
COURSE OUTLINE

OUR DIGITAL EARTH

Office Hours: Monday 1:00-2:00 pm or by appointment
Office location: DTB B212
Contact: smaxwell@uvic.ca

Grading Assistant: Gillian Voss (contact for grading queries)
Contact: gillianvoss@uvic.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to how the world of geospatial data and technologies influences our daily lives and shapes society and the world around us. Students learn how to collect and utilize location-based data, how to develop web maps and mobile mapping apps, how to create technologies to respond to environmental disasters and humanitarian crises, and how to think spatially to improve our understanding of our planet. Lectures involve a mix of presentations and group interaction, as well as several opportunities to crowdsource data collection to solve geospatial problems. Lectures also provide students with training in how to use various mapping technologies to collect, map, analyze, and communicate data in powerful ways.

KEY THEMES

Location-based data, geospatial technologies, spatial thinking, problem solving and location privacy.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND SOFTWARE

The required text for this course is *Our Digital Earth*. Links to all readings will be provided on BrightSpace. We will be using ArcGIS online to complete exercises in class and assignments. You will be given free access to the platform for the duration of the class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Define appropriate modes of spatial thinking needed for addressing geographical questions.
- Collect and analyze geographic data to characterize spatial patterns of observations and spatial relationships between variables.
- Develop mobile apps to facilitate the collection of geospatial data.
- Create web mapping applications to display spatial patterns and communicate information.
- Utilize technology theory to develop a geospatial tool to help with responding to an environmental disaster or humanitarian crisis.

- Understand issues of accessibility, privacy, and security with regards to geospatial data and technologies.

EVALUATION AND DEADLINES

Assignment 1	Sep. 24 at 11:00 pm	10%
Assignment 2	Oct. 15 at 11:00 pm	15%
Assignment 3	Nov. 2 at 11:00 pm	25%
Assignment 4	Dec. 4 at 11:00 pm	20%
Activity 1	Sep. 16 at 11:00 pm	2%
Activity 2	Oct. 5 at 11:00 pm	2%
Activity 3	Oct. 22 at 11:00 pm	2%
Activity 4	Nov. 18 at 11:00 pm	2%
Activity 5	Nov. 25 at 11:00 pm	2%
Final Exam	TBD during exam period Dec 6-20	20%

NOTE: Students will **not be given an opportunity to submit any additional work for extra grades.*

**NOTE: Do not make travel plans during the scheduled exam period. It is the student's responsibility to be available during the exam period.*

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.

Students who have completed the following elements will be considered to have completed the course:

- Assignments 1-4
- Final Exam

Failure to complete one or more of these required elements will result in a grade of “N” regardless of the cumulative percentage on other elements of the course. N is a failing grade and factors into GPA as a value of 0

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

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

BRIGHTSPACE

Brightspace learning management systems (LMS) will serve as the main avenue of communication: <https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/422822>

Please monitor the page on a regular basis for course announcements. If you are having difficulty logging in or password problems, contact the Computer Help Desk Email: helpdesk@uvic.ca, Tel: 250-721-7687.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Submit your activities and assignments on time. *Activities* will not be accepted passed the due date and time (11pm). *Assignments* will be penalized 10% for each late day and will not be accepted passed five days after the deadline.

Conflicts with work, holidays or travel plans are not considered an acceptable reason to apply for a deferred assignment or extension.

POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Attendance is expected for lectures. Recordings of lecture material will not be provided unless the University reinstates online learning.

High level of student cooperation and participation, involving asking and answering questions is expected. Students are also expected to be punctual for course meetings. Cell phones must be turned off or silenced during lectures and ONLY be used during activities if pertinent to do so.

As an Instructor, I can refuse a student admission to a lecture, laboratory, learning activity or exam because of lateness, misconduct, inattention, or failure to meet the responsibilities of the course. Please refer to the UVic academic calendar in the section on student academic conduct for further information.

It is the student's responsibility to drop the course by the appropriate deadline; students will not be automatically removed from the course for failing to attend lecture.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware and abide by 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:

https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V

To learn more about academic integrity, you can also self-enroll in the [Integrity Matters](#) course in Brightspace. Search for this course under the [Discover tab](#) on your Brightspace homepage.

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor.

USE OF AI

Please be advised that in this course you are not authorized to use any form of generative AI. In order to successfully complete course activities, generative AI is not required nor welcomed. Students should not make any use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, among others that use AI for content generation and editing. As the University of Victoria states on its Academic Integrity Policy "Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility." Therefore, I expect you to comply with the course syllabus and I encourage you to enhance your academic experience in this course by refraining from using generative AI.

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

If you have been directly or indirectly impacted by sexualized violence, reach out to the SVRO for information, advice, resolution options (restorative and disciplinary) as well as support options and referrals. The SVRO is both survivor-centred and trauma-informed in their approach.

eghr01@uvic.ca

Sedgewick C Wing

www.uvic.ca/svp

EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS (EQHR)

EQHR is a resource for students, staff and faculty who have experienced discrimination and harassment and are looking for informal and formal resolution options as well as advice, coaching and/or education. We are available for confidential consultations so that you can ask questions and learn your options.

eghr01@uvic.ca

Sedgewick C Wing

www.uvic.ca/equity

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.

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	Dates	Topic
1	Sep 4	Welcome
2	Sep 8 & 11	Intro to Coordinates & Geospatial Data
3	Sep 15 & 18	Data Types and Measurements & GPS Activity 1 Due Sep 16 <i>Sep. 16 - Last day to drop class with 100% reduction of tuition fees</i> <i>Sep. 19 - Last day for adding courses that begin in the first term</i>
4	Sep 22 & 25	Visualization & Spatial Patterns Assignment 1 Due Sep 24
5	Sep 29 & Oct 2	Autocorrelation & Assignment 2 Work Period Activity 2 Due Oct 5 <i>Sep. 30 - Last day for paying first term fees without penalty</i>
6	Oct 6 & 9	Scale & Assignment 2 Work Period Assignment 2 Due Oct 15 <i>Oct. 9 - Last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees</i>
7	Oct 16	Developing a Research Project
8	Oct 20 & 23	GIS and Research Questions & Assignment 3 Work Period Activity 3 Due Oct 22
9	Oct 27 & 30	Remote Sensing & Assignment 3 Work Period Assignment 3 Due Nov 2 <i>Oct. 31 - Last day for withdrawing from first term courses without penalty of failure</i>
10	Nov 3 & 6	Crisis Response
11	Nov 13	Guest Lecture
12	Nov 17 & 20	Contributory Platforms & Privacy and Security Activity 4 Due Nov 18
13	Nov 24 & 27	Assignment 4 Work Period Activity 5 Due Nov 25
14	Dec 1	Wrap-up & Review Assignment 4 Due Dec 4

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*
<https://www.uvic.ca/accessible-learning/index.php>.

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