

# Topographies Seminar Series Presents:

## "Celebrating the Career of Chancellor's Professor Emeritus Christopher Burn A Legacy of Leadership in Permafrost Science"

After more than four decades of outstanding scholarship, mentorship, and service, we celebrate the remarkable career of Professor Chris Burn, Chancellor's Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University.

### A Career Built on Discovery

Arriving in Canada in 1981 as a Commonwealth Scholar, Professor Burn completed his M.A. (1983) in Geography and Ph.D. (1986) in Geology at Carleton University. Following post doctoral research as a Killiam fellow at the University of British Columbia with renowned permafrost scientist J. Ross Mackay, he returned to Carleton in 1992, where his career flourished and helped establish the university as a leader in cold regions research.

### Advancing Knowledge of a Warming North

Professor Burn's research has focused on the relationships between climate and permafrost, with long term field investigations across the western Canadian Arctic and Yukon. His work provided some of the longest and most important records of ground temperature change and active layer dynamics in North America, offering critical insights into the impacts of climate warming on northern landscapes and infrastructure.

### Research Leadership & Community Partnership

From 2002 to 2012, Professor Burn served as NSERC Senior Northern Research Chair, leading collaborative programs that paired rigorous science with deep engagement in northern communities. His research partnerships with organizations such as the First Nation of Na Cho Nyak Dun and the Northwest Territories Geological Survey exemplified his commitment to knowledge co creation and applied science. He served as President of the International Permafrost Association in 2020-2024 navigating the COVID pandemic and the Association's response to the Ukraine war.

### Mentorship & Impact

A dedicated educator and mentor, Professor Burn supervised and supported generations of graduate students whose work continues to shape permafrost science across Canada. Many of his students have gone on to careers in northern research, government, and applied geoscience, extending his influence far beyond the classroom.

### Honours & Recognition

Professor Burn's contributions have been widely recognized, including:

- Polar Medal, Governor General of Canada, (2018)
- Doctor of Science (D.Sc.), Durham University (2018)
- Canadian Federation of Earth Sciences Mentorship Medal (2024)
- Award for Scholarly Distinction in Geography, Canadian Association of Geographers (2023)
- Hugh M. French Award, Canadian Permafrost Association (2025).

Each honour reflects a career defined by excellence, integrity, and service to Canada's North.

### With Gratitude

We thank Professor Chris Burn for his extraordinary dedication to science, students, and communities. His legacy at Carleton University will continue to inspire future generations of geographers and environmental researchers.



Please join us in celebrating the distinguished career and retirement of Dr. Chris Burn. Colleagues and former students will pay tribute to his lasting impact, dedication, and many accomplishments.

Wednesday, April 8th, 2026

2:30 - 4:30

In-Person, 2017 Dunton Tower

All Welcome