COURSE OUTLINE

Geographies of Culture and Identity (GEOG 3021)

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University, Winter 2017

THIS IS THE COURSE OUTLINE FROM LAST YEAR (WINTER 2017). THE COURSE WILL HAVE SIMILAR THEMES AND ACTIVITIES DURING THE FALL 2018 TERM, BUT MANY DETAILS WILL CHANGE

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Office hours: To be announced in class, and by appointment.
Teaching assistants: To be determined

Calendar description:

Examination of culture, identity and place over time. Colonial and other historical processes that have shaped societies from place to place; relationships between cultural groups and their natural surroundings; gender, ethnicity, nationality and other dimensions of identity; impacts of globalization.

Course description:

Culture has been and continues to be a central theme in geography. This is reflected in a tradition of looking at relationships between distinct peoples’ way of life and their natural surroundings as well as in current debates related to landscape, place and identity. Colonial and other historical processes that have shaped societies around the world are also of central concern, and provide context needed to better understand contemporary issues. In an increasingly globalized world, cultural geographers will continue to make important contributions in how to interpret the complex cultural dimensions of economic, social, political, and environmental change.

The purpose of this course is to examine a broad spectrum of concepts and approaches in cultural geography through a combination of lectures, videos, class discussion, readings, and assignments. Together we will explore topics like cultural landscapes and regions, people and nature, place and identity, nations and states, colonial legacies, globalization and cultural diversity, and other related concepts and issues. The content will reflect an international approach, but with somewhat greater emphasis on Canada.
**Prerequisites:** The calendar notes that GEOG 2300 and third-year standing are required prerequisites. Please contact the instructor as soon as possible if you do not have the prerequisites but wish to take this course. It will be assumed that students have sufficient background in human geography for the course, as well as the writing skills and critical thinking abilities expected of third-year students. Students who do not have adequate experience will likely be at a significant disadvantage and should not register in this course.

**Course objectives:**

- To become familiar with the historical development and current orientations of the field of cultural geography;
- To become knowledgeable about a wide range of core concepts in this field;
- To develop an understanding of different methodological and theoretical approaches in cultural geography; and
- To improve critical thinking and writing skills, and the ability to evaluate and critique academic publications.

**Class format:**

The course meets for 80 minutes twice per week. Classes will combine lectures, class discussion, and in-class tutorials. This class will have a significant “active learning” component, meaning that students will not simply listen to the instructor, but will instead have the opportunity to participate actively in the class. Regular attendance and coming to class prepared will be important for learning course material. More explanation of the in-class tutorials will be provided in class.

**cuLearn and communications:**

The cuLearn site for this course will contain the course outline, lecture slides, assignment marks and any announcements. Your grades will be posted on cuLearn as they become available. Please notify the teaching assistant or instructor of any omissions or inaccuracies.

The best way to reach me is usually to call me, and leave a number where I can reach you if I am not available. I am also very happy to meet with students during office hours or by appointment. If you want to get in touch with me or the teaching assistant, please send emails the “regular” way – in other ways, not through cuLearn. Whenever possible, I will return calls and email inquiries within 36 hours (but note that I will not respond over the weekend). Please use your Carleton email account for all course-related correspondence, and place “GEOG 3021” in the subject heading.

The use of laptops in class (e.g. taking notes during class) is permitted. However, students are prohibited from using their laptops to check email, Facebook or to engage in other non-course related activities. Those who do will be asked to not use their laptops in class. Students are also requested to turn off cell phones during the class.

**Required readings:**

There is no required textbook for this course. The required readings consist of one reading for every class of the term, except for the first lecture, the day of the mid-term, and the last day of class. All readings will be available through cuLearn unless otherwise noted. To access the readings, log in to cuLearn and click on the “View course in Areas” button in the Library Reserves section in the left-hand column of the main page, and a new window will open with the list of readings that are linked to PDF documents.

The readings for the course have been selected from a wide range of books and journals and represent a broad array of theoretical debates, concepts, issues, and case studies. An attempt has been made to include readings that address current debates and new frontiers; to include case studies from a variety of regional settings; and to introduce you to some of the key journals that publish research in cultural geography and related fields. The readings both complement and reinforce the lectures, but also cover material that may not be discussed in class. Keep in mind that although the readings have been placed into specific themes, many of the authors “stray” into other topics that are addressed more directly at other stages in the class. Take note of the author’s affiliation, the year and place of publication, and any other information that might help you contextualize what you are reading. Use an on-line
mapping site to find the location of a case study for regions you are not familiar with, to provide some geographic context. Some of the readings taken from books may only be available on reserve for two-hour loans (these are indicated in the reading list by “BOR”). It is very important that you read the materials in advance of class to be able to participate in class discussion and small group activities. Videos shown during class are also required material that will be included on the midterm and final exam, so if you miss a class it is important to view the video afterwards. In many cases, a web link will be provided in the lecture slides; when this is not possible (e.g., for videos on loan from another university), other arrangements will be made and explained in class.

For students who wish to review introductory material in cultural geography, the following texts are useful. The book by Norton is on reserve for four-hour loans and the Atkinson book is available in the reference section of the library:


The following is a Canadian writing guide available in the reference section of the library, but you may want to buy your own copy as it is fairly inexpensive and will likely be useful beyond your undergraduate career. An electronic version is also available through the library catalogue.


For additional library research on the topics addressed in class or in your assignments, the following library subject guide is a useful place to begin: [http://www.library.carleton.ca/research/subject-guides/geography](http://www.library.carleton.ca/research/subject-guides/geography).

**Writing Tutorial Service:**

Writing is a critical component of this course. Students who are having writing difficulties, or who simply want to improve their writing skills, should consider making use of the writing tutorials provided by Carleton University: [http://www.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/](http://www.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/).

**Course evaluation:**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written commentaries (3 commentaries x 5 percent per commentary)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term examination</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photographic essay</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Final examination</td>
<td>30</td>
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Assignments will be graded on a scale from A+ to F. The evaluation will take into account the content in relation to the purpose of the assignment, as well as the quality of written expression and overall presentation. Whenever possible, assignments will be returned to you in class one week after they are submitted. Please include a title, your name and student number, the course number and instructor’s name, and the date on all of your written assignments at the top of the first page. Please also retain an additional hard copy for your records.

**Written commentaries:**

For this class, a written commentary consists of a two-page (500-word) description and analysis/discussion of one of the required readings. A total of three written commentaries are required for this course, one for each of the five required readings that have been selected (see those marked with an “***” below). Each of the commentaries should above all demonstrate that you have read and reflected on the content of the reading. The commentary
should include a synthesis and discussion of what you feel to be the most important concepts, issues and/or arguments in the reading. It is not necessary to address all of the issues that are discussed in the reading in your written commentary (particularly in the case of the longer articles), but it is important to provide a synthesis that provides a good understanding of what the reading is about. The commentary should also provide a discussion of key ideas, concepts, and/or issues in reading, especially those that relate to the course. For example, what does the reading say or demonstrate about the theme of the class for which it was assigned? You may also include your own critique, by highlighting important issues that are neglected, a weakness of an argument, or if applicable, methodological limitations that affect the results. (You are not expected, however, to comment on the quality of the writing, or how interesting it is or is not.) You are also encouraged to integrate relevant personal observations from your own life or connections to current events as examples of the issues or ideas you discuss in your commentary – things that are happening in Ottawa or elsewhere in Canada or around the world. Your discussion may also include something about the implications of the main points being made – can the ideas, for example, be used to address specific social issues or improve current policies? The written commentary should represent your own, unique response to the concepts and issues addressed. You are encouraged to discuss the readings and concepts with your classmates, but the commentary must be entirely your own work. A complete reference for the reading should be included at the end of your commentary. If you choose, you may use quotes from the reading as part of your commentary, but you must use quotation marks and correct citations (e.g., “Fisher 2000, 2”). References to other sources (e.g., other required readings) can strengthen a written commentary but are not required. However, if you do use other sources, you should cite them in the main body of your commentary where appropriate (e.g., “Alfredsson 2008”) along with a full citation at the end of the commentary. Please also include a title.

A hard copy of the commentary is due at beginning of class on the day that the reading is assigned (for example, the written commentary on the reading by Cresswell (2009) on the concept of place is due at the beginning of class on January 26).

Photographic essay:

The photographic essay represents a significant, independent project that more or less replaces the “traditional” term paper. While less writing is required, the conceptual content and the room for original expression will provide an opportunity for a rich learning experience that links the concepts of the course with your own environment. The photographic essay should consist of six entries, each consisting of (i) a photograph that is somehow connected to one or more themes of the class, (ii) a quote from one of the required readings or some other academic source, and (iii) an original caption averaging about 150-200 words. The author, location, and approximate date taken must be included directly below each photograph. The purpose of the caption is to describe what is in the photograph and what it shows about one of the main themes of the course. In some cases the connection between the academic quote and the rest of the entry will be obvious, but if not, the caption can be used to make the connection apparent. At least four of the photographs should be taken by you (preferably during this course) but other photographs may be used, provided that they can be adequately described and referenced. The photographic essay should also include a 300-500 word narrative that summarizes your approach and explains common ideas and connections among the photographs and discusses the story they tell. This introduction should not consist of a reiteration of the essay entries. More explanation about the purpose and expectations of this assignment will be provided in class. If you do not have access to a camera, please see me as soon as possible. The photographic essay will be due April 6, the last day of class.

Examinations:

The mid-term exam (15%) and final exam (30%) will be comprised of short answer and longer essay questions that will test students on their understanding of concepts, issues, and themes covered in lectures, required readings, videos and class discussion. The one-hour mid-term exam will focus on material covered in the first half of the course and the three-hour final exam (to be scheduled by the university) will focus on the entire course. Both exams will include both short answer questions, and longer essay questions.
There will be no make-up for the mid-term exam. If a student misses the mid-term exam for a legitimate reason, the final exam will be reweighted to count for 45% percent of the final grade. Proper documentation (e.g., medical note) is required. Without proper documentation, a grade of zero will be assigned for a missed mid-term exam.

**Late or deferred submissions:**

A late submission of a written commentary or the photographic essay without prior permission will result in a penalty equivalent to **10 percent per day** after the designated due date. Assignments submitted through the Departmental drop-box slot (Room B342, Loeb Building) on the due date after class will be considered one day late. For all assignments submitted through the drop-box (for which there is no date-stamping service), an attachment of the assignment must be sent to the teaching assistant (see cuLearn for contact information) immediately before or after the assignment is dropped off. The email attachment will be opened for verification purposes, but will not be graded; it will be used for determining the late penalty that will apply.

Students who are unable to complete assignments on time because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may request an extension within five days after the deadline to negotiate a new deadline, either directly with their supervisor or the course instructor depending on who is evaluating the assignment. Permission will only be granted if the request is supported by a medical certificate or other supporting documentation. Conflicts arising due to religious obligations should be indicated in advance, but do not require verification. Late assignments can be submitted to me directly during office hours or put in or in the mail drop box of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, near the main office, on the third floor of the Loeb building.

**Academic accommodations:**

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 me 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://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/).

*Religious obligation:* write to me 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://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/](http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/).

*Students with disabilities* requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the deadlines published on the PMC website: [http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/](http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/).

**Academic dishonesty:**

Students are reminded of the seriousness with which Carleton University treats academic dishonesty of any form, including plagiarism. Students should be familiar with the University’s Academic Integrity Policy (see [http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity](http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity)). For more information on plagiarism, its consequences and how to avoid committing plagiarism, see the MacOdrum Library web site on the topic: [http://www.library.carleton.ca/howdoI/plagiarism.html](http://www.library.carleton.ca/howdoI/plagiarism.html).
Course schedule and required readings

Jan 5  NO CLASS

Jan 10  Culture, place and time – key themes in cultural geography - No required readings.

CULTURE AND PLACE

Jan 12  Culture and geography


Jan 17  Cultural landscapes


Jan 19  Cultural regions


Jan 24  The politics of culture

Mitchell, Don (2000) “Culture wars: Culture is politics by another name,” Chapter 1 in Cultural Geography: A

Jan 26  Place


COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL GEOGRAPHIES

Jan 31  Postcolonial perspectives

181 (only). In Dissident Geographies: An Introduction to Radical Ideas and Practice. Harlow, England: Prentice
Hall.

Feb 2  Constructing the “other”


Feb 7  Colonial geographies

UK: Sage Publications. (BOR)
Feb 9  Mapping colonial spaces


Feb 14  Postcolonial identities


**PEOPLE AND NATURE**

Feb 16  MID-TERM EXAMINATION

WINTER BREAK – February 20-24

Feb 28  Cultural and political ecology

To be determined

Mar 2  Local knowledge


March 7  Social nature


**IDENTITY AND GEOGRAPHY**

March 9  Gendered spaces


March 14  Race – Illusion or reality?


Mar 16  Ethnicity and difference

Mar 21  National identities

To be determined

Mar 23  Aboriginal identities


THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

Mar 28  Cultural imperialism


Mar 30  Global culture?

To be determined.

April 4  Cultural hybridity

To be determined

CONCLUSION AND REVIEW

Apr 6  New directions in the study of culture, place and time / Course review

No required readings

Note: Schedule and readings subject to change. Changes will be announced in advance through cuLearn and in class.