

GEOG/ENST 2005A Geographic Inquiry

2025-6, Fall Semester, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

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Course page: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/372851>

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1. Course Description

This course introduces qualitative approaches to knowledge production in geography and environmental studies from a local and global perspective. 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.

Lectures will be delivered asynchronously every Friday as letters to students in which I share any necessary information, discuss our focus for the coming week, refer students to related terms in the course Glossary, and pose 3-5 questions for reflection. Students will respond to these questions every week. This can be done *either* as written short answer reading reflections, submitted through the course page and assessed by Teaching Assistants using a provided rubric, *or* by coming to discuss them in visiting hours on Mondays from 11:35 to 1:25, and graded pass/fail. One quarter of your final grade is based on the comprehension, curiosity and commitment demonstrated by these responses.

The Glossary is an alphabetical collection of course concepts. It will be posted on Brightspace and will grow over time. There are no other assigned textbooks.

Students will work in their weekly labs (on Wednesdays in Loeb 211A, Section A1 at 10:30; A2 at 11:30, and A3 at 1:30) to make a set of Concept Cards based on the course Glossary, with a visual symbol or image on one side and bullet points on the other, using blank index cards on a snap ring (provided). **Please attend during the lab session for which you are registered so your grades can be properly recorded.** Students will be assigned at least one concept per lab to portray and present, with support and guidance from their Teaching Assistant, as concepts will vary in degree of difficulty and reward. Students will be given some time in each lab to work on their cards, with basic art supplies provided (feel free to bring your own favourites). Working in groups, students will then take turns presenting their cards, explaining their concepts, and placing their cards spatially in relation to the previously presented concepts to create a concept map, which will be photographed and posted in Brightspace. Cards will be assessed by peer review for clarity, creativity, contribution, and connection to course themes, using a provided rubric. Photos of both sides of high scoring cards will be posted to the course gallery in Brightspace. The lab section that contributes most to the course gallery will receive a collective 1% bonus. The students in each lab section who contribute the most individually will also receive a 1% bonus and a golden snap ring for their cards.

Students can work on their cards all semester and may make as many as they like. Students will submit photos of their best cards to be graded, with their top ten card grades counted. At the end of term, students will be asked to lay out and walk me through their concept cards, as an oral exam. Half-hour time slots for your oral exams will be scheduled during the exam period.

2. Preclusions

There are no courses precluded by this course.

3. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Confidently discuss the nature of reality, who we are, how we know, and what is good
- Critically analyze the trustworthiness and limits of truth-claims
- Explain how knowledge is shaped by systems of power like colonialism, racism, and sexism
- Describe western, Indigenous and global approaches to knowledge production
- Reflect on their own positions as knowledge producers and consumers
- Use visual and verbal communication to synthesize and share complex ideas.

4. Texts & Course Materials

Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.

5. Course Calendar

Week	Monday Visits	Wednesday Labs	Friday Letters
Sept 1-5		Lab 1: Introduction to concept cards; debate on role of AI in learning	Letter 1: Opening & Orienting
Sept 8-12	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 2: Concept Cards (make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 2: Epistemologies (How do we know what we know?)
Sept 15-19	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 3: Concept Cards (make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 3: Ontologies (What is the nature of reality?)
Sept 22-26	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 4: Concept Cards (make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 4: Subjectivities (What and who are we?)
Sept 29-Oct 3	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 5: Check-in and cards (make & share 1, peer review; TA feedback)	Letter 5: Axiologies (What is good and useful?)
Oct 6-10	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 6: Concept Cards (make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 6: Eastern Inquiry (Asian, Islamic, SE Asian)
Oct 13-17	Thanksgiving Holiday	Lab 7: Concept Cards (Make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 7: Southern Inquiry (African, S. American, Pacifican)
Oct 20-24	Reading week	Reading week	Reading week
Oct 27-31	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 8: Concept Cards (Make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 8: Western Inquiry (European, American, Canadian)
Nov 3-7	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 9: Concept Cards (make & share 1, peer & TA feedback)	Letter 9: Northern Inquiry (First Nations, Inuit, Sami, Siberian)
Nov 10-14	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 10: Concept Cards (Make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 10: Sensory Intelligence

Nov 17-21	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 11: Concept Cards (Make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 11: Linguistic Intelligence
Nov 24-28	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 12: Concept Cards (Make & share 1, peer review)	Letter 12: Artificial Intelligence
Dec 1-5	Visiting Hours 11:30-1:30 or written reflections due @ 12	Lab 13: Check in & closing	Submit photos of best 10 cards

6. Evaluation

List of Evaluation Elements

All written work should be submitted on Brightspace, not by email. Late work will be penalized 5% per day unless an extension has been arranged before the due date. Written work should be easily legible with correct grammar and language usage. Evidence of care and thought is expected in visual work but aesthetic skill is not required. A deferred final oral exam will only be available if all other course work has been submitted.

Reflection Questions: 25%

Reflection questions submitted in writing (on the course page) will be graded for comprehension, curiosity and the degree of commitment (effort, tenacity) they demonstrate. They are due by noon Mondays. Late reflection questions can be handed in but they will be docked 5% per day.

Reflection questions that are brought to visiting hours for discussion will be graded pass/fail.

Concept Cards Peer Review: 25%

Peer evaluations will be written and private, handed in at the end of the lab. Peer review sheets will also serve as a way of tracking attendance. Your Teaching Assistant will record an average of the grades assigned by peers for clarity, creativity, contribution to learning and connections to course themes, and post grades on the course page. Students are NOT expected or required to be 'good at art'; the point is effective expression rather than elegance. Students will also receive written feedback from the TA in Lab 5 and Lab 9. Every student should present a dozen cards for peer review. Students are welcome to assist each other and share ideas but cards must be individually made by hand.

Best Ten Cards: 25%

On or before Dec 5 students will hand in photos, front and back, of their top ten concept cards. Students are welcome to improve their concept cards all semester and may make as many cards as they like. Cards must be hand-made by the students themselves, with visual images on one side and text on the other. More detailed guidelines will be discussed in the labs.

Tests and Examinations

Oral Exam: 25%

Half-hour one on one conversations will be conducted in person on campus. **Students must bring their card deck**, show me their cards, and be ready to discuss their meanings. A rubric of detailed expectations will be provided.

Final Grade Approval

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 with the Instructor in order to ensure that grading is consistent and fair for all students. However, 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.

7. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students may use AI to support their comprehension of course concepts and collection of knowledge. However, concept cards are to be made by the students, by hand and students may not simply copy an AI generated summary. Students are urged to consider the limitations of AI, including its tendency to hallucinate false information. <https://theconversation.com/what-are-ai-hallucinations-why-ais-sometimes-make-things-up-242896> . The risks and benefits of AI in knowledge production is one of the topics we will be examining together. As our understanding of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

8. Statement on Academic Integrity

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 Assistant 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 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 limit your availability, please let us know early in the semester so we can find solutions (for instance, you may have caregiving, health, or resource constraints). Unless there are exceptional circumstances, students are expected to schedule their employment or other activities around their class obligations.

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.

9. Statement on Student Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>"

Instructors may also wish to list of some or all the following resources:

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Crisis/Urgent Counselling Support: 613-520-6674 (Mon-Fri, 8:30-4:30)
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

Carleton Resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service <https://walkincounselling.com>

10. Requests for Academic Accommodations

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the *Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances*, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

If you need a short-term accommodation, please **email your TA with the course code in the subject line**. Medical notes are not required. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, extensions must be negotiated before assignments are due.

If you need long-term or more complex accommodation, please **email you instructor with the course code in the subject line**.