaching Team.* This project requires several important steps, many of which may be completed (or at least started) in class. Further details on requirements will be posted on CourseLink.

Instructional Support:

During the course, your instructor will interact with you on various course matters on the course website using the following ways of communication:

- **Announcements:** The instructor will use **Announcements** on the Course Home page to provide you with course reminders and updates. Please check this section frequently for course updates from your Instructor.
- **Ask Your Instructor Discussion:** Use this discussion forum to ask questions of your Instructor about content or course-related issues. If you encounter difficulties, the instructor is here to help you. Please post general course-related questions to the discussion forum so that all students have an opportunity to review the response. To access this discussion forum, select **Discussions** from the **Tools** dropdown menu.
- **Email:** If you have a conflict that prevents you from completing course requirements, or have a question concerning a personal matter, you can send your instructor a private message by email. The instructor will attempt to respond to your email within 24 hours.
- **Video Call:** If you have a complex question you would like to discuss with a member of your Teaching Team, you may book a video meeting on Zoom. Video meetings depend on the availability and are booked on a first come first served basis.

Communication: CourseLink will be used in this course to facilitate course communication outside of class, including announcements, course material, e-readings, assignments, written submissions, and any updates. Outside of class, the Teaching Team will use ‘Gryph Mail’ to communicate directly with individual students and the Discussion Board and Announcements to communicate directly with the entire class. **Additionally, there will be Zoom meetings before every major assignment is due to ensure comprehension and address any remaining concerns; these are optional but provide a good opportunity to connect with our learning community (and will be recorded for those who cannot attend).** Please monitor CourseLink frequently. If you have any questions, concerns, or difficulties with this course at any time, please do not hesitate to talk with the instructor during office hours, either just before or after class, or via e-mail. E-mail communication to the Teaching Team should at all times be professional in tone (i.e. Dear Professor Hooykaas...). E-mail will normally be answered within 48 hours, during working hours, Monday to Friday. Avoid using e-mail as a substitute for consulting with the instructor on issues requiring detailed responses. As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <@mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

Netiquette Expectations: The course website is considered the classroom and the same protections, expectations, guidelines, and regulations used in face-to-face settings apply. Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate online behaviour include:

- Posting inflammatory messages about your instructor or fellow students;
- Using offensive language;
- Copying or presenting someone else's work as your own;
- Adapting information from the Internet without using proper citations or references;
- Buying or selling term papers or assignments;
- Posting or selling course materials to course notes websites;
- Threatening or harassing a student or instructor;
- Discriminating against fellow students, instructors and/or TA;

- Using the course website to promote profit-driven products or services;
- Attempting to compromise the security or functionality of the learning management system; and
- Sharing your username and password.

Dropbox: Assignments should be submitted electronically via the online Dropbox tool (with the exception of the blog posts, to be accessed via Tumblr). When submitting your assignments using the Dropbox tool, do not leave the page until your assignment has successfully uploaded. To verify that your submission was complete, you can view the submission history immediately after the upload to see which files uploaded successfully. The system will also email you a receipt. Save this email receipt as proof of submission.

Be sure to keep a back-up copy of all of your assignments in the event that they are lost in transition. In order to avoid any last-minute computer problems, your instructor strongly recommends you save your assignments to a cloud-based file **storage** (e.g., OneDrive), or send to your email account, so that should something happen to your computer, the assignment could still be submitted on time or re-submitted.

It is your responsibility to submit your assignments on time as specified on the Schedule. Remember that **technical difficulty is not an excuse not to turn in your assignment on time**. Don't wait until the last minute as you may get behind in your work. If, for some reason, you have a technical difficulty when submitting your assignment electronically, please contact your instructor or [CourseLink Support](#).

Late Assignments: All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date indicated in the attached schedule, unless otherwise indicated. *Failure to submit any assignment on time will result in a 10% deduction per day, for up to five days.* For example, if an assignment is due at 11:59pm, submitting by 11:59pm the next day will be a 10% penalty; if submitted at 12:00am that night, a 20% penalty will be deducted). If you know in advance that you will not be able to meet a particular deadline *for any reason*, please contact the instructor before the deadline to make alternative arrangements. Your e-mail request for an extension must have your completed work to date for the assignment attached. No extension will be granted if you have not completed what the course instructor considers to be a reasonable amount of work on the assignment.

Grades and Feedback: Unofficial assessment marks will be available in the Grades tool of the course website. Your instructor will attempt to have grades posted online within 2 weeks of the submission deadline, if the assignment was submitted on time. Once your assignments are marked you can view your grades on the course website by selecting Grades from the Tools dropdown menu on the navbar. Your course will remain open to you for seven days following the last day of the final exam period. University of Guelph students can access their final grade by [logging into WebAdvisor](#) (using your U of G central ID).

Library Access: As a student, you have access to the University of Guelph's library collection, including both physical and electronic materials. For information on checking out or couriating physical library items, accessing electronic journals and returning items to the library, visit the [library's website](#). If you are studying off campus and would like to access the library's electronic resources, use the [Off Campus Login](#) and login using your Single Sign On credentials or using your last name and library barcode:
<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/> <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/campus-login>

Writing: Students are expected to write at a University Level. Many students have difficulty writing, the instructor strongly suggests that you edit each other's work and carefully edit your own work. This is one way to improve your writing. If you would like more structured assistance, visit [The Learning Commons](#) (for a list of services refer to).

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures: Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted, they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

Course Technologies:

CourseLink System Requirements: You are responsible for ensuring that your computer system meets the necessary [system requirements](#). Use the [browser check](#) tool to ensure your browser settings are compatible and up to date. (Results will be displayed in a new browser window.)

By using CourseLink, you agree to comply with the [University of Guelph's Access and Privacy Guidelines](#). Please visit the D2L website to review the Brightspace privacy statement and Brightspace Learning Environment [web accessibility standards](#)

Technical Support: If you need any assistance with the software tools or the CourseLink website, contact CourseLink Support: Email: courselink@uoguelph.ca/Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 56939 Toll-Free (CAN/USA): 1-866-275-1478; **Support Hours (Eastern Time):** Monday thru Friday: 8:30am-8:30pm; Saturday: 10:00am-4:00pm; Sunday: 12:00pm-6:00pm

Zoom: This course will use Zoom for lectures/meetings. Check your [system requirements](#) to ensure you will be able to participate.

Skills: *As part of your learning experience, you are expected to use a variety of technologies for assignments, lectures, teamwork, and meetings. In order to be successful in this course you will need to have the following technical skills:*

- *Manage files and folders on your computer (e.g., save, name, copy, backup, rename, delete, check properties);*
- *Install software, security, and virus protection;*
- *Use office applications (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or similar) to create documents;*
- *Be comfortable uploading and downloading saved files;*
- *Communicate using email (e.g., create, receive, reply, print, send, download, and open attachments);*
- *Navigate the CourseLink learning environment and use the essential tools, such as Dropbox, Discussions, and Grades (the instructions for this are given in your course);*
- *Access, navigate, and search the Internet using a web browser (e.g., Firefox, Internet Explorer); and*
- *Perform online research using various search engines (e.g., Google) and library databases.*

Contact your course instructor if you need support with any of the above.

University of Guelph Policy Statements:

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement: When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).

Drop Date: The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Accessibility: The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student. When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway. Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day. More information: www.uoguelph.ca/sas

Academic Misconduct: The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding

by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar. Resources: The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Territorial Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the Attawandaron people on whose traditional territory the University of Guelph resides and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them.

We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land. The Dish with One Spoon Covenant is a peace agreement made between Indigenous nations before the Europeans arrived. It characterizes our collective responsibility to each other and Mother Earth - we should take only what we need, leave enough for others, and keep the dish clean.

Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.