

GEOGRAPHY FINAL COURSE OUTLINE: WINTER 2020

GEOGRAPHY 565 GFC HOURS (3-0)

Spaces of Urban Politics

Section	Days	Time	Location
LEC 01	MoWeFr	10:00 – 10:50	TI Studio B

Instructor: Ryan Burns	Office: ES 442
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Please note: The emergency evacuation assembly point for all classes taught in Taylor Institute is MacEwan Student Centre – North Courtyard.

Official Course Description

An examination of how urban spatial relations shape, and are shaped by, political institutions, organizations, and social movements. Themes may include the politics of urban growth, urban environmental justice, urban sustainability, place-based politics, and multi-scalar politics.

Course Objectives

Why do we study cities? Does this preclude, or necessitate, studying regions or “the rural”? How do scholars produce knowledge about cities, and for what purposes? Is knowledge useful for its own sake, or do we have an imperative to try to “make lives better”? What comprises the urban? Where does it stop? Is it an organizing logic, physical structures, or social relation? How do we translate complex ideas into actionable policies – or should we not? Is it hubristic to assume that we are able to improve cities through research?

In this course, we will grapple with these tough, age-old questions by thinking about the politics of urban space. We will contend with how groups – and to a lesser extent, individuals – carve out spaces for belonging, for prosperity, for exerting power, for oppression, for creating relations, and for economic advantage. In each of these cases, one might argue that cities provide sufficient material, human, and economic resources to transform the above questions into unique manifestations: that urban spaces draw into stark relief how power translates into territory, into ideology, and into social relations. In this course we will consider a range of ways that scholars have approached these concerns, and will use them to explain how the (urban) world works. We will creatively evaluate multiple frameworks against each other, to see their strengths and weaknesses, always with an eye toward the diverse audiences for our inquiries.

Course Learning Outcomes

The Department of Geography is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes to which they contribute, and the expected level of achievement.

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

Course Learning Outcomes	PLO(s)*	Level(s)**
Appraise the contributions of different theories toward explaining urban political-geographic phenomena	1,4	3

Construct creative and compelling arguments about an urban political phenomenon using established and emerging urban political geography theoretical frameworks	1,4,5,8	3
Synthesize across diverse thought to reflect and act on unequal power relations within cities	1,2,5	3
Compose oral and written educational materials related to urban political geography	7,8	3

**PLOs = Program Learning Outcomes: 1 = reflect and communicate diverse human-environment perspectives, 2 = identify and explain human-environment processes, 3 = implement sampling, data collection, analyses and communication methods, 4 = analyze spatial and temporal aspects of human-environment systems, 5 = employ knowledge, arguments, and methodologies for solving human-environment problems, 6 = evaluate geospatial data and manipulate it to create cartographic products, 7 = communicate geographic concepts using oral, written, graphic, and cartographic modes, and 8 = demonstrate literacy skills.*

***Levels: 1 = Introductory, 2 = Intermediate, and 3 = Advanced.*

Prerequisites:

3 units from Geography 351, 452.

There are no prerequisite skills.

Learning Resources

Required readings will be linked or posted on the course D2L page.

Assignments and Evaluation

- It is not essential to pass all components to pass the course as a whole.
- I will grant **no** deadline extensions this term, save for exceptional, unforeseen events. Part of the university experience entails seeing a series of expectations and deadlines, and planning ahead accordingly. Responsibilities can quickly become overwhelming, so I encourage you to space out your work with an eye toward spreading it out evenly over the term.
- There are no exams for this course.
- Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of 5% for each day late, and no assignments will be accepted after 2 weeks.

Assignments and Evaluation Weight	Assessed Components	Due
25 %	Weekly reading quizzes	Conducted continually throughout the term
25 15	Class presentation	Sign up for any week; must be done this term
20	Essay Part 1	February 14, 3:30pm (SHARP)
20 30	Essay Part 2	April 17, 5pm
10	Participation	(evaluated as a sustained contribution to seminar discussions throughout the semester)

Weekly Reading Quizzes

Each week on Wednesday morning during our scheduled lecture time, you will be **required** to take a quiz that evaluates your comprehension of the week's readings. I will hand out the quizzes toward the beginning of class, so it's important to arrive on time; I will also make them available online, in the case that you're unable to physically attend that day. Your responses to these quizzes will earn either a pass or fail grade. While there is no limit on the number of quiz fails you may receive, upon a 4th missed quiz, you will no longer be eligible for the assignment's credit (20% of your grade). That is to say, you are able to miss 3 quizzes with no penalty other than forfeiting those quizzes' credits. I will soon circulate a grading rubric for this and the other assignments.

Class presentation

Each student will choose an additional reading(s) of about 50 pages in length related to one of the course weeks' topics, and direct the class for 15-20 minutes. You may do this at any point in the term. The page length is an order of magnitude and not a strict regulation; I am open to hearing ideas that depart from it – maybe a visual analysis of a film, or a deconstruction of a website, for instance. The main idea is that this will go beyond the assigned readings, and will help your peers understand the material in interesting new ways by engaging with your original thought on the topic. You may choose between doing this either Wednesday or Friday during class time.

I am intentionally *not* calling these “presentations” because I can get bored very easily, and I honestly don't want to listen to a dry summary of another reading. What I want to see from these “presentations”, then, is some kind of delivery that excites you. If you want to have us as a class play a game, engage our ideas in a competition, or even just discuss a series of well-articulated questions, these would all be fine with me. **At the very least, you should NOT use this time to just summarize the reading.** You may combine a summary with something else, but *you will not get full credit if this classroom lead merely summarizes.*

Essay

This assignment will help you practice writing for an audience of your choice. In this essay you will creatively and independently engage any material related to the course objectives, in order to formulate an original argument about an issue related to urban political geography. In your essay you must engage with some of the assigned course readings, but you must also go beyond them. Your original argument need not be field-defining or even particularly “big”, but it must show that you've put some critical thinking into the material.

The assignment consists of three parts: a first draft, a visit to the Writing Centre, and a final edited version. The **first draft** should be about 2,500-4,000 words. You will submit this via D2L before spring break, and I will mark up printed versions over the break. Upon returning from spring break, you should quickly revise your essay according to my feedback, and take my comments and your revised version to the **Writing Centre**. The purpose of this visit is to get advice and feedback on how you've approached the revision process. They will not provide proofreading feedback on the essay, but they can give you advice related to the writing process and in particular the way you've approached revisions. You may visit the Writing Centre any time between spring break and the end of the term, as long as you give yourself enough time to revisit your essay after the visit. After you visit the Writing Centre, revise your essay one last time, and document the edits you've made. Submit **(1) your revised-revised essay, (2) proof of your visit to the Writing Centre, and (3) a list of additional revisions** to D2L by April 17th.

You may choose any audience or (nearly) any format for this assignment. You may write a traditional essay, or you may write a series of blog posts, or an op-ed for your favorite literary magazine/journal (e.g., Jacobin, London Review of Books, or the Journal of Undergraduate Research (<http://www.jurpress.org/>)), or even create a website or policy proposal. Your writing style, design, and examples should all fit

accordingly. In any case, your “essay” should (1) include an original argument, clearly stated in the first or second paragraph, (2) an empirical example that you either focus on or use as a launching pad for your argument, (3) references to both assigned readings and non-assigned peer-reviewed journal article readings. I don’t care which reference style you use, but I prefer APA style. In terms of structure, the first and second paragraphs should be directly related to your topic, and avoid language like “For as long as humans have been around” or “Since the dawn of time” – the reason is because in this course we’ll be deconstructing such broad, sweeping, a-temporal, monolithic claims like these. As well, you should **always** use active voice (refresh your memory here: <http://www.biomedicaleditor.com/active-voice.html>) and should almost never use sweeping pronouns like “we” and “us”, as these are problematic constructions possible only through uneven power relations.

Participation

Your participation in classroom discussions is critical for the success of this course. You cannot get full credit for this course unless you show up for class and contribute your reflections on the material. Your evaluation for this component will be balanced heavily toward active contribution but will also take into account attendance.

Grading System

96 – 100	A+	77 – 80	B	59 – 61	C-
90 – 95	A	71 – 76	B-	55 – 58	D+
86 – 89	A-	65 – 70	C+	50 – 54	D
81 – 85	B+	62 – 64	C	0 – 49	F

In the event that a student misses any course work due to illness, supporting documentation, such as a medical note or a statutory declaration will be required. See: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Please refer to <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq> for frequently asked questions concerning the provision of a medical note/statutory declaration.

Supplementary Fees

Not applicable

For additional detailed course information posted by the instructor, visit the course Desire2Learn page online at <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home>.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Email Policy

I receive far too many emails to respond individually to each one. While I make an effort to respond to each one a student sends, this is not an effective way of communicating with me. The best approach to take is to first consult the course outline and slides that I circulate. If your question isn’t answered there, consult your peers. After that, approach me before/after class or in my office hours. I can’t guarantee a timely response otherwise.

Principles of Conduct

The University Calendar includes a statement on the principles of conduct expected of all members of the university community (including students, faculty, administrators, any category of staff, practicum

supervisors, and volunteers), whether on or off university property. This statement applies in all situations where members of the university community are acting in their university capacities. All members of the university community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the principles of conduct statement, which is available at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Student Misconduct

The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect.

Academic dishonesty is not an acceptable activity at the University of Calgary, and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section in the University Calendar at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html. Often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are (1) presenting another student's work as your own, (2) presenting an author's work or ideas as your own without adequate citation, and (3) using work completed for another course. Such activities will not be tolerated in this course, and students suspected of academic misconduct will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the calendar at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Information on Instructor Intellectual Property can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation in Alberta disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, such as outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc. Term assignments will be returned to students individually, during class or during the instructor's office hours; if students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they must provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Human subjects

Students will not be expected to conduct research with human subjects.

Internet and electronic communication device information

There are restrictions on the use of laptops and tablets in class. You may use them to take notes or find information relevant to the class, if there is no disturbance or distraction of other students or the instructor. Phones must be turned off during class, unless you have previously identified yourself to the instructor as a health care or law enforcement professional.

Posting of Grades and Picking-up of Assignments

Graded assignments will be returned by the instructor or teaching assistant personally during scheduled lecture or laboratory periods, unless they are made available electronically through the course D2L webpage. Grades and assignments will not be available at the Department of Geography's main office.

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations, according to the university policies and procedures listed in the University Calendar.

The student accommodation policy can be found at: www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy.

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need, preferably in writing to their instructor or the Department Head (email: david.goldblum@ucalgary.ca).

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Act.

Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness, and academic success and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support, or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370, MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

College can be stressful, and your mental well-being is important. If you are a student of University of Calgary, the SU Wellness Centre offers you support for your emotional, educational or vocational concerns. Assistance is free of charge. They provide an atmosphere that is informal and professional, where you can feel safe and comfortable seeking help. Find them at **MacEwan Student Centre 370** or call them at **403-210-9355**.

Your academic advisors can be great advocates for you. While I expect that you will all make an effort to keep me informed if you will be absent, or ask for help if you are struggling, your advisor also can help you find the people at the university that you need to talk to if you have an unexpected life event.

Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation

- Student Union VP Academic 403-220-3911, suvpaca@ucalgary.ca
- Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts – 403-220-3913, arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
- Student Ombuds Office information can be found at: www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/

Campus Safewalk

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day, to any location on Campus, including the LRT station, parking lots, bus zones, and university residences. Contact Campus Security at 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security officer will accompany you to your campus destination.