



Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Geography

University
of Victoria



Geography 388 A01 REGIONAL STUDIES – POLAR REGIONS FALL 2018

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Randy Scharien
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OFFICE HOURS: W 12:30 -14:30
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LECTURE TIMES: T, W, F 10:30-1120
LECTURE LOCATION: DSB C108



COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Polar Regions are no longer considered desolate unknowns of little significance beyond the fascinations of the intrepid. Compared to 60 years ago, there is increased awareness of their scientific importance within a global context, rising demand for their vast and largely undeveloped resources, and more accessibility through tourism. Along with the growth of activities in the Polar Regions are increased environmental and social risks, along with political tensions. In the Arctic, there is pressure to balance activities by largely southern-based residents with the concerns voiced by newly empowered Indigenous communities about the impacts these activities may have on their way of life. This course addresses these topics, within historical, contemporary, and future contexts. It places emphasis on the Physical Geography of the Polar Regions and explores Canada's unique position within the myriad of issues facing the Polar Regions. It also takes time to share experiences and celebrate a unique region that has excited imaginations for many centuries.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- A more sophisticated understanding of the physical, historical/cultural, and political geographies of the Polar Regions and the social and environmental challenges faced there.
- Enhanced comprehension of Canada's unique position within the myriad of issues facing the Polar Regions (rapid environmental change, critical knowledge gaps, and unresolved boundary disputes) and awareness of how high latitude issues are treated by residents residing at lower latitudes.
- Enhanced critical thinking skills, i.e. the ability to: make important linkages and connections; recognize and evaluate multiple perspectives and the values and assumptions underlying each (including your own); define questions and problems, evaluate evidence and arguments, and arrive at defensible positions on issues.

COURSE TEXTS (OPTIONAL):

Antarctica: Global Science from a Frozen Continent, ed. David W.H. Walton. Published by Cambridge University Press. © Cambridge University Press 2013.

READINGS (MANDATORY):

Essential readings in the form of scientific and policy reports, journal articles, and book chapters will be posted on the course CourseSpaces site (<http://CourseSpaces.uvic.ca>) or made available through the course reserve in the main library.

COURSESPACES:

Access CourseSpaces (<http://CourseSpaces.uvic.ca>) for announcements, instructor notes, your grades, and additional information (e.g. discussion topics).

LECTURE PRESENTATIONS:

Lecture presentations can be downloaded from CourseSpaces. In most cases the presentation slides will be made available in advance of the lectures.

GRADING SCHEME

Exercises (2 at 20% each)	40%
Term Exams (2 at 20% and 1 at 15%)	55%
Participation	5%

There is no final exam in this course.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Penalty for assignments handed in late is **20% per day**. Exceptions will only be granted for medical reasons (requiring a written report from a medical practitioner stating your inability to attend class) or extreme personal crises.

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.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented 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/>. 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.

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.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. It is expected that students, faculty members and staff at the University of Victoria, as members of an intellectual community, will adhere to these ethical values in all activities related to

learning, teaching, research and service. Any action that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification or deception, undermines the intention and worth of scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community. Students are advised to consult the university's Policy on Academic Integrity in the University Calendar. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software programs to detect plagiarism in term papers.

Plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with university policy. Please review the University Calendar for details. Be sure to reference all material you use. If you have any questions, please contact me.

The use of an editor, whether paid or unpaid, is prohibited unless the instructor grants explicit written authorization. The instructor should specify the extent of editing that is being authorized.

Course Topics

- Topic 1: Overview: contrasting the Arctic and Antarctic Regions
- Topic 2: Polar Regions in the Media
- Topic 3: Physical Geography
- Topic 4: Biota
- Topic 5: Global Climate and the Role of Polar Regions
- Topic 6: Climate Change in the Polar Regions
- Topic 7: Security and Sovereignty: Canada and a Transforming Arctic
- Topic 8: History of People in the Polar Regions
- Topic 10: Risks
- Topic 11: Tourism and visiting the Polar Regions

There will be guest lectures, featuring expert perspectives and new and emerging views on current topics related to the Polar Regions. These will be announced during class.

WEEKLY CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

WEEK	DATES	LECTURES
1	04 SEP – 07 SEP	COURSE INTRODUCTION.
2	11 SEP – 14 SEP	POLAR REGIONS IN THE MEDIA.
3	18 SEP – 21 SEP	GUEST LECTURES. TOPICS TO BE ANNOUNCED.
4	25 SEP – 28 SEP	PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.
5	02 OCT – 05 OCT	BIOTA. TERM EXAM 1 (5 OCT)
6	09 OCT – 12 OCT	GLOBAL CLIMATE AND POLAR REGIONS.
7	16 OCT – 19 OCT	POLAR CLIMATE CHANGE. EXERCISE 1 DUE (19 OCT).
8	23 OCT – 26 OCT	POLAR CLIMATE CHANGE.
9	30 OCT – 02 NOV	POLAR CLIMATE CHANGE.
10	06 NOV – 09 NOV	SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY. TERM EXAM 2 (06 NOV).
11	13 NOV – 16 NOV	READING BREAK (12-14 NOV). SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY.
12	20 NOV – 23 NOV	SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY. RISKS. EXERCISE 2 DUE (23 NOV).
13	27 NOV – 30 NOV	RISKS.
14	04 DEC – 05 DEC	TOURISM AND VISITING. TERM EXAM 3 (04 DEC).

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