

**Carleton University, Department of Geography
& Environmental Studies**
Winter 2017
GEOG 5905: Masters Research Workshop

Catalogue Description (from Academic Calendar)

A workshop which focuses on the challenges of research design in the various sub-fields of geography. The workshop will culminate with the development and defence of a thesis research proposal.

Course Overview (Instructor's additional description)

The primary objective of the Masters Research Workshop is the development of a thesis proposal. This proposal will provide the foundation for the completion of your MA or MSc research, and will include the discussion and consideration of: theoretical approaches to research, ethical codes of conduct, research design and sampling strategy, justification for proposed methodology, context and rationale for research, anticipated field work sites and timeline, and your graduate program timeline. A secondary objective of this course is to develop critical analytical skills through the process of peer review of research proposals. This course is highly interactive, whereby MA and MSc students learn together, and from each other, with broad exposure to various types of geographic research. This course also takes place in close consultation with your thesis supervisor, who is involved in the evaluation of assignments and overall progress.

Instructor

Dr. Gita J. Ljubicic

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Website: <http://www.straightupnorth.ca>

Communications

Wherever possible course content, supplementary materials, presentation outlines, readings, and any additional information will be posted and communicated using **cuLearn** (<https://www.carleton.ca/culearn/>). You are also strongly encouraged to use the online discussion tools to ask questions and receive feedback from the Instructor. However, in corresponding with the Instructor via email, please be sure to include the course number in the subject line (i.e. GEOG5905 - subject of email). **Please note that emails received after 5pm weekdays or on weekends will receive a reply the following weekday.**

Lectures/Seminar Discussions

3 hours weekly Time: Thursdays, 2:30 - 5:30pm Room: Southam Hall 411

Readings

There is no specific textbook for this course. A number of readings will be made available from selected book chapters and journal articles. These will be made available electronically through the E-reserves (Ares) system and on reserve at the MacOdrum Library. Weekly required readings will be listed on cuLearn, so **please check cuLearn regularly for reading updates.**

Method of Instruction

- Seminar discussions
- Engagement with course readings, assignments, and class discussions
- Consultations with the Instructor and your thesis supervisor
- Student presentations
- Acting as a peer reviewer and discussant
- Guest presentations

Evaluation

Thesis proposal (70%)

The goal of this course is to develop a Masters research proposal which will help to guide your graduate research throughout your degree program. This proposal should include the following key components: i) working title; ii) introduction (abstract); iii) aims; iv) research question; v) objectives/hypotheses; vi) justification; vii) context; viii) literature review; ix) methodology; x) timeline; xi) limitations; xii) references; and, xiii) any other related materials. Additional description of proposal components and expectations will be distributed in class. The thesis proposal grade is broken down into several components, including:

- 1) a written draft thesis proposal (15%) - **Due February 27 or March 6**, to be presented and discussed in class **March 2 and 9** respectively
- 2) an oral presentation of the revised thesis proposal (20%) - **Due March 23 or 30**
- 3) a final, written, thesis proposal (35%) - **Due April 13**

Participation (30%)

This course is run as a workshop, and thus its success relies heavily on student engagement and contributions of all participants to the class discussions. You are expected to prepare for each class in the ways indicated in the course schedule, and in the more detailed descriptions of assignments. This includes doing the required readings, and reviewing your peers' proposal drafts according to the various groups and/or pairs you will work in. Student contributions also include participating in discussions, providing constructive feedback, and asking questions related to all presentations or discussions, not only for the particular groups/pairs you are part of. The participation grade is broken down into several components, including:

- 1) the oral presentation and critique of a previous MA or MSc thesis (10%) - **February 9**
- 2) being a discussant of one of your peer's draft thesis proposals (10%) - ongoing
- 3) contribution to class or group discussion (10%) - ongoing

As outlined in the [Faculty Grading Guidelines](#) please note that: "Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean."

Lateness Policy: Just as there is no lateness policy for most job-related deadlines, there will be a **no tolerance lateness policy** for this course.

- All written assignments, with the exception of the final thesis proposal, will be shared with the all students in the class and thesis supervisors. Therefore, **assignments must be posted directly to cuLearn, by noon on the date they are due** (see Evaluation section for deadlines).
- **All oral presentations must occur on the date indicated in the presentation schedule** (refer to cuLearn for details).
- **The final thesis proposal is due in electronic (.pdf format) by noon on April 13, sent to both the Instructor and your thesis supervisor.**

*Students assume all risk for lost or missing materials.
Be sure to **keep a back-up electronic copy** of all assignments.*

Extenuating Circumstances: Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with extenuating circumstances (i.e. out of your control). Any requests for deadline extensions for writing assignments must be made at least **5 business days prior to the deadline**. In case of missed deadlines **due to unforeseen circumstance, an official medical note** (or other applicable formal documentation) must be provided **IN PERSON** (or by other agreed upon means) **within 5 days** of the missed deadline in order to negotiate new deadlines. Missed presentations must be accompanied by the same documentation, using the same protocol outlined above, and only then will the re-scheduling of presentations be considered. *With the proper documentation these accommodations will be considered, but will not be guaranteed. **If no documentation is provided, the resulting grade of a missed assignment will be zero.***

Academic Dishonesty: Students are reminded of the seriousness with which Carleton University treats academic dishonesty of any form, particularly plagiarism (**see p. 5 for details**). Students should be familiar with the University's **Academic Integrity Policy** (<http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity/>), and do not hesitate to speak with the Instructor if you have any questions - BEFORE handing in the assignment in question.

Requests for Academic Accommodations: You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of **disability, pregnancy or religious obligations (see p. 5 for details)**. Please review the course outline promptly and write to the Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation **during the first two weeks of class**, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. Visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.

Help with assignments and course requirements: There are a variety of ways to get help if you are having difficulties with any of the course material, or managing to meet the requirements of a number of courses at once. The Instructor is here to facilitate your learning, so take advantage of your opportunities for interaction and ask for help when needed. You are especially encouraged to attend designated office hours if you need particular assistance. There are also a number of support services and resources on campus at your disposal, including: **The Student Academic Success Centre** (www.carleton.ca/sasc to help you in achieving academic success in various aspects of your university program); **The Writing Tutorial Service** (www.carleton.ca/wts to help you improve your writing skills); and, **The MacOdrum Library** (www.library.carleton.ca which offers library, research, learning, and IT support).

In ALL cases, it is important to negotiate special arrangements well in advance of test or assignment deadlines.

Scheduled Seminar Topics and Assignments (Winter 2017)*

Week	Date	Seminar Topic	Assignments
1	Jan 5	Course overview and expectations	
2	Jan 12	The research process, and components of a research proposal	
3	Jan 19	Refining the research question	• group review of 1-page research question description
4	Jan 26	Graduate student experiences - research design to implementation <i>Guest presentation: Keegan Smith & Brittany Rea</i> Connecting theory and methodology	
5	Feb 2	Independent Work Session <i>No formal class</i>	
6	Feb 9	Discussion of MA and MSc theses <i>Student presentations</i>	• presentation of thesis critique
7	Feb 16	Proposal writing/presentation tips <i>Work Session</i>	• group review of 2-page description of the theoretical and methodology approach(es) you will draw from
8	Feb 23	NO CLASS - READING WEEK	
9	Mar 2	Discussion of draft thesis proposals <i>Student presentations</i>	• presentation/discussion of draft thesis proposal**
10	Mar 9	Discussion of draft thesis proposals <i>Student presentations</i>	• presentation/discussion of draft thesis proposal**
11	Mar 16	Research ethics, permits, and communications <i>Guest presentation: Sophie Tamas</i>	• group review of 1-page plain language research summary
12	Mar 23	Presentation of revised thesis proposals <i>Student presentations</i>	• presentation/discussion of revised thesis proposal**
13	Mar 30	Presentation of revised thesis proposals <i>Student presentations</i>	• presentation/discussion of revised thesis proposal**
14	Apr 6	Independent or group work to finalize proposals <i>Work session</i>	

*All required and supplementary readings will be posted weekly on cuLearn and will be available electronically through Ares or through MacOdrum Library. **Please check cuLearn regularly for reading updates.**

All materials to be presented and discussed in class must be **circulated electronically via cuLearn by Monday at noon, during the same week of the scheduled presentation (i.e. providing 4 days for all to review).

The Instructor reserves the right to modify the topics and schedule during the term.

University Policies and Statements

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines *plagiarism* as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offense which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s Instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an Instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial: they can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Academic Accommodations for Pregnancy

Contact the Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.

Academic Accommodations for Religious Obligations

Contact the Instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The **Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC)** provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send the Instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with the Instructor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for a formally-scheduled exam (if applicable) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>.

Visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.