

Fall 2020

GEOG/ENST 2005: Geographic Inquiry

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I. Course Description:

Content

This course offers an introduction to qualitative approaches to producing knowledge. Students will be encouraged to think critically and creatively about how and why we do research, how truth-claims are authorized, the underlying assumptions that shape academic inquiries, and the ethical dimensions of doing research with people and communities. Our exploration of these big theoretical questions will be grounded in experiential learning, as students will work together to study the impact of COVID-19 on themselves and their communities.

Format

Most course activities will be asynchronous and involve using CULearn or CUPortfolio. There will be a full-class videoconference to begin and end the course and there might sometimes be lab-section or small-group videoconference calls. Students will need internet access but will not need to be online continuously in order to complete course requirements. MS Excel will be used in week 5 (it is freely available at <https://carleton.ca/its/ms-offer-students/>).

Learning Objectives

This course aims:

- to make you wonder how you know what you know, what 'knowledge' is, and why it matters;
- to help you understand and critique the links between academic practices and social injustices;
- to expand your thinking and academic skills by introducing Indigenous, feminist, and other non-mainstream approaches to inquiry;
- to provide relevant and meaningful primary research experience studying the impact of COVID-19 in your community; and
- to offer collaborative learning that helps you connect with your classmates.

II. Preclusions

There are no courses precluded by this course.

III. Texts

There is no textbook required for this course. Course content is divided into twelve modules and twelve labs. Each weekly module contains a letter from the instructor with supplementary links and associated questions or reflective tasks to be completed on CUPortfolio. Module themes and titles may vary as they are being developed. Each weekly lab will be found and completed on CULearn.

Please note that all course materials used, including letters, slides, handouts, and the course outline, are my own intellectual property and protected by copyright. They are for your educational use only and may not be distributed, reproduced, or posted for commercial purposes without my express written consent.

IV: Course Calendar

In addition to the activities charted below, the course will begin and end with a whole-class Zoom call. Access details will be posted on CULearn. These calls will last one hour and take place on **Thursday September 10 at 3:35 pm** and **Thursday December 10 at 3:35**. Every other week, this is where you can find Sophie for a drop-in office hour.

Lab sections will sometimes meet via Zoom during scheduled lab times. **Please make sure you attend the section in which you are registered.** This ensures that you get graded for your work.

Section A1: Thursdays 6:05-7:55pm.

Section A2: Fridays 3:35-5:25pm.

Section A3: Friday 8:35-10:25am.

Section A4: Fridays 11:35-1:25pm.

Access details for lab section Zoom calls will be posted on CULearn. On weeks when your lab activities are asynchronous (*not on Zoom*), your Teaching Assistants will be available at lab time for a drop-in office hour.

Week	Modules	Labs	Date
	<i>Every Wednesday morning a new module PDF will be posted on CULearn. You will submit work in CUPortfolio.</i>	<i>Labs will be posted on CULearn at least two weeks before they are due. Work is collected in CULearn.</i>	<i>Work due weekly on Fridays by 5:00 pm.</i>
1	Starting up: Where we're going and why -Create your Portfolio -Answer module questions	Figuring out CUPortfolio -Complete the tutorial posted on CULearn. Submit the secret URL using Assignment 1 on CULearn.	Sept.11

2	<p>Theorizing our worlds: Ontology and Epistemology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Begin your theoretical framework -Begin your glossary -Answer module questions 	<p>Personal Profiles</p> <p>Make an opening post in Forum 1, following the guidelines posted in CULearn.</p>	Sept. 18
3	<p>Theorizing our words: The purpose and power of research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>The community impact of COVID-19: Introducing our case study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Read a condensed report and view a short video posted on CULearn. -Submit a reflection following instruction for Assignment 2 (also on CULearn). 	Sept. 25
4	<p>Watching, witnessing, and standing by: Observational research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>Doing the survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use the link posted on CULearn to complete a short anonymous survey -Submit comments to Assignment 3 as per posted instructions. 	Oct. 2
5	<p>Asking and listening: Interviews and stories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>Meeting the data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete coding worksheet (on CULearn) to find interesting geographic questions based on two data sets (in MSExcel) and submit as Assignment 4. 	Oct 9
6	<p>Who wants to know? Subjectivity and relations in research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>Comparative analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Study one question in both data sets and post observations to Forum 2. Post must add to or extend the conversation, not just repeat points. 	Oct 16
7	<p>Human knowledge in a more-than-human world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>Resource collecting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Forage online for at least two different kinds of materials (one social media, one not) that contextualize or extend your understanding of your question from last week. Post to Forum 3, along with a note explaining how the content adds to your understanding of the data and the structure works to make it effective. 	Oct. 23
8	<p>Hiding in plain view: The everyday and the extraordinary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Answer module questions 	<p>Digesting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Comment and respond to at least 2 classmates' posts to Forum 3 (above), identifying follow-up questions and 	Nov. 6

		<i>critically reflecting on the content and structure of the pieces collected.</i>	
9	Look here: Visual methods -Answer module questions	Drafting -Create a social media post for your community that tells them what you think they should hear on this topic. Submit for peer review by posting to Forum 4 in CULearn.	Nov. 13
10	Text, genre, and representation -Answer module questions	Reviewing -Review a classmate's draft social media post and respond in Forum 4, reflecting on both content and structure.	Nov. 20
11	Making sense: Authority, meaning and ethics -Answer module questions	Revising -Finalize your social media post in response to peer feedback. Add it to your Portfolio along with an explanation of what it is, what changes you have made (or would like to), and why.	Nov. 27
12	Consolidation: Where we've been -Revisit your theoretical framework from week 2. Submit final portfolio.	Reflecting -Review your work using the reflection questions posted on CULearn. Submit your responses to Forum 5. Return and comment before final Zoom on Dec. 10.	Dec.4

V: Evaluation

Students will be assigned two sets of tasks: modules (worked on in CUPortfolio) and labs (worked on in CULearn). Both will follow a repeating pattern with different small assignments due at the end of every week (5:00 pm Fridays). **Letting things pile up and then cramming will NOT work well.** Each step builds on previous work so skipping tasks is not recommended. Module and lab work that is handed in late will be penalized 5% per day.

Modules - 50%

Every week I will post a module of new content with associated short-answer questions on Wednesday morning. I will have virtual office hours during class time (Thursdays 3:30 to 4:30) on Zoom; no new content will be delivered but students will be welcome to zoom in with their questions. If it proves to be busy, one TA will be asked to attend to manage the queue (in Zoom chat) and provide technical support for students struggling with the platform. Students who wish to discuss things more privately will be encouraged to email their TA's (or me) to arrange an appointment.

It should take roughly 2 hours for students to read and respond to each module. Module responses should be posted to the student's reading journal in CUPortfolio and submitted as an assignment by 5pm every Friday. Students will also be asked to create and maintain a running glossary in their portfolios, adding at least one 'fuzzy' and one 'clear' concept for every module and updating their definitions as they learn.

TA's will scan student posts, summarize the learning needs they see, and report them to me by the end of Monday. I will revise and adapt the next module on Tuesday to be ready to post again on Wednesday. This will repeat for twelve weeks.

Half the module grade (25%) will be assigned as work is received based on the TA's preliminary quick evaluation of basic criteria (questions were understood and answered on time). The other half of your grade will be assessed at the end of the semester. Posts will be locked during their initial assessment but will become editable once the initial grade has been recorded. Students are welcome to return to and revise or improve their reading journals throughout the course. The quality of module responses will be assessed in a final portfolio review that is worth another 25%.

Labs - 50%

Students will gain experiential knowledge by working through a series of tasks that develop comprehension and skills. There are 10 tasks worth 5% each plus two small non-graded (but still required) tasks in weeks 1 and 4, for a total of 12 tasks. Each step must be completed in order. Students should plan to spend two to four hours a week on these tasks. **Lab work that is handed in more than a week late will at best receive half marks.** TA's will be available to offer support through optional one hour weekly drop-in Zoom labs. Access details and task instructions will be posted on CULearn.

Communication of Grades

Grades will be posted on CULearn as they become available. However, 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.

The Teaching Assistants in this course will be working closely together and with the Instructor in order to ensure that grading is consistent and fair for all students. That being said, mistakes can be made. Students who wish to appeal or discuss their grade(s) are welcome to do so, as follows:

- 1) A 'cooling off' period of 24 hours is required. This is to ensure that students have the time to consider the evaluation provided.
- 2) Grade appeals must be made in writing and emailed to the Teaching Assistant. The course code (GEOG/ENST 2005) must appear in the subject line. In order to respect your confidentiality, correspondence must be sent from a Carleton email address. Students should summarize the grade they received and explain why they believe this evaluation is unfair or inaccurate.

- 3) The Teaching Assistant will arrange to meet with the student to discuss the grade.
- 4) If the Teaching Assistant and the student are unable to come to terms, they will both meet with the Instructor. Grades may be increased, decreased, or remain the same.

Academic Conduct

Our ability to express ourselves, to interpret intention and meaning, and to regulate emotion relies heavily on non-verbal, largely unconscious physical cues from our environments. We constantly (in culturally-specific, imperfect ways) 'read' postures, facial expressions, the gaze, tone, timing, volume, proximity, gestures, aromas, and countless contextual factors. **We are therefore much more likely to give or take offense when we are communicating online.** It might take extra effort to become engaged or connect, especially if you don't like distance education. You could be dealing with caregiving obligations, financial hardships, mental and physical health issues, or living in less-than-ideal circumstances,

Our primary obligation to each other is kindness. We are all trying new things and the learning curve for instructors, TA's and students will be steep. Mutual respect is required in all interactions. Conduct that inhibits the open and safe exchange of ideas and perspectives will not be tolerated. If something is inhibiting your participation or making you uncomfortable in class, it is your responsibility to promptly bring this issue to the attention of the Teaching Assistants or the Instructor. Creating an inclusive, welcoming learning environment takes a team effort. We rely on feedback from students to make this the best experience possible.

The usefulness of this course depends on your engagement. Courtesy protocols for videoconference calls will be explained and expected. Please be aware that your attention (or lack thereof) is palpable; if you are distracted during class encounters this has a negative impact on the entire group. To help you remain attentive, synchronous scheduled activities will include regular breaks and/or be short in duration.

If you live in circumstances that compromise your availability, please let us know early in the semester so we can find solutions (for instance, you may be a primary caregiver with children at home or be sharing a computer with others in your household). Unless there are exceptional circumstances, students are expected to schedule their employment or other activities around their class obligations, which will only fall during times indicated by the university timetable.

Academic Integrity

Ideas and the words that express them are the currency of the academic world. Good scholarship locates itself within its field by showing, through proper use of citations and bibliographies, whose ideas it has borrowed and built upon. Scholarship that fails to do so steals intellectual property and cannot contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

Plagiarism is defined by the Carleton University Senate 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 it as your own, without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- Submitting work written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas, direct quotations, or paraphrased material without appropriate acknowledgement in any academic assignment;
- Using another's data or research findings without attribution;
- Using direct quotations without quotation marks;
- Handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission from the instructor.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the instructor. All suspected cases are sent to the Associate Dean, who conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial and can include failing the course.

It is the students' obligation to ensure that they are familiar with the rules for proper citation and attribution of sources. I urge you to be extremely careful in this regard, particularly if you are using on-line or other non-standard sources. The library website offers a wide range of style guides and other citation tips as well as subject area specialists who would be happy to assist you.

VII: Requests for academic accommodations

Some students need special arrangements to meet their academic obligations during the term. **This year, due to COVID-19, these needs may be amplified and complicated.** All students who are struggling with their studies or circumstances are encouraged to speak to me or to their TA, to seek peer support, and/or to get in touch with the friendly folks listed below. If you are elsewhere in Ontario, call 2-1-1 for help finding local services.

Centre for Student Academic Support – <https://carleton.ca/csas/>

Writing Services – <https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

International Student Services – <https://carleton.ca/isso/>

Graduate Students Association - <https://gsacarleton.ca/>

Equity Services - <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Health and Counselling Services - www.carleton.ca/health

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 its 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).