



**University
of Victoria**

Faculty of Social Science
Department of Geography

Geog306 - Geography of Canada Syllabus - Winter 2016

Course Description:

What is Canada? Who are Canadians? Would everyone agree on the answers to these questions? Would the answers change over time and space? Why do such questions matter? This course goes beyond a description of the physical geography of Canada, and investigates into imagined and contested national identities, and as a place of diverse regions. We will begin with an overview of the country's physical setting and the relevance to politics, economics, and culture. Next we will then look at how conceptions of place and space are relevant to Canadian geography. We will then explore Canadian cultural geographies, decolonization in Canada, and finally Canada's place in the world. Through readings and discussion, we will examine the key issues facing Canadians today and in the past. During discussions on Canadian geography, we will neither be unconsciously optimistic nor cynically pessimistic. Instead we will attempt to understand new ways of seeing "Canada" and being "Canadian".



Instructor Information:

Jennifer Mateer

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Office Location & Hours

Thursday 11:00-1:00pm in the David Turpin Building (DTB) Room B208

Guiding Thoughts:

"In the end, everything in politics turns on the distribution of spaces. What are these places? How do they function? Why are they there? Who can occupy them? For me, political action always acts upon the social as the litigious distribution of places and roles. It is always a matter of knowing who is qualified to say what a particular place is and what is done in it." - Jacques Rancière (2003: 201)

"A nation is a group of people who share the same illusions about themselves ... expressed in stories or core myths we tell about ourselves." - Daniel Francis (1997:10)

"The real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the workings of institutions that appear to be both neutral and independent, to criticize and attack them in such a manner that the political violence that has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them." -Michel Foucault (Chomsky and Foucault 1974: 171)

Course Schedule

January 5	Physical Geography	February 16	Midterm
January 12	Economic Geography	February 23	Cultural Geographies (Soundscapes; Foodscapes; and Art)
January 19	Canadian Migration, Immigration, and Refugee geographies	March 1	Indigeneity and Decolonization (this will be a running theme throughout the course, however it will be more closely attended to this week)
January 26	Canadian Myths and Place-Making	March 8	Canada's place in the world
February 2	Conceptions of Space in Canada	March 15-29	Regional Presentations and Review
February 9 Reading Break – No class			

Learning Objectives

- 1) To develop a more sophisticated understanding and critical appreciation for Canada's physical, economic, political, historical, and cultural geographies.
- 2) To better recognize how national and regional identities are constructed, contested, reproduced and reworked.
- 3) To enhance the understanding of key geographic concepts such as place and space, drawing on the Canadian experience.
- 4) To develop critical thinking skills which recognize the multiplicity of values, assumptions, and perspectives that underline opinions and "facts".
- 5) To be able to articulate and defend a clear and concise position on a Canadian issue through the written assignment.
- 6) To gain public speaking experience through one group presentation.
- 7) To develop a better appreciation of the importance of a critical education for Canada for one's own well-being and for future endeavors – be they academic or otherwise.

Course Policies

<p>Collegial Respect: Do your part to ensure a classroom environment conducive to learning. Arriving late, talking, texting, surfing the internet etc. all disrupt the flow of the class and may impact your participation grade. Be respectful to the instructor and colleagues. Being at university is a unique privilege. Be sure to make the most of it!</p>
<p>Late / Missing Work: If for a legitimate reason (e.g. verifiable serious illness or family emergency) you must miss the midterm/exam/assignment deadline you must notify the instructor before the date to make alternative arrangements. Failure to do so will result in a mark of zero. Your required hand-in assignments will be accepted up to three days after the due date with a 15% penalty applied per day. Extensions will only be granted ahead of the deadline and with a doctor's note or equivalent – travel is not considered a reason to miss a deadline or exam.</p>
<p>Accessibility: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSd) as soon as possible. The RCSd staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations http://rcsd.uvic.ca/.</p>
<p>Email: The Instructor receives a high volume of emails and may not always be able to respond in less than 48 hours, be sure to plan ahead, read the syllabus closely and/or ask peers for clarification.</p>
<p>Withdrawal: For information regarding withdrawal from class, please see: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015/FACS/UnIn/UARe/With.html for dates and other information.</p>
<p>Academic Integrity: Please review http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2015/FACS/UnIn/UARe/PoAcI.html for university policy on academic integrity and useful information on avoiding plagiarism, falsifying results, cheating on assignments etc. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic “F” for that assignment or test and possibly the course for ALL individuals involved. Note: plagiarism detection software will be used in this class.</p>
<p>Grade Revisions: If you believe your grade does not reflect the quality of your work, you may resubmit the assignment with a one or two paragraph justification for why your mark should be changed.</p>

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 via MyPage 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.

Required Materials

- **Readings:** Required readings, such as journal articles, book chapters, and other sources will be posted on the CourseSpaces site (<http://CourseSpaces.uvic.ca/>) and should be read thoroughly and brought to class. While readings are peripheral to learning in some courses, they are *central* to this one.
- **Reading effectively** is absolutely essential for success in this course. Be mindful that simply reading without engaging with the material (i.e. marking, highlighting, frequent re-reading, taking notes and critical reflection) will limit the movement of material from short to long term memory.

Note on CourseSpaces: You will Access the CourseSpaces site for required readings, important announcements, assignment submissions, instructor notes, your grades and additional information.

Assessments

Students will be evaluated on the following required elements:

Participation: based on the quality of your contributions to class discussion, and/or extra-curricular involvement (10%)

Midterm Exam: Thursday February 16th (in class) multiple choice, fill in the blank, & short written answer questions covering material to date (15%)

Purposeful Reading Responses: 3 reports on the assigned readings, due the same week as the reading chosen. *The first must be submitted from before the midterm, the second submitted after the midterm, and the third submitted during the regional presentations.* (4% each)

Written Op/Ed: Thursday March 15th An opinion piece on a Canadian issue (20%).

Regional Presentations: March 15 & 22: In class group presentations and participation on regional geographies of Canada (18%)

Final Exam: Take Home Exam, to be submitted online (25%)

Note on Undergraduate Grading: Grading practices and procedures are guided by University policies specified in the Calendar. The geography department is concerned about the potential problem of **grade inflation** and wishes to ensure **equity in grading standards** among colleagues. In cases in which grades for a course are substantially outside normal ranges, the department Chair may ask the instructor to justify or revise those grades. Instructors submit grades online as soon as they have been approved by the Chair. If the grades for a course are not available online, it means that the grades have not yet been approved by the Chair, and any grades posted elsewhere are unofficial and subject to change.

Students should pay particular attention to the qualitative indicators associated with each grade

A+ (90-100%); A (85-89%); A- 80-84% Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a small group of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.

B+ (77-79%); B (73-76%): Very good / acceptable work fulfilling expectations. These grades indicate a good or satisfactory grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area with no major weakness.

B- (70-72%); C+ (65-69); C (60-64%); D (50-59): Deficiencies in knowledge, understanding or techniques; Mastery of some relevant techniques or concepts lacking.

F (0-49): Failing grade. Unsatisfactory performance.

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2014/GRAD/FARe/Grad.html>