

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University

Doctoral Core Seminar: Geography, Society and Environment (GEOG 6000), Fall 2018
“An Integrative Orientation to Problems in Geographic Thought”

Course outline

(Note – readings, guest speakers and other activities are subject to change, depending on student input and other factors.)

Instructor: Derek A. Smith

Email: dereka_smith@carleont.ca

Office hours: By appointment

Seminar: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:35 to 11:25 (with a break of about 30 minutes in each session)

Course Objectives:

- To provide students with an appreciation of the intellectual history of geography and related disciplines, and its relevance to current debates;
- To enable students to locate their own geographical research interests and perspectives within a broader intellectual context;
- To develop an environment of collegiality, mutual respect and appreciation for the intellectual benefits of exploring a broad range of interests and perspectives related to the geography of social change, the geography of environmental change, and their inter-relations;
- To begin the process of assisting students to develop a focus for their dissertation research;
- To promote a community of scholars with an appreciation of the challenges and rewards of doctoral-level research.

Course Format:

The course follows a seminar format, with students expected to come to class well prepared to be active participants and to lead discussions of assigned readings. Guest speakers will provide opportunities to discuss additional topics in geographic research.

Course Assignments and Assessment:

The course grade will reflect the student's overall performance and intellectual development. It will be based on the following elements:

Commentaries (15 percent of final grade)

Students are required to share with other members of class and the instructor brief but thoughtful comments stimulated by the assigned readings and other class content. The chief purpose of these preliminary contributions is to encourage reflection on one's own reactions to the readings in anticipation of the in-class discussion. These commentaries must be sent by email no later than 2pm on the day preceding the seminar discussion. There will be a total of eight (8) commentaries over the course of the term. Commentaries should focus on the primary theme (i.e., the topic indicated in the title of the upcoming seminar), but can include connections to previous seminar readings and discussions. With the exception of two book chapters, all readings are available either via cuLearn by accessing the *Ares* site (look for the "View course in Ares" link on the left-hand side of the page) or from a website using the URL provided. Cresswell's book, *Geographic Thought*, is on reserve in the MacOdrum library.

In-class discussions will be animated through a co-facilitation approach. Students will share the role of co-facilitator (along with the instructor). Assignment of facilitation duties will be agreed to in advance.

Review essay (35 percent of final grade)

Each student will prepare an essay (7500 words) on a topic that reviews the links between selected course themes and each student's own substantive research focus. Students will be given an opportunity to present their ideas for the review essay to the class in late October/early November, and to then present the review in class as a way to get feedback for the final paper. This final presentation should be done in a conference style – 15 minutes maximum, with 5 minutes for questions and discussion. Please prepare a one-page abstract and bibliography to be distributed to the rest of the class at the beginning of the presentation. These presentations will be scheduled for December 4 and 6.

Students are encouraged to consult with their supervisors on both the topic and approach to the review essay. Supervisors will also be involved in the assessment of the essay if possible. Each student's final essay will be returned personally, at which time they will be given the opportunity to reflect on their progress during the term before their grade for the course is finalized.

The final deadline for submission of the review essay is December 15.

Class participation (50 percent of final grade)

An assessment of class participation will be based primarily on being an active, engaged and informed participant and occasional co-facilitator in the seminars, as well as on an assessment of the three oral

presentations prepared for the seminar (i.e., the proposed doctoral research presentation in September, the review proposal in late October/early November, and the review essay presentation in December).

While the structure of the final grade will be based on the components explained above, it will also take into account an assessment of personal intellectual growth achieved during the term and the contributions to the collective intellectual growth of the seminar participants. While superior scholarship is the goal that each student should aim for, in this first term, you are particularly encouraged to 'think outside the box' and to take intellectual risks with the confidence to push intellectual boundaries rather than trying to 'get things perfect' at this early stage of your doctoral career.

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.

Seminar schedule

Thursday, September 6 – No class / office hours

Tuesday, September 11 - Introductions

Each student and the instructor will provide a personal and academic autobiography (about 10 minutes) as a way of introducing ourselves to each other and revealing the academic interests that have brought us together in this course.

As a separate item, each student should select 1-2 key publications (books or articles) that have shaped their enthusiasm for engaging in doctoral work. They will briefly speak to how and why.

Thursday, September 13 – Geographic thought: Common themes and challenges

*** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than September 12 at 2pm.*

Reviewing the history and current state of the discipline, what are the enduring themes that geographers have pursued? What is distinctive about the discipline? Is there a case for maintaining an integrative interpretation of geography as a discipline that straddles the divide between the natural and social sciences? If so, what is that case, and what is necessary to make it effective? These are not questions we will fully resolve this week! They begin an exploration that really continues all year.

Readings:

- Cresswell, Tim (2013) *Geographic Thought: A Critical Introduction*. Chichester, West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. Chapters 1-3, "Introduction" / "Early geographies" / "The emergence of modern geography" (pp. 1-57).
- Harrison, S. (2009) Physical geography and human geography. In *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, N. Thrift and R. Kitchin, eds, pp. 163-168. Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Aspinall, Richard (2010) A century of physical geography research in the *Annals*. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 100 (5): 1049-1059.
- Barrows, Harlan H. (1923) Geography as human ecology. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 13(1): 1-14.
- Baerwald, Thomas J. (2010). Prospects for geography as an interdisciplinary discipline. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 100 (3): 493-501.

Tuesday, September 18 – Geographic thought (continued) / Workshop (NCERC and SSHRC applications)

Readings:

- Johnston, Ron (2011) Promoting geography (or part of it)—Yet again! *The Professional Geographer*, 63(3): 325-331.
- Sheppard, Eric (2004) Practicing geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 94(4): 744-747.
- Ziegler, Alan, Jamie Gillen, Barry Newell, Carl Grundy-Warr and Robert J. Wasson (2013). Commentary: Comprehensive research in geography, *Area* 45(2): 252-254.

Thursday, September 20 – How do we know what we know?

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than September 19 at 2pm.**

They don't call the degree a Doctor of Philosophy for nothing. Much more than at the level of the Masters degree, a PhD demands you reflect critically on the nature of reality and the whole process of knowledge creation, because that's what you will be engaged in. If geography is a discipline of broad scope, you will not be surprised to find there is no single route to producing valid knowledge.

Readings:

- Inkpen, Robert (2005) The nature of reality, pp. 26-36 (**only**). In, *Science, Philosophy and Physical Geography*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sayer, Andrew (2015) Realism as a basis for knowing the world. Chapter 8 in *Approaches to Human Geography: Philosophies, Theories, People and Practices*, pp. 106-116. Stuart C. Aitken and Gill Valentine, eds. Los Angeles: Sage.

- Fotheringham, A. Stewart (2015) Quantification, evidence and positivism. Chapter 25 in *Approaches to Human Geography: Philosophies, Theories, People and Practices*, pp. 306-319. Stuart C. Aitken and Gill Valentine, eds. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Posey, Darrell Addison (1992) Interpreting and applying the “reality” of indigenous concepts: What is necessary to learn from the natives? In *Conservation of Neotropical Forests*, edited by Kent H. Redford and Christine Padoch, pp. 21-34. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wylie, John (2015) Poststructuralist approaches: Deconstruction and discourse analysis. Chapter 30 in *Approaches to Human Geography: Philosophies, Theories, People and Practices*, pp. 373-384. Stuart C. Aitken and Gill Valentine, eds. Los Angeles: Sage.

Tuesday, September 25 – How do we know what we know (continued) / Guest speaker

Readings:

- CBC (2012). *How to Think About Science*, Episodes 5 (full episode) and 14 (first half in particular). CBC Ideas, available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/how-to-think-about-science-part-1-24-1.2953274>.
- Harari, Yuval N. (2014) *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*. Toronto, Ontario: Signal. Chapters 14 and 15, “The discovery of ignorance” / “The marriage of science and empire” (pp. 247-304).

Thursday, September 27 – Student presentations > Doctoral research proposals.

In conjunction with your thesis supervisor, each student will prepare a draft application for an Ontario Graduate Scholarship and/or the appropriate Tri-Council (NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR) Doctoral Scholarship (or if not applicable, geared toward another audience). Each student will have up to 20 minutes to outline their proposal and receive feedback. For assistance, you may consult the book by Craswell and Poore (2012) *Writing for Academic Success*, pp. 150-154 (available via Ares); if possible, examples of a successful applications will also be provided.

Tuesday, October 2 – Guest – Trish Ballamingie (on GEOG 6001)

September 28 –approximate, expected NSERC deadline for PhD scholarships

Thursday, October 4 – Theory in Geography

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than October 3 at 2pm.**

Readings:

- Burt, T. (2005) General/particular. In, *Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates*, pp. 117-130. Noel Castree, Alisdair Rogers, Douglas Sherman, eds., Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

- Castree, N. (2005) Is geography a science? In, *Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates*, pp. 57-79. Noel Castree, Alisdair Rogers, Douglas Sherman, eds., Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.
- Bauer, Bernard O., Thomas T. Veblen and Julie A. Winkler (1999) Old methodological sneakers: Fashion and function in a cross-training era. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89 (4): 679-687.
- Bauer, B. O., J. A. Winkler, and T. T. Veblen (1999) Afterword: A shoe for all occasions or shoes for every occasion: Methodological diversity, normative fashions, and metaphysical unity in physical geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 89 (4): 771-778.
- Miller, Harvey J., 2015, Data-driven geography, *GeoJournal*, 80: 449-461.
- Turner, Matthew D. (2016) Political ecology II: Engagements with ecology? *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(3) 413-421.

Tuesday, October 9 – Theory in Geography (continued) / Guest speaker

Additional readings TBD.

Thursday, October 11 – Spatial science / critical cartography

*** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than October 10 at 2pm.*

Readings:

- Robinson, Arthur H. (1979) Geography and cartography then and now, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 69(1): 97-102.
- Cresswell, Tim (2013) Spatial science and the quantitative revolution. Chapter 5 in *Geographic Thought: A Critical Introduction*, pp. 79-102.
- Edney, Mathew G. (1993) The patronage of science and the creation of imperial space, 1799–1843: The British mapping of India, 1799–1843. *Cartographica* 30(1): 61-67.
- Dodge, Martin (2015) Mapping and geovisualization. Chapter 24 in *Approaches to Human Geography: Philosophies, Theories, People and Practices*, pp. 289-305. Stuart C. Aitken and Gill Valentine, eds. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Elwood, Sarah (2010) Thinking outside the box: Engaging critical Geographic Information Systems theory, practice and politics in Human Geography. *Geography Compass* 4(1): 45-60.

October 12 – SSHRC expected, approximate deadline for PhD scholarships

Tuesday, October 16 – Spatial science / critical cartography (continued)

Additional readings TBD.

Thursday, October 18 – Humans and nature

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than October 17 at 2pm.**

Readings:

- Jones, O. (2009) Nature/Culture. In *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, N. Thrift and R. Kitchin, eds, pp. 309-323. Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Tarolli, Paolo (2016) Humans and the Earth's surface. *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms*, 41, 2301-2304.
- Mark Vellend, Mark (2017) The biodiversity conservation paradox. *American Scientist*, Volume 105(2): 94-101.
- Swyngedouw, E., and M. Kaika (2008) The environment of the city or the urbanization of nature. In, *A Companion to the City*, ed. G. Bridge and S. Watson. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 567-581.
- Pierotti, Raymond and Dan Wildcat (2000) Traditional ecological knowledge: The third alternative (commentary). *Ecological Applications* 10(5): 1333-1340.
- Palmer, Lisa (2007) Interpreting 'nature': The politics of engaging with Kakadu as an Aboriginal place. *Cultural Geographies* 14: 255-273.

October 22-26 – Fall Break, no class.

Tuesday, October 30 – Humans and Nature (continued) / Guest speaker

Additional readings TBD.

Thursday, November 1 – Presentation of review essay proposals

Each student will give a 15-20 minute presentation, followed by class feedback and discussion.

Note – The schedule for the remaining seminar meetings will be provided later in the term.

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 offence that cannot be resolved directly by 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. The Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed at <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>.

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the professor 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 see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

Religious obligation: write to the professor 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 see <https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>

Accommodation for Student Activities: write to the professor 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 see <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Survivors of sexual violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support/wp-content/uploads/Sexual-Violence-Policy-December-1-2016.pdf>.

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 me 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 me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).