



COURSE OUTLINE
Sustainable Cities

Office Hours: Thursday 12:30-1:30 PM
Office Location: DTB B124
Course: Thursday 2:30-5:20 PM, Clearihue Building
Room: A329

We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən 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.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Explores the opportunities and challenges of creating ecologically-minded, resilient, healthy, and socially just cities with a practical, community-engaged focus.

PREREQUISITES

Complete 2 of:

- [GEOG209](#) - Introduction to Environmental Management (1.5)
- [GEOG332](#) - Urban Development in the Global South (1.5)
- [GEOG340](#) - Cities and Planning (1.5)
- [GEOG346](#) - Health, Environment and Community (1.5)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cities are the main sites of economic development, hold most of the world's population, and this proportion is predicted to continue to grow. Most cities are in climate vulnerable areas, such as on coastlines. The density of population and infrastructure make cities key sites of climate change impacts, adaptation, mitigation.

In our course, we recognize that cities, as complex systems, are home to billions of people, and the site of massive change, innovation, and the need for resilience and mitigation to climate change. We will explore, from the personal to the city-scale, how can cities find a pathway towards sustainability, resilience and social justice? The key themes and concepts we will employ to explore how cities can navigate towards sustainability include:

- Ecological footprint/resource demands of cities (strong sustainability)
- Urbanization and industrialization
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Energy, transportation, sustainability clusters, nature-based solutions, food security and urban gardening, justice.

About me:

- I started at the University of Victoria in July 2021. I am cross-appointed to Geography and Civil Engineering. My research is focused on the geography of renewable energy transitions, energy justice and energy democracy. You can learn more about my research program at <https://socialexergy.com/>
- My pronouns are she/her.
- I am committed to anti-racism, decolonization, equity, diversity and inclusion. See some of my writing here: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2023.102964>
- I used to work in public policy in Ontario. Two policies I worked on included the coal cessation regulation in Ontario (the first of its kind in the world) and Canada's first procurement policy for small scale renewable energy (the Renewable Energy Standard Offer Program—RESOP). Based on this experience, I know how to write briefing notes and house notes. I know how government consults stakeholders and reviews their feedback. I know that if I write my research in the public media, like CBC or the Globe and Mail, is a direct route for my research to land on the desks of policy makers. For this reason, some of my techniques for writing might seem strange, but my goals for YOU in the program is that you can communicate with policy makers. This is an important skill no matter whether you work in a community, work for government, industry, or advocacy and activism. You must know how to communicate a message broadly so that the public and government listen.

Please note that I reserve the right to change aspects of this course outline if necessary. This could be due to unforeseen circumstances (such as a pandemic!), or due to a class decision. If there is a major change, all students will be notified simultaneously via Brightspace as soon as possible.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)

The cost of living for students across Canada and particularly in Victoria are exorbitant. As part of equity, diversity and inclusion, and in order to keep your costs manageable, I do not assign a course text book. All readings can be downloaded as part of your tuition from UVic libraries and the internet. I will also provide direct links to the text to keep readings as accessible as possible and save you time.

Students are required to do the readings before class, so that they can arrive ready to discuss them with their classmates.

A list of readings available online from the library is posted on Brightspace.

RECOMMENDED TEXT(S)

A list of readings available online from the library is posted on Brightspace.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To have a strong working understanding of the complex array of social, spatial, environmental, political and distributional challenges and opportunities that cities face in reducing their environmental impacts and becoming healthy and just places to live for citizens.
- To contribute to a constructive and positive learning environment for yourself, the course director and your classmates. I recommend arriving to class prepared to discuss the assigned course reading, prepared to listen carefully to your classmates and course director. If you don't understand someone's perspective, I recommend that you engage in your curiosity and calmly

ask questions. Skillful communication means avoiding interrupting others and letting them know you are sincerely listening to them and responding to their ideas, rather than waiting for the opportunity to insert your own.

- Hone your problem-solving skills for complex urban systems and sustainability. There are no simple, linear, or “one size fits all” answers when designing sustainable cities, particularly with multiple co-occurring social and environmental crises. An important skill to develop in this course is to process a range of complex information from a range of sources and try to synthesize it, recognizing there are always trade-offs and no easy solutions.
- To understand the importance and potential methods of citizen engagement in designing and implementing sustainability solutions in cities.
- Develop the knowledge basis to distinguish between solutions that are likely to bring about lasting sustainability, as opposed to “green washing” or “false solutions” to creating or improving sustainable cities.
- Develop appropriate communication skills of the complex challenges and solutions to create sustainable cities. This means being ready to explain the problem and potential solutions to decision makers, citizens, your neighbours, and businesses so that others can understand and engage in the issues with you.

EVALUATION

Grade Breakdown

Pre-class survey: **5%**

Weekly Reading Summaries: **25%**

Reading presentation: **10%**

Transportation opportunities scan assignment: **25%**

Transportation opportunities scan presentation: **10%**

City sustainability solution scan assignment: **25%**

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a 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.
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GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

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

All course notes are posted on Brightspace.

All assignments are posted on and due through Brightspace. Assignments will not be accepted via email or hardcopy.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

To ensure fairness towards those of you who have made the effort to hand in assignments on time, I will deduct 5% per day (including weekends and holidays) for assignments that are handed in late. In-class contributions and presentations that are not prepared on time will be given zero and substitutions to later dates are not an option. Exceptions will only be granted for documented medical or compassionate reasons. Please submit these by email to me, following the email policy to ensure a prompt response.

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Attendance in this course and contributing to a constructive learning environment is critical to success and colleague points. This means arriving on time, staying until the end, and aiming to create a positive environment for students and professor.

Students are responsible for the content provided in class and on Brightspace, and in the course outline. In order to do well in this course, you need to attend classes, do the readings and assignments. If you do not attend classes, you may not do well in the course. Class time and office hours are designed to support your success. If you need to miss classes for legitimate reasons supported by university policy (e.g., medical reasons), please provide me with documentation as soon as possible so we can make arrangements for you to cover the material.

POLICY ON COMMUNICATION

My priority is to support the students in the course, but I require YOUR help to make sure I see your email! To this end, to ensure prompt and accurate responses, I strongly recommend following these email guidelines. If you do not follow these guidelines, I may not see your email at all, or in time to respond promptly, which impedes my goal to support you:

- So that I can prioritize your emails and respond as quickly as possible, please put "GEOG 406" into the subject line of your email. This allows me to program MS Outlook to filter and prioritize your emails out of the thousands of emails I receive on a weekly basis. I cannot guarantee providing a response to emails that do not have this subject heading.
- I recommend emailing only when absolutely needed and to prioritize meeting me during office

hours and attending the class time. As a student, you are responsible for the content posted on Brightspace and in the course outline. Prior to sending an email, please review the course outline and the Brightspace website carefully. Answers that are contained in the course outline or on the Bright Space website will not likely be responded to.

- If you have a question about the assignment or any aspects of the outline, please visit me during office hours and/or ask your question in class. Content related questions will be discussed in class, or on online discussion forums with the entire group
- Reasons for email:
 - To request an academic concession or accommodation with the specific details and the required documentation. Please ensure that your request and documentation meet the UVic policies and guidelines, as these are the guidelines I am required to follow. Here is the policy on academic concessions:
<https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-concessions-accommodations/index.php>
 - To provide me with the required documentation to arrange for an accommodation. In the case of any accommodation, you are required to let me know of any accommodations I must provide within 2 weeks of the start of the semester to allow me to make appropriate accommodations.
 - To let me know of a mistake I've made on Brightspace (for example, on assignment set up, a missing document). In this case, I thank you in advance, and I will inform the entire class of the rectification of the issue via the announcement module.
- Please do not email me for the following:
 - To let me know you are late to class or to let me know you are missing class.
 - To ask a question about an assignment (please come to weekly office hours or ask during class).
- Responses will be provided within three business days. Please plan accordingly.
- For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, please email me from the email registered to your Bright space account. In order for me to respond quickly and accurately to meet your needs, please **always add your student number and full name to your email to me, along with the course number.**
- You are responsible for checking your email associated with your Bright Space account, and this is the email I may contact you through if I need to be in touch.
- Contact: Dr. Hoicka, cehoicka@uvic.ca

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 submission, 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.

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 let 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.

In the past I have received this information a few days before a test, even though the students had the accommodation documentation at the beginning of the semester: the sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course. If you do not give us enough time, we may not be able to accommodate you. Therefore, I am requiring that you let me know of a known consideration within 2 weeks of the start date of the course, and of anything that arises that you could not anticipate (such as a broken bone) as immediately as possible. I am requiring the same for compassionate reasons—we all go through difficult periods in life and it is important to learn to ask for support. If you are experiencing something very difficult, such as the critical illness of an immediate family member, please approach me by email or during office hours right away so that we can make appropriate arrangements to support your success.

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

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

UVic Important Dates: [Academic important dates - University of Victoria \(uvic.ca\)](https://www.uvic.ca/academic-important-dates/)

Last day for adding courses that begin in the second term (except for Faculty of Law)

Wednesday, January 24th

Last day for withdrawing from full year and second term courses without penalty of failure

Thursday, February 29th

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC
1	January 11 2024	Course Introduction
2	January 18 2024	Urban ecological footprints—can cities be sustainable?
3	January 25 2024	Impacts on Cities
4	February 1 2024	Urbanization and Industrial Clusters
5	February 8 2024	Energy and Transportation
6	February 15 2024	Energy
N/A	February 22 2024	Reading break /No class
7	February 29 2024	Transportation assignment presentations and feedback
8	March 7 2024	Navigating solutions—ideal cities <i>Transportation assignment due</i>
9	March 14 2024	Sustainability clusters
10	March 21 2024	Justice in urban sustainability
11	March 28 2024	Nature based solutions
12	April 4 2024 (last day of class)	Food Security and Urban Gardening <i>Cities solution assignment due</i>

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/](https://www.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/](https://www.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