

GEOG 3000A/ENST 3900B. Honours Field Camp
Fall Semester, 2026-2027 Academic Year
Department of Geography & Environmental Studies

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Course Times: Thursdays 11:35 – 2:25; September 10 – December 3, 2026

Location: A-120, Loeb Bldg., Physical Geography Laboratory

Brightspace site: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/373305>

University Course Calendar: [GEOG 3000 \[0.5 credit\]. Honours Field Course](#). Field research, with a focus on data collection methods, analysis and presentation of findings. Design and conduct research that links the human and biophysical environment. Topics may change from year to year. Includes: Experiential Learning Activity.

To elaborate: What makes geography/environmental studies unique, both as a discipline and a professional field of work, is its integrated and transdisciplinary nature. We straddle the natural and social sciences, and this is what we are doing in field camp too.

Two years ago, we look at the campus as a whole and that field camp research suggested that re-designing the campus will not necessarily encourage students to remain on campus. Therefore, as one team argued, why not design a campus that simply makes for a more positive experience for students while they are on campus? How can we make the campus a vibrant and attractive, resilient and flourishing campus, that students love being on while they are here? That led us last year to look at revisioning the ugly, irritating parking area in front of Nideyinàn into a “happenin’” Lower Student Quad. This year we are going to look at transforming another ugly, irritating part of the campus, the parking lot next to the O-Train station, into a Student Commons linked to an expanded O-Train Station.

You will be working in teams of four or five in the field. You will also be working through a course laboratory manual, and I will be working alongside you, so the tasks will be easy to follow and results easy to interpret. But by taking this course, you will gain important experience in the diverse range of field research methods available to you as environmental professionals.

This is a non-residential field camp course based on campus. This year I am going to run it as a weekly class. *Because of the nature of a field camp, attendance is mandatory. This is, after all, an experiential course and this means you must be in the field to learn. Missing two classes or more in part or completely can result in you having to withdraw from the course. Furthermore, all students are required to contribute to all components of the fieldwork or else risk not passing the course.* I have to state all of that unpleasantness – but don’t be turned off by it. Field camp is a groovy experience. It is a lot of fun as you will find out! It’s creative. It’s engaging. You will want to be out there! It is the same story year after year.

Course Plan

Course Introduction

Class 1. September 10 – Introduction. The challenge explained. Introduction to the course and to fieldwork. Introduction to placemaking, the site, and the scope of work.

To do: Watch the video, “An Introduction to Fieldwork”, before the class.

Assignment: Planning Document due before the start of class 2.

Unit 1. Preparing for the Field – Conducting a Reconnaissance

Classes 2/3/4 – Prior to undertaking formal field research, you often need to do a reconnaissance. So, this is your first task. This will involve an actual walkabout of the site by the team and photovoice exercise.

To do: Watch the video, “What is a Reconnaissance?” before Class 2.

Class 2. September 17 – What is a reconnaissance? Then, to the field. Continue over week.

Class 3. September 24 – Continued in-field work on the reconnaissance.

Class 4. October 1 – In-class review, discussion and analysis.

Assignment: Reconnaissance laboratory due before the start of Class 5.

Unit 2. In the Field – Surveying Carleton Students

Classes 5/6/7 – In this unit, you will design and then conduct a survey of students. The goal will be to obtain their opinions about the site, what they would like to see in the proposed Student Commons and Transportation Station, and ways, in general, to make the campus a more resilient, flourishing and positive place for students year-round.

To do: Watch the video, “Engaging with People”, before Class 5.

Class 5. October 8 – Designing a questionnaire and planning a survey. A look at ethics.

Class 6. October 15 – Conducting survey through week according to survey plan.

To do: Watch the video, “Analysing your Survey Results” before Class 7.

Class 7. October 22 – In-class discussion of experience and analysis.

Assignment: Survey laboratory due before the start of Class 8.

Reading Week, October 25 – 30

Unit 3. In the Field – Greenspaces & Campuswoods

Classes 8/9 – In this unit, you are going to shift your focus to physical fieldwork. Building on your reconnaissance observations, you will map the trees and greenspaces of the surrounding, assess these. In the design portfolio it is stated that the vision for this site must include both greenspace and campuswood features. (These are required to occupy 25% of the space each.)

To do: Watch the video, “Greenspaces & Campuswoods Assessment”, before Class 8.

Class 8. November 5 – Introducing greenspaces and campuswoods. Mapping the greenspaces and campuswoods on and surrounding the site.

Class 9. November 12 – In-class discussion of the campus greenspaces/campuswoods and analysis.

Assignment: Greenspaces/Campuswoods laboratory due before the start of Class 10.

Unit 4. Preparing your Vision

Classes 10/11/12 – Having conducted your field work, it is now time to come up with your vision. You will need to connect your vision to the selected placemaking paradigm. Your vision is expected to be complete, including specific design features, natural elements, and activities. The goal of your overall design is to create a place where students will want to gather, interact and engage.

To do: Watch the videos, and “The Art of Placemaking” and “Placemaking for Health and Well-being”, before Class 10.

Class 10. November 19 – Brainstorming as a design team. Identify key features to be incorporated.

Class 11. November 26 – Discussion of key findings of the fieldwork. Visioning work continues.

Class 12. December 3 – Draft vision to be presented to instructor for feedback and guidance.

Final: Vision Presentation

Presentation: To be presented in the exam time slot set by the university.

Learning Outcomes

The objective of the Honours Field Camp is to introduce students to the nature of fieldwork and its methodologies and methods through actual in-field experience. Students taking this course will gain:

1. An understanding of the diversity of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and methods available for the researcher when conducting field research,
2. An understanding of the challenges facing the researcher in the field when attempting to secure specific data of relevance for a defined research question or issue,
3. The importance of proper preparation in preparing for fieldwork, including both theoretical and practical issues the researcher might face in the field, and
4. An understanding of the challenges of teamwork in the field.

Course Textbooks

There is no single text identified for this course. However, you are encouraged to consider two texts if you plan to undertake fieldwork in the future, either academically or professionally. These are:

- Creswell, J.W. & J.D. Creswell (2018) *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Fifth edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This is my absolute favourite. It is beautifully organised, comprehensive, and clearly written.
- Sproull, N.L. (2002) *Handbook of Research Methods*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press Inc. I personally like this book a lot and wish they would update it. This book provides you with an excellent, comprehensive overview of field research. I love it!

See also:

- Northey, M. (2019) *Making Sense. A Student's Guide to Research and Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 9th edition. In addition to providing students with insights into research activities, this book introduces you to a wider set of skills you will need both academically and professionally.
- Robinson, G.M. (1998) *Methods and Techniques in Human Geography*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Starke, B. & J.O. Simonds (2013) *Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Environmental Planning and Design*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill. 5th edition. This is another reference book that I love. It provides a strong foundation on geographical fieldwork.
- Alasuutrari, P., L. Bickman & J. Brannen. (eds.) 2008. *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Evaluation and Grading

As a field course, an emphasis will be placed upon the active participation of each student in the field. The grading is broken down as follows:

- *Planning Document*: This is to be done as a team task so you get to know each other. Complete the provided document as completely as possible. The more complete, the better the grade.

- *Laboratory Assignments:* Each student must complete all three laboratory assignments. While the in-field collection of materials and laboratory work will be done in teams, every student must complete and submit his/her own laboratory report. Each lab consists of a section based upon group work and a second section for your personal work, additional thoughts and general reflection on the field experience associated with each laboratory. Your individual work is expected to build upon, or expand upon, the group work. Grading of the laboratory assignments is broken into two components: 50% of the mark is assigned to the group work and 50% of the mark to your personal work (including your in-field contribution, added ideas and personal reflections – so it is important).
- *Group Vision:* Presentation and final report. This, again, is a group effort and a group mark. The report is a summary of the presentation and not a major report.
- *Reflection:* As a closing ‘take home exam’ component, I want each of you to produce an overall reflection of the field course. You will find in Appendix 1 questions for geomatics students, physical geography-focussed students, and human geography-focussed students to answer in this reflection. I would recommend that you keep a field diary that you draw upon for this final task.

Grading. The grading is as follows:

• Planning Document	15%
• Laboratory Worksheets:	50%
○ Reconnaissance Laboratory; due October 8	15%
○ Student Survey Laboratory; due November 5	20%
○ Greenspaces & Campuswoods Laboratory; due November 26	15%
• Final Research Team Vision Presentation; scheduled during exam period	15%
• Personal Reflection; due last day of exam period	20%
Total	100%

Late Submissions of Assignments. You are expected to meet your deadlines and I am going to impose severe penalties to encourage you to do so. Assignments submitted:

1. Late (even one second past the due date and time) will incur an immediate one-grade level penalty in the grade. The submission time as recorded by the course BrightSpace will be the official time of submission so do not wait until the last nanosecond to submit your work.
2. Assignments will not be accepted six days following the due day. You will receive a zero for that assignment and risk being removed from the course.

I want you to take deadlines seriously. You cannot afford to miss deadlines as you will end up with less time available for subsequent assignments until you become completely overwhelmed. *Quite simply, you will do better if you keep a steady pace through the semester.*

Final Grades. In accordance with the Carleton University Calendar, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+	90-100	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	56-59	F = Below 50
A	85-89	B	73-76	C	63-66	D	53-56	WDN = Withdrawn
A-	80-84	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-	50-52	DEF = Deferred

ABS = Student absent from final exam.

FND (Failed, no Deferral) = Student could not pass the course even with 100% on final exam.

Final grades are subject to the Dean's approval.

Deferred Assignments/Grades. Only official deferrals petitioned through the Office of the Registrar will be honoured. Students who are unable to complete a final paper or write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply within five working days to the Registrarial Services Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. Permission can be granted only if the request is fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documents.

Statement on Academic Integrity

The nature of this course includes collaborative work and the opportunity to pull together knowledge and practices from other courses as applied to fieldwork. Given this, I expect students to abide by the following stipulations:

- a. *Use of materials from other courses.* For this course there is no need to draw upon materials from other courses. Therefore, doing so is not permitted. I want you to use the materials provided for this course, and your in-field work only.
- b. *Use of group or collaborative work.* As already stated, you will be working in teams and I your field assignments will contain group work. The group work for all laboratory assignments will represent 50% of the assignment's mark. Your individual work will be graded as the other 50%. You will need to clearly identify what portion of an assignment is group work (for example, using italicised font) and what is you individual part (for example, using of regular font). Your assignments must contain both. Make sure these are clearly differentiated.
- c. *Use of generative artificial intelligence tools (e.g. Copilot, ChatGPT).* There will be opportunities for drawing upon AI tools for this course, notably for the design vision. However, if you do, include the generated response to your query, or a portion of it, you must present it the same way you would for a quote from a published source and cite it accordingly. Finally, you must do more than present generated AI answers in your assignments. The AI information is only a portion of any answer. More on this in class.

Statement on Plagiarism. The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include, but are not limited to, books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else or AI programs;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

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.

Statement on Student Mental Health

As a university 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. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

- Emergency numbers: <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>
- 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: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

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).

Pregnancy. Please, write to me before the start of the semester or speak with me about any requests for academic accommodation during our first class. For accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form.

Religious obligation. Again, please write to me before the start of the semester or speak with me concerning any possible requests for academic accommodation during our first class.

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).

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 where 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/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

Accommodation for Student Activities. Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me or speak with me concerning any possible requests for academic accommodation the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Appendix 1. Final Personal Reflection

I want each of you to reflect on the importance of your specific sub-discipline in research generally and field work specifically. You are encouraged to work on this throughout the semester. Reflect on how your specific sub-discipline and its tools and methods can contribute to field work through the laboratories. Use all the materials provided in the course, including the planning document presented in the first class. Plus, draw upon your broader experiences in various classes. This reflection should be between 2,000 and 2,500 words of text (eight to 10 pages double-spaced text). Here are the questions:

For geomatics students: “What can geomatics offer research in general and the researcher in the field? Your reflection should include, but not be limited to:

1. An overview of the range of geomatics tools available to the researcher,
2. An explanation of how these various tools can be used in the field to support and even enhance field research,
3. When and how might these tools be best used,
4. The benefits and challenges associated with using such tools, and
5. What are the possibilities, both today and in the future for such tools in research and the field.”

For physical geography/environmental studies students: “What is the importance of understanding the natural setting in geographic research and field work specifically? Your reflection should include, but not be limited to:

1. Describing the scope of physical geography research and field work (both abiotic and biotic dimensions),
2. Why knowing the physical setting is important even in human-oriented research (What does this knowledge contribute to understanding and answering human-oriented research?)
3. Why is this knowledge becoming even more important today?”

For human geography/environmental studies students: “Why do we obsess over participant involvement in geographic/environmental studies research and field work? Your reflection should include, but not be limited to:

1. Why are people so important in our research?
2. What challenges and opportunities exist with people-oriented field work?
3. How do we involve people in the different types of research and field work?
4. Why is the timing of participant involvement so important?
5. Describing the range of methods for participant involvement available to the researcher and which one or collection of methods you personally feel are the best (and why).”

Specifications: Your reflection is limited to two thousand words (eight pages of doubled-spaced 11-point font text). Tables and graphics are not included in this word count. Make sure that it is formally organised:

- *Header:* A proper and complete header is need at the top of your opening page. This includes the course title, the title of the reflection, your name and student number, and date of submission. A cover page is not required for this reflection.

- *Purpose*: The opening section of your reflection should be a purpose section where you state the purpose of the document and then outline its organisation.
- *Background*: Here you describe the nature of research generally and field research specifically. What are its purposes and goals? It should also include a paragraph on the importance or relevance of your specific sub-discipline (geomatics, physical research, human-oriented research) in research.
- *Overview of your sub-discipline in field work*: This is where you present the nuts and bolts of field research associated with your sub-discipline.
- *Reflection on the importance of your sub-discipline in research in general and field research specifically*: This is where you insert your reflection properly.
- *Conclusion*: Produce a proper conclusion culminating with a statement about the role and importance of your sub-discipline in research and field work.
- *References*: Provide a list of references should you draw upon any outside of the materials provided in this course.

A word on using GenAI. You can use GenAI to develop your ideas. If you use GenAI, I want you to use Copilot and to include, as an addendum to your submission, the full conversation you had with Co-pilot. Do not edit it or clean up typographical errors. Simply highlight the entire conversation in Copilot, copy it and then paste it as is to the end of your reflection. Title it “Appendix 1. A Conversation with Copilot.”

Your reflection cannot be based solely upon this conversation. You must demonstrate personal reflection and ideas. You are also required to draw from the course materials and activities. When incorporating materials from the conversations, introduce this with “In my conversation with Copilot ...” or “Copilot noted ...” or some other introduction that tells me the source of the materials being presented as originating from Copilot. Plus, place the text in quotations as you would a quote from any source.

Here’s a suggestion for your conversation: at the end of the conversation ask Copilot to design a field research design including in-person and technological methods for studying a specific question of your choice. What can you learn from that? I tried this for each of the above posed questions – and it was really interesting!