

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE
GEOGRAPHY*3030: MEDIA, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY and ENVIRONMENT
Department of Geography, Environment and Geomatics

Land Acknowledgement

All of Canada resides on the traditional territories, treaty or unceded lands and/or homelands of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The University of Guelph campus sits within the Dish with One Spoon wampum. The Dish with One Spoon is an agreement between Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg and their allied nations to live peaceably on the lands throughout what is now known as the Great Lakes Region. The circle at the centre is a dish with a beaver's tail, indicating that they will have one dish and what belongs to one will be shared among all. We are to eat of the beavertail, using no sharp utensils, to prevent the shedding of blood. We all share resources and everything the Creator has provided for us upon our arrival to Mother Earth.

Reflecting with intention about where we live, learn and work is one way to uphold Indigenous histories, peoples and territories. Another is to learn more about Canada, colonialism and reconciliation; if you would like to do so, one way to begin is by visiting the website of the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) and reading the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action](#). The Territorial Acknowledgement above is adapted from university materials and resources by the Jake Thomas Learning Centre.

Course Description

GEOG*3030 examines contemporary transformations in how human-environment relations are monitored and communicated. In particular, it will explore how media firms, digital technologies, and technology users shape responses to challenges like climate change and biodiversity loss. Topics may include media representations of nature, social media and digital devices in environmental campaigns, and new technologies for environmental assessment. Students will develop skills in areas such as discourse analysis, data visualization, and/or social media analytics.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Describe how media firms, technologies and technology users shape environmental governance, natural resource management, and environmental campaigns, past and present;
- Identify environmental governance, natural resource management and campaigning practices that are changing in 'the digital era';
- Critically discuss contemporary case studies wherein digital technology and media have influenced human-environment relations and outcomes in unanticipated or highly impactful ways;
- Pose feasible research questions and employ ethically and methodologically appropriate techniques to gather and organize social science data from online spaces (e.g., Twitter, Blogs, Online Media Reports);
- Conduct analysis of social science data from online spaces and effectively use different data visualization techniques;
- Communicate literature review summaries and findings from analyses of social science data in written and oral form.

PRELIMINARY Assessments

Documentary review assignment:	20%
Mid-term:	15%
Seminar group portfolio:	30%
Online closed-book exam (scheduled by registrar's office):	35%

TOPICS, TUTORIALS and SEMINARS	READINGS
Class intro, logistics, & what is digital?	Ash, J., Kitchin, R., & Leszczynski, A. (2018). Digital turn, digital geographies? <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> , 42(1), 25-43. [NOTE: Today's reading is optional]
Digital media/environment Digital technology/environment	Büscher, B. (2021). Sharing Truths and Natures. Chapter 2 in 'Truth About Nature: Environmentalism in the Era of Post-truth Politics and Platform Capitalism'. University of California Press. Bakker, K., & Ritts, M. (2018). Smart Earth: A meta-review and implications for environmental governance. <i>Global environmental change</i> , 52, 201-211.
Documentary (Merchants of Doubt) Documentary (The Social Dilemma)	Merchants of Doubt. Written and directed by Robert Kenner, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2015. The Social Dilemma. Written by Jeff Orlowski, Davis Coombe, and Vickie Curtis; Directed by Jeff Orlowsky. Exposure labs & Argent Pictures, 2020.
Environmental mis/dis-information: background Environmental mis/disinformation: platform capitalism <i>Documentary Review Assignment</i>	Lewandowsky, S. (2020). Climate change, disinformation, and how to combat it. <i>Annual Review of Public Health, Forthcoming</i> . Büscher, B. (2021). Between Platforms, Post-Truth, and Power. Chapter 3 in 'Truth About Nature: Environmentalism in the Era of Post-truth Politics and Platform Capitalism'. University of California Press.
Intro to the Concepts Portfolio and Seminar Portfolio Assignments Conservation data in and from the digital	Simlai, T., & Sandbrook, C. (2021). Digital surveillance technologies in conservation and their social implications. <i>Conservation technology</i> , 239-249. Toivonen, Tuuli, Vuokko Heikinheimo, Christoph Fink, Anna Hausmann, Tuomo Hiippala, Olle Järv, Henrikki Tenkanen, and Enrico Di Minin. (2019). Social media data for conservation science: A methodological overview. <i>Biological Conservation</i> , 233, 298-315.

TOPICS, TUTORIALS and SEMINARS	READINGS
Seminar #1 Mid-term (covers all reading and lecture material to date)	Boykoff, M. T. (2009). We speak for the trees: Media reporting on the environment. <i>Annual review of Environment and Resources</i> , 34, 431-457.
University reading day Documentary (Angry Inuk)	Angry Inuk. Written and directed by Alethea Arnaquq-Baril, National Film Board of Canada, 2016.
Seminar #2 Seminar #3	Hawkins, R., & Silver, J. J. (2017). From selfie to #sealfie: Nature 2.0 and the digital cultural politics of an internationally contested resource. <i>Geoforum</i> , 79, 114-123. Hamilton, T., & Cavello, S. (2021). Ethical product havens in the global diamond trade: Using the Wayback Machine to evaluate ethical market outcomes. <i>Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space</i> , 0308518X211029661.
Seminar #4 Seminar group work – groups will collaborate in-person on their portfolio.	Turnhout, E., & Boonman-Berson, S. (2011). Databases, scaling practices, and the globalization of biodiversity. <i>Ecology and Society</i> , 16(1).
Seminar #5 Seminar wrap-up & conclusions <i>Seminar Portfolio Due</i>	Silver, J. J., & Hawkins, R. (2017). “I’m not trying to save fish, I’m trying to save dinner”: Media, celebrity and sustainable seafood as a solution to environmental limits. <i>Geoforum</i> , 84, 218-227.
‘The Digital’: transformational, reinforcing the status quo, or something in between? How do we research the digital? Overview & ethics	Drakopoulos, L., Silver, J. J., Nost, E., Gray, N., & Hawkins, R. (2022). Making global oceans governance in/visible with Smart Earth: The case of Global Fishing Watch. <i>Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space</i> , 25148486221111786. Hewson, C. (2016). Ethics issues in digital methods research. In <i>Digital methods for social science</i> (pp. 206-221). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
How do we research the digital? In-class activity Course conclusions and wrap-up	

TOPICS, TUTORIALS and SEMINARS	READINGS
<i>Concepts Portfolio Due</i>	
<p>Documentary (How to Change the World)</p> <p>Virtual office hours + exam Part B question list released</p>	<p>How to Change the World. Written and directed by Jerry Rothwell, Picturehouse Entertainment, 2015.</p> <p>NOV. 28: ---</p>

Materials

Readings

Students will download PDFs of the readings by going to CourseLink Content and/or the GEOG*3030 Library ARES reserve list.

Documentaries

How to Change the World. Written and directed by Jerry Rothwell. Picturehouse Entertainment, 2015. Click [here](#) to be taken to video.

Angry Inuk. Written and directed by Alethea Arnaquq-Baril. National Film Board of Canada, 2016. Click [here](#) to be taken to video.

Merchants of Doubt. Written and directed by Robert Kenner. Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2015. Click [here](#) to be taken to video.

The Social Dilemma. Written by Jeff Orlowski, Davis Coombe, and Vickie Curtis; Directed by Jeff Orlowsky. Exposure labs & Argent Pictures, 2020. Available on Netflix for those who have access to an account. For those who do not have Netflix, Prof Silver will provide access instructions in a CourseLink Announcement on or around September 16.