

APPROACHES TO GEOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY (GEOG 5000)

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University, Fall 2016

Instructor:	Jill Wigle, PhD
Office:	Loeb B353
Office hours:	Tuesdays, 10:00 to 11:30 am, or by appointment
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Lectures:	Wednesdays, 11:35 am to 2:25 pm, Loeb A410
cuLearn site:	https://culearn.carleton.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=76523

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

A review of the major philosophical perspectives shaping research and explanation by geographers. Particular attention is paid to interpretations of social structure and human action, the nature of the biophysical universe, and the interaction between human beings and their environments.

Prerequisite: Graduate student standing, or permission of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. Open to graduate students from all disciplines.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide students with the opportunity to engage with significant approaches, practices, and concepts in human geography;
- To discuss important issues and debates in geographic inquiry and to assist students to reflect upon their own research within this context;
- To support the development of student research interests and projects.

CLASS FORMAT

The course meets once weekly for a 3-hour seminar. As a graduate seminar, students are expected to participate in class discussions in an active and informed manner. Weekly seminars will revolve around discussion of the assigned readings and student presentations.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

The textbook and a variety of additional readings have been chosen to: provide a general overview of significant approaches in human geography; represent new, influential or enduring works in particular areas of geographic research; offer illustrations of certain approaches to geographic inquiry; and to present more in-depth insights on important themes and debates from geographic perspectives. The required text for this course is: Aitken, Stuart and Gill Valentine (editors). 2015. *Approaches to Human Geography: Philosophies, Theories, People and Practices* (Second Edition). London: Sage.

Copies of the text are available for purchase at Haven Books (43 Seneca Street, 613-730-9888). Other required course readings are available through ARES and the ARES link in cuLearn. Readings can also be found through the library's e-journals at: <http://www.library.carleton.ca>. A copy of the textbook is also available through course reserves at the library.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CULEARN

The course's cuLearn site will be used to post the syllabus, links to required readings, information on assignments, sign-up sheets for reading discussants and commentaries, and other course-related information. Your confidential grades will be posted on cuLearn as available. Please notify the instructor of any inaccuracies as soon as possible or before the last class. Please use your Carleton email account for email correspondence with the instructor, placing "GEOG 5000" in the subject line.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Academic Biography and Presentation (10% of final grade)

This assignment asks students to prepare a short academic biography (approximately 500 words) of their academic journey to graduate studies, modeled after one of the chapters in “Part 2: People” (pp. 215-284) of Aitken and Valentine (2015). Students should discuss how their academic trajectory has been “shaped by philosophies, personal experiences, place, time” (Aitken and Valentine, 2015, p. 215). Students will be asked to present their academic biography to the class in week 2. In week 11, students will be asked to revisit their academic biographies and critically reflect on their original submissions based on course content and learning. The written part of the assignment is due in class on September 14, 2016.

Overall Class Participation (10% of final grade)

Participation is an important part of this graduate seminar. Students are expected to attend class prepared to discuss the required readings in an informed manner and to actively engage in class discussions. The participation mark will be evaluated by the instructor based on the overall quality of a student’s contribution to class discussions during the entire semester.

Reading Commentaries and Presentations (45% of final grade)

a) Reading commentaries (3 written commentaries x 10% each = 30%)

To support engagement with the readings and meaningful class discussion, students are asked to prepare written reading commentaries for one of the required weekly readings for three weeks during the term. Each commentary should be a maximum of 750 words and provide a succinct assessment of the main arguments, ideas or issues raised by the reading, as well as some analysis of important connections (linkages, differences or tensions) with another course reading from either the same week or a different week. Students should email their commentaries to the professor by or before 4 pm on the Tuesday before class – this should be considered the due date/time for each of the three commentaries. A sign-up sheet for this activity will be circulated in week 1.

b) Reading discussant (3 oral presentations x 5% each = 15%)

For three weeks of the term, students are asked to serve as a “discussant” of the required weekly readings and to prepare a 20 to 30-minute overview and assessment of these readings to share with the class. The purpose of these presentations is to initiate class discussions. In their presentations, students should provide a brief outline and assessment of main arguments, concepts and points raised in the readings; discuss how they relate or conflict with other readings/issues/concepts raised in class; and develop two or three questions for class discussion. A sign-up sheet for this activity will be circulated in week 1.

Review Essay and Presentation (30% for written review, 5% for presentation = 35% of final grade)

This assignment requires students to research and write a concise 3,000-word review essay similar to those found in the “progress reports” in *Progress in Human Geography*. Students should discuss their proposed review essay topic with the professor before week 7 of the term. The purpose of the review is to survey and critically assess recent geographical literature in a particular thematic area of interest to student research. Students will present their draft review essays in a 30-minute presentation to the class in week 12 of the term. Other students will be expected to offer respectful and helpful peer review of the presentations. These presentations provide an opportunity to obtain feedback before submitting final review essays before 5:00 pm on December 9, 2016. The review essay assignments should be submitted by uploading them to cuLearn.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments must be typed, submitted as a paper copy and adhere to the guidelines for written assignments discussed in class and/or posted on cuLearn. Students are asked to retain a hard copy (with electronic backup) of all assignments in the event of loss. All assignments must represent individual work completed on an independent basis.

A penalty of *two grade points per calendar day* will be applied to late assignments, unless accompanied by adequate written documentation for a *legitimate* reason beyond the student's control (e.g. illness or an emergency in your immediate family). Late reading commentaries will be accepted *only* up to 5 days past the indicated due date/time. Responsibilities and commitments for in-class presentations should be taken seriously and only changed if adequate documentation is provided for a legitimate reason.

Requests for a review of an assigned grade must take place in written form (e.g. by email) *within 7 days* of the grade being posted on cuLearn. In accordance with the Carleton University Calendar, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

WDN = Withdrawn from the course; ABS = Student absent from final exam; DEF = Deferred; FND = Failed Not Deferred (students who fail to meet the above-outlined course requirements may be assigned an FND grade); INC = Incomplete. 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that lecture topics and required readings are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Week 1: September 7

Course introduction

Week 2: September 14

Approaching human geography

Week 3: September 21

Positivist and humanist geographies

Week 4: September 28

Feminist geographies

Week 5: October 5

Marxist geographic perspectives

Week 6: October 12

Post-structuralism and geographic inquiry

Week 7: October 19

Post-colonialism and geographic inquiry

Week 8: November 2

Critical geography

Week 9: November 9

Mapping, calculation and geographic analysis

Week 10: November 16

Socio-ecological relations

Week 11: November 23

Socio-spatial relations

Week 12: November 30

Class presentations and course summary

Week 13: December 7

Final assignments

INSTRUCTIONAL AND CONDUCT OFFENCES

Carleton University has clear and firm policies regarding instructional and conduct offences. Instructional offences include among other activities cheating, contravening examination regulations, plagiarism, submitting similar work in 2 or more courses without prior permission, and disrupting classes. Conduct offences apply in areas of discrimination and sexual harassment. Further information about University regulations which define and regulate these offences is presented in the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/>.

Plagiarism is one kind of instructional offence. 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.

University regulations stipulate that allegations of plagiarism, cheating or any violations of examination conduct rules will be thoroughly reviewed. Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved by the course’s instructor. University procedures do *not* permit an instructor to discuss allegations of plagiarism with a student. If the instructor suspects that a student has submitted plagiarized work, the submitted assignment is forwarded to the Chair of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. If it is agreed that an instructional offence may have been committed, the case is forwarded to the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Affairs) of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) who conducts a rigorous

investigation, including an interview with the student, before deciding what, if any, penalties are warranted. They can include a grade of “F” for the course. For more information and guidance, please refer to: <http://www.library.carleton.ca/help/avoid-plagiarism>.

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 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://www.carleton.ca/equity/>

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://www.carleton.ca/equity/>

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) at <http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

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