



GEOGRAPHY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
A CRITICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE GEOGRAPHY OF BC

Lecture: Cornett Building A221; Tuesday 4:30pm-7:20pm

Office Hours: Wednesday 10am – 12pm

Office Location: DTB B208 (or sometimes via Zoom; link will be sent out on those days)

Contact: jmateer@uvic.ca

We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəḡən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the physical and human geographies of British Columbia, with a particular focus on political geographies and political ecology. Conflict or struggle is central to the province's social experience recognized in persistent disputes around such matters as resource exploitation, environmental protection, Indigenous sovereignty, immigration, and urban development. Through engaging lectures, class discussions, videos, and texts, this course will carefully analyze historical and present struggles critically interrogating the values and assumptions of different groups vying to define our province and its future. Students should leave with a more sophisticated appreciation of the field of critical geography and of the province of BC.

Critical geographies, and critical thinking more generally, is often misrepresented as cynical, pessimistic, or “being against things.” In this class, it should be understood in terms of healthy skepticism and recognizing the world could / should be otherwise. This includes questioning of status quo “common sense”; trying to make important linkages and connections; recognizing and evaluating multiple perspectives and the values and assumptions underlying each (including our own); evaluating evidence and arguments (while recognizing power relations in knowledge claims), arriving at defensible positions on issues and working towards a more respectful, inclusive, just, and fair world (or province and country in this case).

KEY THEMES: Place, Wilderness, TEK, Neoliberalism, Colonialism, Decolonization

REQUIRED TEXT AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings are available digitally through UVic libraries or will be uploaded on Brightspace.

Optional readings and recommended readings will also be available on BrightSpace. For those students who have a limited background in geography, recommended texts may provide a bit of essential background for the theme of the week. Optional readings are for those students wishing to explore the theme further, perhaps for their final essay.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course has three primary objectives:

- To gain a deeper understanding of the particular geographies of British Columbia
- To develop a deeper understanding of the key theoretical concerns and debates that inform and continue to shape critical and regional geography.
- To allow students to develop a critical appreciation for the complex roles and multiple ways in which geographies are implicated within and woven through our everyday lives.

You can expect to acquire the following skills:

- **Critical Thinking:** by applying seminar discussions and readings to your assignments and participation, students will develop an ability to think critically about the geographic ideas that have historically shaped and continue to inform political events in BC.
- **Communication:** to develop written communication skills through written work, and to develop verbal communication skills and self-confidence through seminar discussions as well as student presentations.
- **Time Management and Personal Responsibility:** by attending seminars and by handing in assignments on time.

EVALUATION

Participation	10%
Midterm	20%
GVPN project (group)	20%
Literature Review	20%
Final Exam	30%

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+	9	90-100%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a
A	8	85-89%	

A-	7	80-84%	student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

ASSESSMENT & ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

PARTICIPATION - (10%) – ONGOING THROUGHOUT TERM

- This includes engaging in class by asking questions and offering answers and interpretations. This is not an attendance grade, however, if you don't attend classes, it will be impossible to participate fully.

MIDTERM EXAM – (20%)

- This will be in-class and cumulative and include multiple choice, short answer, and definitional questions.

LITERATURE REVIEW – (20%)

We will be covering a series of topics relating to various geographic concepts and how these are exemplified through British Columbia's places, spaces, and landscapes.

For your literature review, I would like you to select a topic of interest to you that relates to the geography of BC. You will then discuss the relevant academic literature on your chosen topic (for example, the Rights to the City, Environmental Repossession, or Decolonization). You will then write one to three paragraphs about how your literature review speaks to a current news article, along with a conclusion.

****REMINDER THAT A LITERATURE REVIEW IS NOT AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY****

- The paper should be a total of 10-12 pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font Times New Roman, 2.54 cm margins with proper in-text citations. Your reference list will not count toward your page length and should be in APA style.
- The first, and longest, portion of the paper should be a review of the relevant academic literature on your chosen topic (for example, the Rights to the City, Environmental Repossession, or Decolonization). You will need to demonstrate that you have gone beyond assigned class readings by considering the discussions we have had in class and by doing additional outside reading and thinking on the topic you choose to tackle here.

- The second portion of your paper, which should be one to three paragraphs, should discuss how the academic literature speaks to a current news article in BC.

GREATER VICTORIA PLACEMAKING NETWORK (PROJECT) – (20%)

For this course, you will have the opportunity to work on a group project related to placemaking in Victoria and the CRD with the Greater Victoria Placemaking Network (GVPN). The purpose of this assignment is to apply academic knowledge to real-world issues in a process that can benefit both students and the community.

A group sign-up will be available on BrightSpace, with more details on the assignment to follow.

FINAL EXAM – (30%)

- This will be an in-person exam held during the exam period
- I will discuss the final exam format with you in our last few weeks of class.
- Date TBD – this will be announced by the University during the term
- Travel is not a reason to miss the exam, so please wait until after a date has been selected to make any travel arrangements for December.

IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT NOTES:

Assignment: For all assignments use 12 pt. Font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, number pages, and a list of references. You do not need to include a title page, but DO include your name, my name, the course number, and the date at the top of the first page.

Referencing: Students are required to follow the APA style guide posted on Brightspace.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/
- Geography Department Chair: geogchair@uvic.ca
- Geography Undergraduate Advising: geogadvising@uvic.ca

BRIGHTSPACE

I will post the course syllabus, link to any online lectures, and any additional relevant materials on the course's Brightspace website.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignments submitted ON TIME will receive my full attention & useful feedback.
- Please speak with me well in advance if you anticipate a delay in submitting your work, particularly when dealing with illness or family conflicts.
- 10% per day penalty for late assignments, including weekend days.

** All assignments must be done exclusively for this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on **cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submissions, and aiding others to cheat.**

Policy on Academic Integrity: web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php.

Students are reminded that submitting for credit any academic work which has been submitted (or where credit has already been obtained) in another course is listed among academic offenses as academic dishonesty.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible (uvic.ca/services/cal/). The CAL staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

POSITIVITY AND SAFETY

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE AT UVIC

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR; Sedgewick C119

Phone: 250.721.8021

Email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca

Web: uvic.ca/svp

RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The University of Victoria offers a number of resources to support international students as they pursue their studies. UVic's [International Centre for Students](#) is the primary office supporting international students on campus at the university-wide level and provides various supportive program through the [UVic Global Community Initiative](#), including a Mentorship Program and Conversation Partner Program.

For academic advising-related questions, students in the Geography Department are also encouraged to meet with the Geography Undergraduate Advisor (geogadvising@uvic.ca) as well as an academic advisor in the [Academic Advising Centre](#) early in their studies to help map out a plan to declare a major and complete university program requirements. Other resources include the [Centre for Academic Communication](#) and the [Math and Stats Assistance Centre](#). International students are also encouraged to contact the International Student Liaison in Geography (Prof. CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, cindyann@uvic.ca), who can assist in making connections with other international and domestic students in the Geography Department and share opportunities for getting involved in departmental activities more broadly.

POLICY ON CHILDREN IN CLASS

It is my belief that if we want women and parents in academia, we should also expect children to be present in some form. Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is, thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to students, staff, and faculty parents.

- 1) All exclusively breastfeeding and chestfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women or people can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they must choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in my class anytime.
- 2) For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
- 3) I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
- 4) In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

POLICY ON RECORDING LECTURES

According to the university's Intellectual Property Policy (GV0215), professors and instructors are the authors of their original course materials, lecture notes, and lecture presentations. Accordingly, they own the copyright in these materials. A lecture constitutes an instructor's intellectual property. A student must get permission to record the lecture from their instructor. Any material for the course (e.g., lecture notes, PowerPoints, syllabus, including a recording of a lecture) is made solely for the use of the student registered in the course for research and private study only. These materials must not be posted online or shared with other students without the instructor's permission. In some cases, a student with a perceptual disability will be eligible for an academic accommodation to record a lecture. Please visit the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) website for more information. You should be aware that there are policies and legislation regarding academic accommodation. Should you have any questions, please contact the Copyright Office.

COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed online and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

WEEK	DATE	
1	September 12 th	Introduction to the course and discussion on Physical Geography and Climate Change in BC
2	September 19 th	Climate Change and Placemaking ** September 22 nd is the last day for adding courses that begin in the fall term.
3	September 26 th	Wilderness and Racialization in BC
4	October 3 rd	Rural Geographies and Forestry in BC
5	October 10 th	Forestry continued
6	October 17 th	Midterm
7	October 24 th	Processes of colonialism
8	October 31 st	Urban Geographies and Vancouverism ** October 31 st is the last day for withdrawing from first term courses without penalty of failure.
9	November 7 th	Urban Geographies and Housing in BC *Presentations in class
10	November 14 th	Reading Break (no class)
11	November 21 st	Decolonization *Presentations in class
12	November 28 th	Decolonization (continued) *Presentations in class

DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

NOTE:

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - *Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic*

students. uvic.ca/services/counselling/

Health Services - *University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.* uvic.ca/services/health/

Centre for Accessible Learning - *The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations* uvic.ca/services/cal/. *The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.*

Elders' Voices - *The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.*
uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php