

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University

Doctoral Core Seminar: Geography, Society and Environment (GEOG 6000), Fall 2019
“An Integrative Orientation to Problems in Geographic Thought”

Course outline

(Note – Topics and readings subject to change. Last updated August 24, 2019.)

Instructor: Derek A. Smith

Email: dereka.smith@carleton.ca

Office hours: By appointment

Seminar: Wednesdays and Fridays, 9:35 to 11:25 (with a break of about 20 minutes in each session), in Room A220, Loeb Building.

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 (20 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. The suggested length is about 400-500 words (not including references). These commentaries must be sent by email no later than 2pm on the day preceding the seminar discussion. There will be a total of ten (10) commentaries over the course of the term. Commentaries should focus on the primary theme of the seminar, but can include connections to previous seminar readings and discussions. With the exception of 2-3 book chapters, all readings will be 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*, will also be on reserve in the MacOdrum library.

Review essay (30 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 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.

Class participation (50 percent of final grade)

An assessment of class participation will be based primarily on being an active, engaged and informed participant, 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 essay proposal in late October/early November, and the review essay presentation in December). In-class discussions will follow a co-facilitation approach, whereby students will introduce specific readings. Students may also bring additional materials or issues to the attention of the seminar participants, during class or by email.

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. 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

Note – Guest speakers will be invited to the seminar, which may lead to some adjustments to the schedule below.

Wednesday, September 4 - 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 and speak about how and why this previous work has been influential in their own intellectual path.

Friday, September 6 – 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 5 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.

Wednesday, September 11 – Geographic thought (continued)

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.

Friday, September 13 – 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 12 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 that is shared by geographers. On a broader scale, there are different ways of knowing that are associated with very different cultural worldviews.

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.
- Dowsley, Martha and George Wenzel (2008) "The time of the most polar bears": A co-management conflict in Nunavut. *Arctic* 61(2): 177-189.
- 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.

Wednesday, September 18 – How do we know what we know (continued)

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).

Friday, September 20 – Student presentations > Doctoral research proposals.

Typically, incoming doctoral students prepare applications for external funding at this time of year – even if their research ideas are still evolving! Some arrive with funding in place. For this session, each of you will have up to 20 minutes to outline your proposed research, to provide an opportunity for us to get to know each other’s interests and to get feedback. If you are applying for an award, you may consult the book by Craswell and Poore (2012) *Writing for Academic Success*, pp. 150-154 (available via Ares); see also the university guidelines and links to the funding agencies here: <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/awards-and-funding/external-awards/>.

Wednesday, September 25 – Student presentations > Doctoral research proposals (continued).

Friday, September 27 – Theory in geography

*** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than September 26 at 2pm.*

Readings:

- Graham, Elspeth (2005) Theory and theorizing. In, *Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates*, pp. 258-273. 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.
- Burt, T. (2005) General/particular. In, *Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates*, pp. 117-130. 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.

Wednesday, October 2 – Theory in geography (continued)

Jeff La Frenierre, Jeff and Bryan G. Mark (2014) A review of methods for estimating the contribution of glacial meltwater to total watershed discharge. *Progress in Physical Geography* 38(2): 173-200.

Friday, October 4 – Spatial science / critical cartography

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

Wednesday, October 9 –Spatial science, critical cartography (continued)

Luis Inostroza, Luis, Ingo Zasada, and Hannes J. König (2016) Last of the wild revisited: Assessing spatial patterns of human impact on landscapes in Southern Patagonia, Chile. *Regional Environmental Change*, 16:2071–2085.

Optional readings:

- 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.
- Penn State (2010) Geospatial Revolution, Episode 1. Available at: <http://geospatialrevolution.psu.edu/episode1>.

Friday, October 11 – Humans and nature

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than October 10 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.
- Pierotti, Raymond and Dan Wildcat (2000) Traditional ecological knowledge: The third alternative (commentary). *Ecological Applications* 10(5): 1333-1340.

Wednesday, October 16 – Humans and Nature (continued)

Reading:

Moore, Jason (2016) The rise of cheap nature. In, *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, history and the crisis of capitalism*, Moore, J. editor, pp. 78-115. Oakland, CA: PM Press.

Optional readings:

Cronon, William. (1996). The trouble with wilderness: Or, getting back to the wrong nature. *Environmental History* 1(1): 7-28.

Steffen, Will; Grinevald, Jacques; Crutzen, Paul, & McNeil, John. (2011). The Anthropocene: conceptual and historical perspectives. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A* **369**: 842-867.

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.

Friday, October 18 – Scale, complexity and emergence

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

Sayre, N. F. and V. Di Vittorio (2009) Scale. In *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, N. Thrift and R. Kitchin, eds, pp. 19-28. Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

Chapura, Mitch (2009) Scale, causality, complexity and emergence: Rethinking scale's ontological significance. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 34(4): 462-474.

Murray, A. Brad, Eli Lazarus, Andrew Ashton, Andreas Baas, Giovanni Coco, Tom Coulthard, Mark Fonstad, Peter Haff, Dylan McNamara, Chris Paola, Jon Pelletier, and Liam Reinhardt (2009) Geomorphology, complexity, and the emerging science of the Earth's surface. *Geomorphology* 103: 496-505.

Miller, Harvey J. and Michael F. Goodchild (2015) Data-driven geography, *GeoJournal*, 80: 449-461.

Ostrom, Elinor (2009) A general framework for analyzing sustainability of social-ecological systems. *Science* 325: 419-422.

October 21-25 – Fall Break, no class.

Wednesday, October 30 – Scale, complexity and emergence (continued)

Readings: To be determined.

Friday, November 1 – Presentation of review essay proposals

For the review essay proposals, each student will give a 20-minute presentation, followed by class feedback and discussion.

Wednesday, November 6 – Presentation of review essay proposals (continued)

Friday, November 8 – The ethics, politics, and social relevance of geographic research

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than November 7 at 2pm.**

Readings:

- Mistry, J., Berardi, A., Simpson, M. (2009) Critical reflections on practice: the changing roles of three physical geographers carrying out research in a developing country. *Area* 41(1): 82-93.
- Kershaw, Geoffrey G.L., Castleden, Heather, and Laroque, Colin P. (2014) An argument for ethical physical geography research on Indigenous landscapes in Canada. *The Canadian Geographer*, 58(4): 393–399.
- Rogers, Alisdair (2005) A policy-relevant geography for society? In, *Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates*, pp. 277-293. Noel Castree, Alisdair Rogers, Douglas Sherman, eds., Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.
- Kobayashi, Audrey (2009) Situated knowledge, reflexivity. In, *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, N. Thrift and R. Kitchin, eds, pp. 138-143. Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

Wednesday, November 13 – Ethics, politics, and social relevance (continued)

Readings: To be determined.

Friday, November 15 – The integrative ethos: Research collaboration across the divide

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than November 14 at 2pm.**

Readings:

- Castree, Noel (2015). Geography and global change science: Relationships necessary, absent, and possible. *Geographical Research* 53(1): 1-15.
- Goodie, Andrew S. (2017) The integration of human and physical geography revisited. *Canadian Geographer* 61(1): 19-27.
- Harden, Carol (2009) Our dichotomies, ourselves. President's Column, *AAG Newsletter*, 44(11): 3. Available at: <http://www.aag.org/galleries/presidents-columns/PresHarden200912.pdf>.
- Lave, Rebecca, Matthew W. Wilson, Elizabeth S. Barron, Christine Biermann, Mark A. Carey, Chris S. Duvall, Leigh Johnson, K. Maria Lane, Nathan McClintock, Darla Munroe, Rachel Pain, James Proctor, Bruce L. Rhoads, Morgan M. Robertson, Jairus Rossi, Nathan F. Sayre, Gregory Simon, Marc Tadaki and Christopher Van Dyke (2014) Intervention: Critical physical geography. *Canadian Geographer*, 58(1): 1-10.
- Ziegler, Alan, Jamie Gillen, Barry Newell, Carl Grundy-Warr and Robert J. Wasson (2013). Commentary: Comprehensive research in geography, *Area* 45(2): 252-254.

Wednesday, November 20 - The integrative ethos (continued)

Canada's Fundamental Science Review (2017). *Investigating in Canada's future: strengthening the foundations of Canadian Research* (pp. 122-123).

Van Noorden, R., (2015). Interdisciplinary research by the numbers. *Nature*, pp. 306-307.

Friday, November 22 - Case studies in interdisciplinary research

**** Note – the commentary for this seminar must be sent to all seminar participants by email no later than November 21 at 2pm.**

Andrews, T.D., Kokelj, S.V., MacKay, G., Buysse, J., Kritsch, I., Andre, A., and Lantz, T., (2016). Permafrost thaw and aboriginal cultural landscapes in the Gwich'in region, Canada. *The Journal of Preservation Technology*, 47(1), 15-22.

Chevallier, P., Pouyard, B., Suarez, W., and Condom, T., (2011). Climate change threats to environment in the tropical Andes: glaciers and water resources. *Regional Environmental Change*, 11(1), 179-187.

Tam, B.Y., Gough, W.A., Edwards, V., and Tsuji, L.J.S., (2013). The impact of climate change on the well-being and lifestyle of a First Nation community in the western James Bay region. *The Canadian Geographer*, 57(4): 1-16.

Wednesday, November 27 – Case studies in interdisciplinary research (continued)

Readings: To be determined.

Friday, November 29 – Review essay presentations

Students will each give a 20-minute conference style presentation of their review paper. This is a chance to share your work and get collective feedback prior to submitting the final paper.

Wednesday, December 4 – Review essay presentations (continued) / Course conclusion

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 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 Department of 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 Department of 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). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

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