GEOG*4880
Contemporary Geographic Thought

Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics
University of Guelph, Winter 2022
11:30AM - 12:50PM, Tuesdays and Thursdays
ALEX, Room 218

Instructor
Dr. Eric Nost | enost@uoguelph.ca
Office: 344 HUTT / See Courselink for Zoom link
Office hours: Thursdays 2-3pm, Fridays 11:30am-12:30pm

Teaching Assistant
Emilie Wiehe | ewiehe@uoguelph.ca
Office hours: TBD

Description
This course does two things. First, it explores the evolution of contemporary geographic thought by engaging with background readings and key thinkers. To make this real, the course runs a place-based workshop where students critically apply key concepts to understand the geography of southern Ontario. Second, as a capstone for GEG majors, the course also runs a professional development workshop where students reflect on the significance of geographical knowledge to society, their own lives, and future career paths.

Class sessions will be participatory, combining lectures with small-group discussions, exercises, and student-led seminars. The success of the course rests on the level and quality of effort that students bring to each session. Students are expected to keep up with readings and come to class prepared to engage with the instructor and their classmates.
Course Format
This course is designed to be delivered in-person. While the instructor may decide to livestream and record class sessions, the course is not meant to be completed remotely. While we can try to accommodate virtual participation, at a minimum the workshop leadership component of the course will need to be completed in-person.

In the first part of the course, Tuesdays will be live sessions where we will conduct workshops via Zoom. Lectures for Thursdays will be pre-recorded and posted by Monday afternoon each week. You are expected to watch the pre-recorded lectures and post a reflection to Courselink before the end of Thursday’s class (1pm). In the last few weeks, Tuesdays and Thursdays will both be live and will consist of team-led seminars for the place-based workshop.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes
The course is designed to have students bring together what they have learned during their undergraduate degree and to think more about what it means to be a geographer. By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of historical and contemporary geography (especially key thinkers and conceptual lenses);
2. assess and critically discuss key scholarly contributions of geography and their societal relevance;
3. position their own interests and skills within the discipline;
4. demonstrate mastery of skills in written and oral presentation;
5. demonstrate enhanced skills in professionalism, teamwork, and case study analysis;
6. identify and communicate these skills as well as career goals.

Required Texts

Any other readings will be posted to CourseLink under the ‘Content’ tab.

Class Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC and/or ACTIVITY</th>
<th>READINGS and RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 11</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Geography before 1930</td>
<td>Chapters 2 and 3</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>Professional Development Workshop: Opportunities &amp; Strategies</td>
<td>Cover Letter assignment introduced</td>
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<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Regional Geography + Quantitative Revolution</td>
<td>Chapters 4 and 5</td>
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<td>WEEK</td>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>TOPIC and/or ACTIVITY</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>Professional Development Workshop: Learning Portfolios</td>
<td>Learning Portfolio assignment introduced</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>GeoHumanities + Critical Human Geography - Reading the Landscape</td>
<td>Chapters 6, 7, and 8</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Professional Development Workshop: Geography’s Societal Relevance</td>
<td>Cover Letter due</td>
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<td>Read one of the readings from theconversation.com/ca on CourseLink</td>
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<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Cultural Geography - Knowing nature</td>
<td>Chapters 9 and 10</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop: Introduction and Planning</td>
<td>Learning Portfolio due</td>
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<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Relational Geographies - Following the Things</td>
<td>PBW introduced</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Professional Development Workshop: Workplace Cultures</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>More-than-Human and Critical Physical Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
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<td>Feb 21-25</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Livestreaming the American Association of Geographers conference</td>
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<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>Reimagining Geography</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 8</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
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<td>Mar 10</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 15</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
<td>AAG Reflections due</td>
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<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
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<td>Mar 22</td>
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<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
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<td>Apr 5</td>
<td>Place-Based Workshop</td>
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<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Course wrap-up and take-home exam review</td>
<td>Participation self-assessment due</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Take-home exam due by 5pm</td>
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**Evaluation**

**Professional Development Workshop - Cover Letter (15%) (Learning Outcomes 6)**
This assignment focuses on career planning and preparation. You will identify a relevant professional opportunity and craft a cover letter for it. A full rubric will be available on CourseLink.
Professional Development Workshop - Learning Portfolio (15%) (Learning Outcomes 3 and 6)
This assignment focuses on career planning and preparation. You will create an online learning portfolio that demonstrates your competencies and substantiates your work towards key Department Learning Outcomes. A full rubric will be available on Courselink.

Place-Based Workshop – Team Seminar (20%) (Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5)
Teams of 3 students will each lead an in-class seminar that covers the assigned reading and analyzes the case study through a specific conceptual lens. Each seminar will be at least about 60 minutes and include an audience participation/engagement activity.

Place-Based Workshop - Take-Home Exam (20%) (Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 4)
Despite what WebAdvisor says, **THERE IS NO SCHEDULED SIT-DOWN EXAM FOR THIS COURSE.** Instead, there is a take-home exam. It will have you employ one conceptual lens covered in the course to make sense of one of the case studies and ask you to write a Conversation-style piece. You will be required to answer in 1200-1500 words. Doing the required readings, making discussion board posts, and taking notes on the lectures and place-based workshops will give you the necessary knowledge base from which to develop an accurate and well-supported answer. A full rubric will be available on Courselink.

AAG Reflections (10%) (Learning Outcomes 1 and 2)
On March 1 we will livestream a session of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) conference. You will write a 400 to 500-word Courselink post covering two of the four presentations we see. For one presentation, you should describe the topic and contextualize it within the disciplinary history and key strands of thoughts we have been exploring in the course. For the other presentation, describe what you thought made it effective. A full rubric will be available on Courselink.

Discussion Board Posts: 10%, 5 at 2% each (Learning Outcomes 1 and 2)
Your experience and learning in this course, and its collective success for all involved, will depend on your engagement with the lectures and assigned readings. I will ask you to reflect on the week’s lecture and/or reading before the end of the following Thursday classes: Jan 20, Jan 27, Feb 3, Feb 10, Feb 17, Mar 3. As you can see, that’s six weeks, so you can miss one week’s post with no penalty! By reflect, I mean develop a substantive question about one aspect of the lecture and/or reading, offer a substantive comment on one aspect of the lecture and/or reading, or respond meaningfully to a classmate’s question or comment. By “sustentative” question or comment, I mean one full paragraph, or 150-250 words. Some example prompts:
- how does this aspect of the reading and/or lecture connect with what you have learned in earlier courses?
- how does this aspect of the reading and/or lecture connect with what you have learned earlier in this course?
- what does this aspect of the reading and/or lecture mean for your professional development?
- how does this aspect of the reading and/or lecture illuminate some specific phenomenon (e.g. how might a feminist geography approach help us understand the impact of the COVID pandemic?)
- ask a clarifying question about some piece of jargon you heard in lecture or read.
- ask a clarifying question about the definition of a concept from the reading and/or lecture.
- expand on a definition from the reading and/or lecture and apply it to some real-world situation.
- other specific prompts mentioned in the lectures...

A full rubric will be available on Courselink.

**Participation in Workshops: 10%**
Your experience and learning in this course, and its collective success for all involved, will also depend on participating in the class’s Professional Development and Place-Based workshops. At the end of the semester you will complete and hand in a self-assessment of your participation in the workshops. You may access the full self-assessment at your leisure on Courselink. I advise that you consult it early in the semester and that you track your engagement throughout the semester. As part of the assessment you will answer a few short answers and assign yourself a grade out of 10. The self-assessments must be submitted to Prof Nost by the end of our final class (failure to will mean an automatic 0/10). Prof Nost will review each self-assessment and follow-up individually with students if there are any major questions or discrepancies between his observations and the self-assigned grade.

What is meaningful preparation and participation? We’ll develop a list in Week 1 of qualities that make for productive workshops.

**What you can expect from me**
- To help you not only understand but get excited about the material! Even though we’re all geographers, we’re still coming from different perspectives and starting points, meaning that it is everyone’s responsibility, but especially mine, to work to provide a respectful and engaging learning environment. I'm here to work with you from where you are and build up your understanding of the course content.
- To provide prompt feedback on assignments.
- To give you a sense of the flow of the semester – when the assignment load will be heavier, so that you can prepare appropriately.
- To assist in developing your critical analysis and communication skills, through our assignments. These are skills that will be useful to you in both your chosen profession and as a citizen.
- To advise you on future coursework, jobs, grad school, and/or volunteering opportunities.

**What I expect of you**
- To treat each other with respect. Our classroom is a safe space for all students, regardless of sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, nationality, ability or disability. Every person is welcome here.
- To communicate with me about what you expect from the course, what you need, and your challenges.
- To put your best possible effort into this class.

**A brief Q&A**
Q: How do I contact you?
A: Email is best. I will check it often during weekdays until 6pm, and occasionally in the evenings and weekends. I will respond to your requests and questions as soon as I can. Please do not count on an immediate response, especially for important last-minute questions regarding assignments.

Q: I’m confused about the material—what should I do?
A: First off, don’t feel embarrassed—few scholars, whether undergraduates or tenured professors—understand everything completely the first time! Please bring your questions to class! If you are confused, it’s likely that your classmates are, too. If you bring me questions, it helps me evaluate how best to help you learn the material. If you are still confused, please come to my office hours. I am glad to help!

Q: I have to miss lecture or an exam for a family/personal/medical emergency. What should I do?
A: As soon as possible, get in touch. In addition to alerting me ahead of time (if possible) and finding out what you need to do, I recommend getting notes from a classmate.

Q: I’m not happy about my grade. Will you change it?
A: For regrades, I reserve the right to either increase OR decrease your grade depending on what I find in regrading. For a regrade, wait 24 hours, then schedule a meeting with me and email a written description of why you deserve a better grade.
University of Guelph Standard Policy Statements

E-mail Communication. 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.

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 last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, April 8th. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar.

Copies of out-of-class assignments. Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility. The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or see the website: http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/

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.

Recording of Materials. Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.
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.