This course will focus on the geographic articulations of empire and the ways in which “culture” interweaves with imperial and colonial geographies. The course will be divided into three parts. We will begin by engaging some key theoretical approaches to empire, including poststructuralist, feminist, Indigenous, antiracist, queer, decolonizing, and political-economic approaches. Next, we will consider a range of “sites” of colonial and imperial formation, including land, territory, nature, the body, sexuality, race, and gender. In the third part of the course we will focus on forms of resistance, resurgence, and decolonization, as well as emerging scholarship that both questions the limits of past approaches to the study of empire and aims to conceptualize imperial, colonial, and decolonizing processes in new ways.

The overall purpose of this course is:

- To situate cultural geographic approaches to empire within the discipline of geography and in relation to key source texts across the social sciences and humanities;
- To analyze culture as a site of imperial formation, an object of imperial knowledge production, and a modality of imperial domination, as well as a form of resistance, resurgence, and decolonization;
- To grapple with contemporary imperial formations and the potential and limits of cultural geographic scholarship for coming to terms with the imperial and colonial present;
- To support the development of your own research projects, as well as your writing, reading, critical thinking, and presentation skills.

I. Approaches to Empire

Jan 7 – Introductions

Jan 14 – Power/Knowledge

Required:


Supplementary:


Jan 21 – Feminist and Anti-racist approaches to empire:

Required:


Supplementary:


Jan 28 – Political Economies of Empire

Required:


Supplementary:


Feb 4 – Decolonizing, Anti-colonial, Indigenous Approaches to Empire
Required:

Supplementary:
• Fanon, F. 2004 [1963]. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove Press
• Maracle, L. 1996. I Am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism. Vancouver: Press Gang

II. Sites of Imperial Formation

Feb 11 – Land, territory, resources
Required:

Supplementary:

**Feb 18 – NO CLASS – Reading Week**

**Feb 25 – Ecology, the non-human**  
**Required:**

**Supplementary:**

**Mar 4 – Bodies, violence, life**  
**Required:**

**Supplementary:**

**Mar 11 – Gender and sexuality**

**Required:**

**Supplementary:**

**III. Contemporary (Anti)imperialisms**

**Mar 18 – Resistance, Resurgence, Solidarity**

**Required:**

**Supplementary:**

Mar 25 - Unknowing Empire
Required:

Supplementary:

Apr 1 – NO CLASS – Easter

Apr 8 – NO CLASS – AAG

Evaluation

20% Participation
- Participation is a crucial component of a graduate-level class.
- Participation includes arriving in class having read all of the assigned readings carefully and critically, offering thoughtful comments and questions to the discussion, being mindful of balanced participation across the class (i.e., checking yourself if you talk too much, and finding ways to contribute if you find it difficult to speak in class), and being generous and respectful with each other.
20% Reading Responses

- Students will be required to prepare short responses to the readings in advance of each class.
- Weekly responses to the assigned readings must be submitted to CULearn by 9am on Mondays. Please submit these on time; I will read them before class and use them to guide our discussion.
- Reading responses should be a maximum of 500 words and should provide a concise summary of the main arguments of each reading, as well as a response of some kind. This could take the form of considering connections or contradictions across the readings, evaluating the merits of a reading’s argument on its own terms (or from outside of its terms), or considering the implications of the readings for your own research.
- Responses are meant to ensure that all students come to class with a solid grounding in the readings, with questions and challenges to discuss, and also to cultivate critical reading and writing skills, particularly the development of nuanced, fair, and generous critique.
- Students can “skip” the reading response assignment twice per term and are not required to submit a response on the day they submit an annotated bibliography (i.e., you must submit seven responses over the ten weeks in which we discuss readings).

20% Annotated Bibliography/Facilitation

- Working either alone or in pairs, you will be responsible for preparing an annotated bibliography (8-10 sources, including assigned readings) in relation to a week’s theme, and for facilitating the first hour of discussion that day.
- The annotated bibliography should a) concisely summarize the assigned readings, with an emphasis on describing, evaluating, and situating the work in relation to broader themes; and b) identify and annotate additional sources that help situate the assigned readings in a broader intellectual context. For example, a bibliography prepared for the “Power/Knowledge” week might annotate a range of articles written by geographers that take up Foucault’s and Said’s work, and help us further understand the ways in which cultural geographers have engaged empire.
- Students are encouraged to discuss their ideas for the annotated bibliography with the instructor in advance. I can provide ideas on additional sources and help refine your plans.
- You are welcome (and encouraged) to select readings from the “supplementary” list.
- Annotated bibliographies are to be posted on CULearn by 9am on the day they are to be discussed.

40% Term Paper

- Term papers should be 4000-6000 words, on a topic of your choice, to be approved by the instructor no later than 25 February
- You are encouraged to pursue a final assignment that supports your own interests and research
- Due April 15, 2013