

## GEOGRAPHY FINAL COURSE OUTLINE: FALL 2020

### GEOGRAPHY 697.01 H(3-0)

#### Seminar in the Philosophy and Nature of Human Geography

Section	Days	Time	Location
LEC 01	We	14:00 – 16:45	Web Based Course

<b>Instructor:</b> Byron Miller	<b>Office:</b> in cyberspace, on Zoom
<b>Telephone:</b> 403 220 7321	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:bavrmill@ucalgary.ca">bavrmill@ucalgary.ca</a>

**Please note: The appropriate emergency evacuation assembly point for courses taught in Earth Sciences is the ICT Food Court.**

#### Official Course Description:

The course will be structured as follows:

- I. An Introduction to the Philosophy of Social Science: *what is science?* Inductive reasoning and its place in science; theory as the base for method (deduction); theory and validation (verification and falsification); dialectical reasoning, hermeneutics.
- II. Conceptions of Social Science: *a science of human behavior?* Human nature; materialism and idealism; approaches to social science (positivism, realism and poststructuralism); understanding and explaining human action.
- III. The Basic Forms of Geographical Inquiry: *are space and spatial differences important?* The meanings of space and spatiality; basic and distinct forms geographical study.
- IV. Objectivity and Values in Social Science: *should the social sciences seek to be objective?* The meanings of objectivity and the role of subjectivity; social justice and values, ethical standpoints.
- V. Can Geography be considered a unified discipline?

#### Course Objectives

Philosophies of science and theories of social and physical processes underlie our understandings of how the world works, i.e., what the prime causes of various processes are, what entities are crucial to examine, how they relate to each other, how we can study and know them, etc. Philosophies of science and theories of social and physical processes are often inter-related: our ontological assumptions and epistemologies set the limits of what we believe it is possible to know.

Philosophy and theory, together, are foundational to knowledge construction. The crucial question, then, is not whether one relies on philosophy and theory, but rather what type of philosophy and what type of theory, and what the implications of one's philosophical and theoretical assumptions are for constructing geographical knowledge. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there have been several major debates

within geography, each representing shifts in the philosophical and theoretical bases for geographical research. Many of these debates are on-going--some of them hot and heavy. In this course we will examine the major debates and shifts that have taken place in geography over the past century. The assigned readings and class discussions should give you a good basis for understanding the wide range of research being conducted in geography today, as well as help you reflect on the ontologies, epistemologies, theories that may guide your own research.

### Prerequisites

Consent of the Department.

### Online Meeting Schedule

Section	Meeting Time	Meeting Dates
LEC 01	14:00 – 16:45	Every Wednesday

### Learning Resources

**Required Texts** (most can be inexpensively purchased used):

Hollis, Martin (2010) The Philosophy of Social Science, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peet, Richard (1998) Modern Geographical Thought, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell.

Sayer, Andrew (2010) Method in Social Science, New York and Oxon: Routledge.

Additional required readings will be posted to D2L.

### Highly Recommended Supplemental Texts:

You may find it helpful to read the short overviews of the major reading topics in the Dictionary of Human Geography. These overviews should help you to identify the issues to focus on in the readings and are an invaluable resource for graduate students. As of March 2017 the AAG International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, Earth, Environment, and Technology became available--it is now the standard reference source for Geography. The library has it--you'll find it useful.

Livingstone, D. (1992) The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise, Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. (**very highly recommended**)

Gregory, Derek, Ron Johnston, Geraldine Pratt, and Michael Watts (eds) (2009) The Dictionary of Human Geography, Oxford and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. (you should be able to **find a pdf on-line**)

Agnew, J., D. Livingstone, and A. Rogers (eds) (1996) Human Geography: an Essential Anthology, Oxford: Blackwell.

Castree, N., A. Rogers, D. Sherman (eds) (2005) Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell. (an upper level undergraduate book, but a good introduction)  
<http://www.muthar-alomar.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Questioning-Geography.pdf>

Gregory, Derek (1993) Geographical Imaginations, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1997) Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference, Oxford and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Livingstone, D. (2003) Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### **Learning Technologies and Requirements**

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology.

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates
- A current and updates web browser
- Webcam (built in or external)
- Microphone and speaker (built in or external) or headset with microphone
- Broadband internet connection

### **Course Format and Grading (Weighting):**

This course revolves around discussion of the assigned readings (listed below). Prior to each class you will need to read the assigned readings and write a brief (approximately 2 to 3 page) reaction paper. Your reaction papers should touch on the major issues raised in the readings and then focus on one or two issues that are of particular interest to you. Your reaction papers need not be comprehensive (in fact, they probably can't be comprehensive). You will most likely find some of the reading challenging, not unlike your first venture into statistics, GIS, economics, or chemistry. Please do not bang your head against the wall! I do not expect you to come to class with a perfect understanding of all the nuances of the readings. Make a good faith effort to understand the major points of the readings and then come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss. Your reaction papers count for 40 per cent of your grade. Your lowest reaction paper score will be dropped. If you want to replace a reaction paper score, you will also have an opportunity to view and review a film (e.g., *The Botany of Desire*) which deals with a major issue in geographical knowledge construction; a film review may be used to replace another reaction paper score.

Discussion is extremely important in this seminar and you are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings. Class discussion is a significant part of your grade (20 per cent). Absence will be excused in the case of death in the family or illness (hopefully neither of these will occur!), with documentation, please.

The remainder of your grade (40 per cent) is based on an approximately 15 page (plus bibliography) seminar paper. Your paper may be on any topic of your choosing related to philosophical or theoretical issues in geography. You could, for instance, choose to write on debates over the role of structure and agency in socio-spatial processes, contrasting approaches to landscape interpretation, varieties of feminist geography, social understandings of climate change, prospects for the unification of human and physical geography, or innumerable other topics. You could also choose to pick one of the weekly topics of this course and address it in more detail. I highly recommend that you meet with me (preferably early in the semester) to discuss your topic so that we can be sure that it is well focused and do-able in one semester. I will be happy to provide you with feedback on your paper--including comments on early drafts--over the course of the semester. Your paper should draw from at least 16 scholarly sources, at least 8 of which should be in addition to the assigned readings. The paper is due Friday, December 18.

**Exemptions to the Examination and Tests Regulations (if applicable)**

Instructors are required to follow university regulations regarding Examinations and Tests, which are specified in the University Calendar at: [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g.html) There are no examinations in this course.

**Grading System**

A+	4.00	Outstanding performance		
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject		
A-	3.70	↑	B+	3.30
B	3.00	Good		
B-	2.70	minimally satisfactory		
C+	2.30	unsatisfactory for graduate level study		
and below				

**Late Assignments**

Late assignments will be marked down 5% per day late. Exceptions will be made in the case of illness or death in the family.

**Supplementary Fees**

There are no supplementary fees.

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

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION****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](http://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](http://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](http://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 participate as subjects or researchers in human subject research as part of this course.

### **Guidelines for Zoom Sessions**

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published with the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith and respect (as per the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behavior in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g. Student Non Academic Misconduct Policy). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your Zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to

join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

### **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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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/>).

### **Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation**

- Student Union VP Academic 403-220-3911, [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

- Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts – 403-220-3913, [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)
- Student Ombuds Office information can be found at: [www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/](http://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.