



UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

GEOG*1220 Explaining Environmental Change

Summer 2026

Section: DE01

Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics

Credit Weight: 0.50

Course Details

Calendar Description

This course introduces foundational concepts for understanding how the world's most pressing environmental problems, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and water pollution, are rooted in societal structures and processes. It integrates perspectives from both earth systems and the social sciences and contrasts issues, drivers, and governance approaches from around the world, with an emphasis on Canadian and US examples.

Pre-Requisite(s), Co-Requisite(s), Restriction(s): none

Method of Delivery: Distance Education (**asynchronous online**)

Final Exam

Date & Time: TBD

Location: In-person on the University of Guelph campus (note: some students may be eligible to apply for an alternative remote DE final exam, see [On-Campus Final Exams for Distance Education Courses](#)).

Note: Additional important information about the final exam can be found in the **Assessments** section of this Outline.

Instructional Support

Instructor

Dr. K. Benessaiah (pronouns: She/Her/Hers)

Email: GEOG1220.DE@uoguelph.ca

Office hours: Online via **Zoom**, Tuesdays 10-11 am ET (link in CourseLink); Subject to change and you will be informed of any changes on courselink.

Dr. Benessaiah a human–environment geographer and Assistant Professor in the department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics at the University of Guelph whose work focuses on how people and communities navigate rapid environmental and social crises, with an emphasis on sustainability transformations, food systems, and resilience. She is a Lead Author for the IPBES Transformative Change assessment. Her research integrates sustainability and resilience thinking, global environmental change and community-based approaches across regions including Greece, Central America, Canada, and West Africa.

Teaching Assistants

Yannan Wang

Communicating with Your Instructor

During the course, your instructor will interact with you through the course website and other tools. Please read carefully and follow these guidelines:

Announcements:

- Location: Course Home page
- **Important reminders, updates, and instructions.**
- Check at least **twice** per week.

Office Hours via Zoom:

- Day/Time: **Tuesdays, 10:00–11:00 AM (ET)** (subject to change)
- Format: Drop-in. Students are admitted one at a time for privacy.
- Access: You must use your **@uoguelph.ca email** to join.
- Link: Available on CourseLink within the Office Hours module.

Ask Your Instructor (Discussion Forum):

- Use this forum for **general course-related questions** (content, assignments, etc.).
- Why? Posting here helps all students see answers.
- **Access:** Go to **Tools** → **Discussions** → **Ask Your Instructor**.

- **Response Time:** from the instructor or TA within 48–72 hours during business days. Your classmates may respond sooner.
Not monitored evenings, weekends, or holidays.

Email

- Use email for **personal matters** or **conflicts** (e.g., illness, accommodations).
- Send your message via your **@uoguelph.ca email**
- Address: GEOG1220.DE@uoguelph.ca
- **Response Time:** The instructor or a GTA will respond within 48–72 hours during business days.
Not checked evenings, weekends, or holidays.

Course Outline -Your Primary Resource

- The **Course Outline** contains all essential details: grading, deadlines, materials, and policies.
 - **Action Required:** Check the outline **before emailing or posting questions**. Questions already answered in the outline will not receive a response.
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Learning Resources

Required Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course. All the required reading materials are in **Ares**.

Ares

For this course, you may be required to access course reserve materials through the University of Guelph McLaughlin Library. To access these items, select **Ares** on the navbar in CourseLink. Note that you will need your Central Login ID and password in order to access items on reserve. For further instructions on accessing reserve resources, visit [How to Get Course Reserve Materials](#).

If at any point during the course you have difficulty accessing reserve materials, please contact the Course Material and Reserve Services staff at:

Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 53621

Email: libres2@uoguelph.ca

Location: McLaughlin Library, First Floor, University of Guelph

<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/find/course-reserves-ares>

Course Website

[CourseLink](https://courselink.uoguelph.ca) (powered by D2L's Brightspace) is the course website and will act as your classroom. It is recommended that you log in to your course website every day to check for announcements, access course materials, and review the weekly schedule and assignment requirements.

<https://courselink.uoguelph.ca>

Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes

This course introduces foundational concepts for understanding human-environment relationships. Our goal is to recognize how the world's most pressing environmental problems—climate change, biodiversity loss, water pollution, and so on—have their roots in societal structures and processes. We will achieve this by integrating perspectives from earth systems and the social sciences.

Each week, we will learn key concepts, including earth system cycles and feedback loops, as well as environmental governance and justice, that help us think about human-environment relationships. Each week, we will also apply these concepts by exploring a range of case studies of environmental change, with a focus on food, energy, and water systems. Throughout the course, we will contrast issues and governance approaches from around the world, with an emphasis on the Canadian and U.S. contexts.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and describe human impacts on the environment across a variety of earth systems and scales;
 2. Define concepts from earth system sciences that characterize environmental change from a biophysical perspective (e.g., feedback loops, open/closed systems, nutrient cycles, etc.) and apply these concepts to specific cases and examples;
 3. Discuss the social scientific concepts that drive human impacts on the environment (e.g., institutional failures, market failures, environmental racism, etc.) and different ways governments, companies, and civil society actors govern environmental change, and apply these concepts to specific cases and examples;
 4. Investigate, evaluate, and synthesize diverse sources of knowledge about real-world, place-based environmental issues; and
 5. Identify potentially effective governance approaches for a particular environmental change.
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Teaching and Learning Activities

Method of Learning

In this course, you'll learn how to explain the societal drivers of environmental change by *doing* and *reflecting*. You'll *do* this by engaging with a variety of assigned readings—academic and real-world materials, including short background chapters from a textbook, policy reports, and peer-reviewed research papers. You'll also read, listen to, and watch content within each unit. Each unit introduces you to key concepts in earth systems and social sciences and expands upon those covered in the assigned readings. Case studies illustrate how these concepts explain environmental systems and changes in food and agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity conservation, and more. However, the only way you'll be able to make sense of all the material you're engaging with is by *reflecting* on it along the way. Each unit includes several activities such as “stop and think” reflection questions, interactive maps and charts, and “test your knowledge” quizzes. These are meant to help you solidify your understanding of the material by getting you to interact with and consider it more closely.

Course Structure

The course is organized into the following 12 weekly units:

- Unit 01: Overview and Introduction to Earth System Science
- Unit 02: Earth System Science Continued
- Unit 03: The Anthropocene
- Unit 04: Populations
- Unit 05: Institutions
- Unit 06: Ethics and Values
- Unit 07: Risk Governance
- Unit 08: Markets
- Unit 09: Political Economy
- Unit 10: Settler Colonialism
- Unit 11: Environmental Justice
- Unit 12: Course wrap-up

What to Expect for Each Unit

Each unit begins with an introduction outlining the key learning outcomes and assigned readings. These short background readings should be completed first, with notes taken to support your understanding of the material that follows.

After the readings, you'll find 1–3 pages reviewing and/or introducing key concepts. These are followed by 1–2 case studies that apply these concepts to real-world environmental issues such as water scarcity, eutrophication, or biodiversity loss.

Most units also include a short exercise designed to help you engage actively with the topic. These may involve small activities, data interpretation, or guided reflection prompts to reinforce learning.

To wrap up each unit, a brief quiz will help you review and retain essential facts and definitions, ensuring that you're building a solid foundation as the course progresses.

Detailed Weekly Schedule

It is strongly recommended that you follow the course schedule provided below. The schedule outlines what you should be working on each week of the course and lists the important due dates for the assessments. By following the schedule, you will be better prepared to complete the assessments and succeed in this course.

Unit 01: Overview and Introduction to Earth System Science

Week 1 – Thurs May 7 to Sunday, May 17

Note: Unit 1 combines the first week and second week of classes to account for starting on Thursday

Readings

- The Course Outline
- Ares: Turner's *The Anthropocene*
 - Section 1 – Question 3: What is the Earth System?
 - Section 1 – Question 4: What are Biogeochemical Cycles?
- CourseLink: Unit 01 content

Activities

- Familiarize yourself with the course website and online learning by selecting **Help & Resources** on the navbar.
- Review **Outline** and **Assessments** on the course website to learn about course expectations, assessments, and due dates.
- Confirm your access to the course reserve materials by selecting **Ares** in **Content**
- Participate in the Introduce Yourself Discussion via the **Discussions** tool.
- Complete the Unit 01 Activities and Unit 01 Reflection Exercise.

Assessments

- Complete the **Course Outline Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Thursday, May 7 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
Closes: Sunday, May 24 at 11:59 p.m. E.T. (to earn a grade)

- Complete the **Practice Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Thurs May 7 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, May 24 at 11:59 p.m. E.T. (to earn a grade)
- Complete the **Test Your LockDown Browser & Webcam Before Exams Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Thursday May 7 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, May 31st at 11:59 p.m. E.T. (to earn a grade)
- Complete the **Unit 01 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Thursday May 7 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, May 17 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 02: Earth System Science Continued

Week 2 – Monday May 18 to Sunday, May 24

Note: This is a shortened learning week due to May 18 (holiday). Unit content will be available a day earlier on May 17.

Readings

- Ares: Turner's *The Anthropocene*
 - Section 1 – Question 7: What are environmental (ecosystem) services?
 - Section 1 – Question 8: Are Global environmental change and climate change different?
 - Section 1 – Question 9: Are the totality of Human Impacts on the Earth System Novel?
- CourseLink: Unit 02 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 02 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

- Complete the **Unit 02 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, May 18 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, May 24 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 03: The Anthropocene

Week 3 – Monday, May 25 to Sunday, May 31

Readings

- Ares: Turner's *The Anthropocene*
 - Section 1 – Question 1: What is the Anthropocene?

- Section 1 – Question 2: Is the Anthropocene a Geological Time Unit?
- CourseLink: Unit 03 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 03 Activities** and **Unit 03 Stop and Think Questions and Unit 03 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

Last day to complete the Course outline quiz to earn a grade is Sunday, May 31, before 11:59 p.m. E.T.

- Complete the **Unit 03 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, May 25 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, May 31 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 04: Population

Week 4 – Monday, June 1, to Sunday, June 7

Readings

- Ares: Turner's *The Anthropocene*
 - Section VII – Question 63: Does an increasing population alter environments?
- Ares: Cummins, E. 2020. The Dark Search for a "Silver Lining" to the Coronavirus.
- CourseLink: Unit 04 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 04 Activities**, **Unit 04 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 04 Reflection Exercise**.
- Prepare for **Midterm 1**

Assessments

- Complete the **Unit 04 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, June 1 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, June 7 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 05: Institutions

Week 5 – Monday, June 8 to Sunday, June 14

Note: Midterm 1 test is on **Wednesday, June 10 (open 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.)**, see details in the Assessments section of CourseLink and this Outline.

Readings

- Ares: Berkes, F., D. Feeny, B. Mccay, and Acheson, J. 1989. The Benefits of the Commons. *Nature*, 340, 91–93.
- Ares: Food and Agriculture Organization’s The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022 — Read “Key Messages” and “Part 1”
- CourseLink: Unit 05 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 05 Activities**, **Unit 05 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 05 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

- Complete the **Midterm 1 test** via the **Quizzes** tool *requires Respondus and a working Webcam
Opens: Wednesday, June 10 at 8:30 a.m. E.T.
Closes: Wednesday, June 10 at 8:30 p.m. E.T.
- Complete the **Unit 05 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, June 8 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
Closes: Sunday, June 14 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 06: Ethics and Values

Week 6 – Monday, June 15 to Sunday June 21

Readings

- Ares: Turner’s *The Anthropocene*
 - Section VII – Chapter 68: Do cultural values and norms shape environmental behaviour?
 - Section VI – Chapter 55: Is human activity creating a new mass extinction?
- Ares: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. (2020). Global Biodiversity Outlook 5: Summary for Policy Makers. Montréal

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 06 Activities**, **Unit 06 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 06 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

- None this week

Unit 07: Risk Governance

Week 7 – Monday, June 22 to Sunday, June 28

Readings

- Ares: Turner’s *The Anthropocene*

- Section VIII – Chapter 72: Do views about human–environment relationships cross-cut cultures and social groups?
- CourseLink: Unit 07 content

Activities

Complete the **Unit 07 Activities**, **Unit 07 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 07 Reflection Exercise**

Assessments

- Complete the **Units 06 and 07 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, June 22 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, June 28 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 08: Markets

Week 8 – Monday, June 29 to Sunday, July 5

Readings

- Ares: Banerjee, S., S. Secchi, J. Fargione, S. Polasky, and S. Kraft. 2013. How to sell ecosystem services: A guide for designing new markets. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 11: 297–304.
- CourseLink: Unit 08 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 08 Activities**, **Unit 08 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 08 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

- Complete the **Unit 08 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, June 29 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, July 5 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 09: Political Economy

Week 9 – Monday, July 6 to Sunday, July 12

Readings

- Ares: Turner's *The Anthropocene*
 - Section VII – Chapter 67: Are some economies and political economies more environmentally degrading than others?
 - Section IV – Chapter 33: What are water withdrawal, water consumption and water footprint, and their implications for water availability?
 - Section IV – Chapter 35: Has human activity degraded groundwater and aquifer stocks globally?

- CourseLink: Unit 09 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 09 Activities**, **Unit 09 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 09 Reflection Exercise**.
- Prepare for Midterm 2

Assessments

- Complete the **Unit 09 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, July 6 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, July 12 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 10: Settler Colonialism

Week 10 – Monday, July 13 to Sunday, July 19

Note: Midterm 2 test is on **Wednesday, July 15 (open 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.)**, see details in the Assessments section of CourseLink and this Outline.

Readings

- Ares: Liboiron, M. 2018. How Plastic is a Function of Colonialism. *Teen Vogue*.
- CourseLink: Unit 10 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 10 Activities** and **Unit 10 Stop and Think Questions**.

Assessments

- Complete the **Midterm 2 test** via the **Quizzes** tool ***requires Respondus and a working Webcam**
 - Opens: Wednesday, July 15 at 8:30 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Wednesday, July 15 at 8:30 p.m. E.T.
- Complete the **Unit 10 Quiz** via the **Quizzes** tool
 - Opens: Monday, July 13 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, July 19 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 11: Environmental Justice

Week 11 – Monday, July 20 to Sunday, July 26

Readings

- Ares: Waldron, I. 2020. Environmental Racism in Canada. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO's IdeaLab.
- CourseLink: Unit 11 content

Activities

- Complete the **Unit 11 Activities**, **Unit 11 Stop and Think Questions**, and **Unit 11 Reflection Exercise**.

Assessments

- Complete the Unit 11 Quiz via the Quizzes tool
 - Opens: Monday, July 20 at 12:01 a.m. E.T.
 - Closes: Sunday, July 26 at 11:59 p.m. E.T.

Unit 12: Course wrap-up

Week 12 – Monday, July 27 to Friday, July 31

Note: This is a shortened week. Please note the due dates carefully.

Readings

- CourseLink: Unit 12 content

Activities

- Complete **Unit 12 Reflection Exercise**.
- Prepare for final exam

Assessments

- No assessments this week

Assessments

The grade determination for this course is indicated in the following table. A brief description of each assessment is provided below. Select **Content** on the navbar to locate **Assessments** in the table of contents panel to review further details of each assessment. Due dates can be found under the Schedule above (all times in Guelph's time zone, E.T.).

Important Assessment Policy

- There are no alternative assignments or extra-credit opportunities available.
- Reweighting of exams is not an option in this course.

All students will be evaluated using the same assessments and grading criteria outlined in this section of the course outline.

Course Assessments

Assessments via the Quizzes tool	Weight	Notes
* Requires Lockdown Browser		
** Requires Lockdown Browser + working webcam		
Outline Quiz	3%	Complete before deadline = earns grade; after deadline = no grade (quiz required to unlock other assessments)
*Practice Quiz	1%	Complete before deadline = earns grade; after deadline = no grade Mandatory for unlocking Unit Quizzes
**Test Your LockDown Browser & Webcam Before Exams	1%	Mandatory for unlocking Midterms & Final Exam
*Unit Quizzes (Best 8 of 10)	15%	most weeks (see schedule above) Opens: Monday at 12:01 a.m. Closes: Sunday at 11:59 p.m.
**Midterm 1 (Units 01-04)	20%	Opens: Wed. June 10 at 8:30 a.m. Closes: Wed. June 10 at 8:30 p.m.
**Midterm 2 (Units 01-09)	25%	Opens: Wed. July 15 at 8:30 a.m. Closes: Wed. July 15 at 8:30 p.m.
Final Exam (Units 01-11)	35%	TBD – in person
Total	100%	

Assessment Descriptions

Outline Quiz

Reading the course outline is essential because it contains all the key information you need to succeed in this course, including grading policies, assignment expectations, deadlines, and academic integrity guidelines. It ensures that everyone understands the rules and responsibilities from the start. To ensure you've reviewed it carefully and understood the content, **none of the course quizzes will unlock until you complete**

the Course Outline Quiz. This is a required first step and must be done before accessing any other assessments. See the **Schedule** for the date and time this quiz is available. It is your **responsibility to complete the quiz** within the designated window.

Practice Quiz and Test Your LockDown Browser & Webcam Before Exams

Before accessing the Unit Quizzes, Midterm exams and Final exam assessments, you must:

1. [Download and install LockDown Browser](#)
2. Complete the **Practice Quiz** (mandatory for unlocking Unit Quizzes)
3. Complete the **Test Your LockDown Browser & Webcam Before Exams Quiz** (mandatory for unlocking Midterms)

The purpose of the Practice and Test quizzes is to confirm that the software is installed correctly and that you are comfortable using it. Missing an assessment due to technical issues with LockDown Browser or your webcam is not a valid reason for a second attempt, extension, or deferred test..

If you have any questions regarding the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor or if you encounter any technical issues during the practice test or final exam, please contact CourseLink Support at courselink@uoguelph.ca or 519-824-4120 ext. 56939.

More information can be found in the [Assessments](#) section of CourseLink.

Unit Quizzes (8 out of 10 counted)

The Unit Quizzes **do not require a Webcam**. Launch Respondus and once launched, click "Start Quiz" to begin your test. You **must complete both the Outline and the Practice Quiz** before gaining **access** to the Unit Quizzes.

There are **ten online Unit quizzes** throughout the course that assess your comprehension of key ideas, facts, and concepts, as well as your ability to recognize and apply them in real-world contexts. Each quiz covers material from a specific unit, including both the online content and the assigned readings.

While you will complete **ten quizzes, only your best eight quiz scores will count** toward your final grade. Your **two lowest quiz scores** will be automatically dropped. This policy is in place to account for unforeseen circumstances such as missed deadlines, technical difficulties, or illness. Any missed quizzes are graded as 0.

There are no extensions or second attempts for quizzes.

See the Schedule for the date and time each quiz is available.

More information can be found in the [Assessments](#) section of CourseLink.

Midterm tests with Respondus Lockdown Browser + Webcam

These tests require the use of a **Webcam** to proctor your online midterms within CourseLink. **Unlike the Quizzes**, you **must** show your **university-issued identification card** during the Respondus Startup Sequence. You will be guided through a brief set of screens after launching Respondus and clicking "Start Quiz". Once you have completed this setup, your attempt will begin, and the quiz questions will appear.

There are **two midterm** tests. **Unlike** Unit Quizzes, these tests are only **open for 12-hours on a single day**.

- **Midterm 1** will cover material from Units 01-04 and is scheduled on **Wednesday, June 10, between 8:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. E.T.**
- **Midterm 2** will cover material from Units 01-09 and is scheduled for **Wednesday, July 15, between 8:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. E.T.**

These tests are designed to assess and measure the knowledge you have gained from the course thus far. More information can be found in the [Assessments](#) section of CourseLink.

CourseLink Support will be available during the test hours to assist with any technical difficulties. If you have any questions regarding the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor or if you encounter any technical issues during the practice test or final exam, please contact CourseLink Support at courselink@uoguelph.ca or 519-824-4120 ext. 56939.

Midterm test policy

There are **no extensions or second attempts** for Midterm Tests. Students who are unable to write a test due to **unforeseen circumstances** beyond the student's control, **documented medical, psychological, or compassionate reasons**, may request **a deferred exam**.

How to Request a Deferred Exam:

- Send your request via your @uoguelph.ca email
- Address it to: GEOG1220.DE@uoguelph.ca
- Use the subject line: **Missed Midterm 1** (or Midterm 2, as applicable)
- Include supporting documentation with your email
- Requests should be submitted **as soon as possible after the scheduled exam**

All requests will be evaluated on a **case-by-case basis**, and approval is **not guaranteed**.

In-Person Final Exam

The **Final Exam** for this course will be written in person. This exam is to be scheduled during the examination period (August 4-14th, 2026). The exam will cover material from Units 01-11 in the course, including specific content from each unit, the assigned readings and your reflections. The exam is designed to assess and measure the knowledge you gain from the entire course and will test your ability to define elements of the course's key concepts and to identify them in real-world examples.

This course requires you to write a final exam on campus at the University of Guelph. It is

assumed that all DE students will be writing their final examination on campus at the University of Guelph. The exam is an individual assessment and should be taken without the assistance of your classmates or other aid. You must present your University of Guelph student ID card during the final exam.

University of Guelph degree and associate diploma students must check [WebAdvisor](#) for the final exam location, while Open Learning program students must check [Exam Schedules By Semester](#).

If you are studying at a distance greater than 170 km from the University of Guelph's main campus, you may request to write your final exam at an approved alternate location with a proctor. Details about how to apply will be made available in the Announcements. Your instructor will provide a deadline for the requests. It is recommended that you make arrangements as early as possible in the semester since changes and approval cannot be guaranteed for applications made after the deadline.

Only certain students are eligible to request an alternative remote DE final exam. More information can be found posted on courselink and here [On-Campus Final Exams for Distance Education Courses](#).

More information can be found in the [Assessments](#) section of CourseLink.

If You Miss the Final Exam

If you do not write the final exam, your course grade will be submitted as **Incomplete (INC)**.

You must act immediately by:

- Contacting your Academic Advisor and Program Counsellor from your @uoguelph.ca email, and
- Submitting a formal Request for Academic Consideration with appropriate supporting documentation (e.g., medical or psychological notes).

The University requires documentation for missed final exams due to unforeseen **extenuating circumstances** (medical, psychological, or compassionate). This request must be submitted **within five working days**. Without valid documentation, your request will likely be rejected, and your final grade will be whatever you have earned without the final exam.

Last Day to Drop Course

The final day to drop S26 courses without academic penalty is the last day of classes: July 31st, 2026.

After this date, a mark will be recorded, whether course work is completed or not (a zero is assigned for missed tests/assignments). This mark will show on the student's transcript and will be calculated into their average.

Course Grading Policies

Quizzes, Midterms and Final Exam

- There are **no extensions or second attempts** allowed for quizzes, midterms or the final exam.
- Reweighting of exams is not an option in this course.

Extra Credit

There are **no alternative assignments or extra-credit opportunities** available in this course. All students are evaluated based on the same assessments and grading criteria as outlined in this document.

Obtaining Grades and Feedback

Final grades will be available at the end of the semester. Students can access their final grade by logging into WebAdvisor (using your U of G central ID).

Open Learning program students should log in to the [Student Portal](https://courses.opened.uoguelph.ca/portal/logon.do?method=load) <https://courses.opened.uoguelph.ca/portal/logon.do?method=load> to view their final grade (using the same username and password you have been using for your courses).

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/webadvisor>

<https://courses.scs.uoguelph.ca/portal/logon.do?method=load>

Technology Requirements and Technical Support

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.

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/technical-requirements/>

<https://courselink.uoguelph.ca/d2l/systemCheck>

Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor Requirements

Respondus LockDown Browser is a locked browser for taking quizzes in CourseLink. It prevents you from printing and copying; using other operating software; using search engines (e.g., going to another URL); communicating via instant messaging; and it blocks non-web-related software (e.g., Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word).

Respondus Monitor is a companion application for LockDown Browser that uses webcam and video technology to ensure academic integrity during online exams. The software captures video during the exam and allows the instructor to review the video once the exam is completed.

In order to use Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor, your computer system must meet the following [system and software requirements](#).

If you have any questions about the system and software requirements, contact [CourseLink Support](#).

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/technical-requirements/#Respondus-LockDown-Browser-and-Monitor>

<https://support.courselink.uoguelph.ca/contact>

Microsoft Teams Requirements

Zoom Requirements

This course uses **Zoom** as a video communication tool for office hours and meetings with the instructor. A Webcam, headphones/speakers may be needed. Review the [Zoom information for students](#) to ensure that your computer meets the technical requirements.

<https://support.courselink.uoguelph.ca/students/courselink/tools/content/zoom>

Technical Skills

As part of your online experience, you are expected to use a variety of technology as part of your learning:

- Install software, security, and virus protection;
- 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 **Quizzes**, **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, Chrome); and

Technical Support

If you need any assistance with the software tools or the CourseLink website, contact CourseLink Support.

CourseLink Support

University of Guelph

Day Hall, Room 211

Email: courselink@uoguelph.ca

Tel: 519-824-4120 ext. 56939

Toll-Free (CAN/USA): 1-866-275-1478

Walk-In Hours (Eastern Time):

Monday thru Friday: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Phone/Email Hours (Eastern Time):

Monday thru Friday: 8:30 a.m.–8:30 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Sunday: 12:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Standard Statements for Online Courses

Acceptable Use

The University of Guelph has an [Acceptable Use Policy](#), which you are expected to adhere to.

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/infosec/aup>

Netiquette Expectations

For distance education courses, the course website is considered the classroom and the same protections, expectations, guidelines, and regulations used in face-to-face settings apply, plus other policies and considerations that come into play specifically because these courses are online.

Inappropriate online behaviour will not be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate online behaviour include:

- Posting inflammatory messages about your instructor or fellow students;
- Using obscene or offensive language online;
- 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;
- Having someone else complete your quiz or completing a quiz for/with another student;
- Stating false claims about lost quiz answers or other assignment submissions;
- Threatening or harassing a student or instructor online;
- Discriminating against fellow students, instructors, and/or TAs;
- Using the course website to promote profit-driven products or services;
- Attempting to compromise the security or functionality of the learning management system;
- Sharing your username and password; and
- Recording lectures without the permission of the instructor.

Copyright Notice

Content within this course is copyright protected. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters and articles) have either been licensed for use in this course or have been copied under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. The fair dealing exemption in Canada's Copyright Act permits students to reproduce short excerpts from copyright-protected materials for purposes such as research, education, private study, criticism and review, with proper attribution. Any other copying, communicating, or distribution of any content provided in this course, except as permitted by law, may be an infringement of copyright if done without proper license or the consent of the copyright owner. Examples of infringing uses of copyrighted works would include uploading materials to a commercial third-party web site, or making paper or electronic reproductions of all, or a substantial part, of works such as textbooks for commercial purposes. Students who upload to CourseLink copyrighted materials such as book chapters, journal articles, or materials taken from the Internet, must ensure that they comply with Canadian Copyright law or with the terms of the University's electronic resource licenses. For more information about students' rights and obligations with respect to copyrighted works, review the [Fair Dealing Policy](#).

<https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/about/policies/fair-dealing-policy>

Respondus Policy Violation Consequences

If your video is flagged, your instructor will review it. If this review indicates a suspected case of academic misconduct, your instructor will initiate the procedures for such cases and you may be subject to the penalties as outlined in the University's [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-misconduct/>

Standard Statements for Open Learning Program Students

As a student at the University of Guelph, it is important to understand your rights and responsibilities and the academic rules and regulations that you must abide by.

Open Learning program (OLp) students are required to follow the same Senate-approved academic regulations as University of Guelph undergraduate students. For information on academic misconduct, academic accessibility accommodations, academic accommodation of religious obligations, and withdrawal procedures, consult [Academic Policies and Procedures](#) and [Withdrawals, Refunds, and Transfers](#) on the School of Continuing Studies website. You may also contact the School of Continuing Studies' [Learner Success Advisor](#) for assistance.

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/academic-policies/>

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/continuing-studies/withdrawals-refunds-transfers/>

Standard Statements for Undergraduate Courses

As a student at the University of Guelph, it is important for you to understand your rights and responsibilities and the academic rules and regulations that you must abide by.

If you are a registered **University of Guelph degree and associate diploma student**, consult the [Undergraduate Calendar](#) for the rules, regulations, curricula, programs and fees for current and previous academic years.

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

Academic Integrity

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 outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-misconduct/>

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in this course must align with academic integrity principles. Students are expected to complete their work independently and showcase their problem-solving abilities. Undeclared and/or unauthorized use of AI tools to produce coursework is considered a form of academic misconduct. Any misuse of AI tools, including submitting AI-generated work, may be considered academic misconduct. For specific guidelines on acceptable AI use in your course, please check with your instructor.

Review the [University of Guelph's Statement on Artificial Intelligence Systems](#),

[ChatGPT, and Academic Integrity](#) for more information.

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2023/03/university-of-guelph-statement-on-artificial-intelligence-systems-chatgpt-academic-integrity/>

Accessibility

University of Guelph Degree Students

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 make a booking at least 10 days in advance, and no later than the first business day in November, March or July as appropriate for the semester. Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time. For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/>

Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements.

See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-accommodation-religious-obligations/>

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/dropping-courses/>

Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and well-being services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](#). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](#) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](#). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/>

<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/navigators>

<https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/shine-this-year>

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, 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.

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/>

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](#).

<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/undergraduate-calendar/undergraduate-degree-regulations-procedures/academic-consideration-appeals-petitions/>