



Social and Cultural Geography

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A CRITICAL APPROACH TO POLITICAL GEOGRAPHIES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to provide an introduction to the fields of social and cultural geography. Over the course of the semester, we will examine the major themes of social and cultural geographic scholarship, with a particular focus on the interpretation of cultural landscapes, place-making, and the contested nature of social identities. The study of social and cultural geography entails more than simply exploring the "exotic" and "far-away" as cultural curiosities. Rather, it calls upon us to rethink the everyday spaces within which we construct our own geographical imaginations as well as how cultural practices intersect with the broader structures of social power. By focusing on the key concepts of "cultural landscape," "social space," and "sense of place," human geographers explore how such spaces often become the site of social struggles over meaning, memory, identity, embodied practices, and the very formation of our geographical imaginations. In this class, we shall, therefore, explore the cultural politics of landscape and the spatial struggles over social space.

The course format consists of lecture sessions during the regularly scheduled meeting time for this class (M/R, 1:00pm—2:20pm) as well as lab sessions that meet on different days depending on the course section number. For the most part, lab sessions will be held at two-week intervals, with the first lab meeting during Week 2 (see Course Schedule below for a full listing of the weeks that labs will meet). The material covered in the labs is meant to complement the lectures and to provide a setting for more in-depth engagement with the major themes of the course.

REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no required textbook for this course. All readings are available through UVic libraries.

EVALUATION

Participation in lab	5%
Midterm Exam	25%
Place-Making Research Paper	20%
Lab Assignments	20%
Final Exam	30%

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: <http://geography.uvic.ca>
- Undergraduate Advisor: Dr. Phil Wakefield - pmw@uvic.ca

COURSESPACES

I will post the course syllabus, outlines of slide presentations, and any additional relevant materials on the course's COURSESPACES 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. For example, 10% will be deducted from the assignment (due in class) *if the assignment is submitted later in the day*. If the assignment is submitted the next day, 20% will be deducted from the assigned grade, and so forth.

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

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism in written assignments, including term papers will not be tolerated. Plagiarism detection software will be used in case of doubt. Plagiarism means representing someone else's work as your own. It is a serious offense, punishable by academic sanctions. When you incorporate the words, ideas, graphics, or other products from someone else's work into your projects, you must give credit by providing a citation and reference to the source work.

It is your responsibility to:

- understand what plagiarism is,
- be familiar with and understand the information on plagiarism outlined in UVic Libraries' plagiarism policy at <http://library.uvic.ca/instruction/cite/plagiarism.html>
- be familiar with UVic's policies on student responsibilities, conduct, discipline, and academic offenses, as described in the Undergraduate Calendar.

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 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.

Discriminatory language is not welcome or tolerated in lectures, seminars, tutorials, or written work. This includes but is not limited to sexist, racist, ethnocentric, ageist, homophobic, or transphobic language.

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the current 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.

Policy on Children in Class: It is my belief that if we want women in academia, that 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 student, staff and faculty parents.

- 1) All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to 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.

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.

OUTCOMES & RESPONSIBILITIES

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

This course has four primary objectives:

- Provide a broad overview of the key concepts and approaches in social and cultural geography.
- Examine the contested politics of place-making as a social and cultural practice.
- Explore the relations between social identity and the production of geographical space.
- Critically analyze and contribute to contemporary scholarship in social and cultural geography.

You can expect to acquire the following skills:

- Critical Thinking: by applying seminar discussions and readings through weekly reflections, students will develop an ability to think critically about the geopolitical ideas that have historically shaped and continue to inform political events.
- Communication: to develop written communication skills through written work, and to develop verbal communication skills and self-confidence through seminar discussions and co-facilitation as well as student presentations.
- Time Management and Personal Responsibility: by attending seminars and by handing in assignments on time.
- Gain an appreciation for the role that social power plays in the formation of socio-spatial identities and the processes of place-making.
- Develop the ability to critically assess the material and symbolic aspects of cultural landscapes.
- Improve competency in interpreting scholarly literature in social and cultural geography and enhance research skills by writing an academic paper.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attending lectures and labs
 - Reading the required materials. Seriously, you **MUST** do the readings. Seriously!
 - Actively participating in class and lab discussions
 - Submitting lab assignments on-time
 - Writing a final term paper on place-making
 - Attend and write both the midterm and final exams
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ASSESSMENT & ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

Midterm Exam and Final Exam

The course will have one midterm exam and a final exam. Each exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer/mini-essay questions. The final exam will be cumulative and held during the regular final exam period.

Place-Making Research Paper

In this class, we will be exploring how "places" are socially produced and performatively enacted through a variety of place-making practices. The making of "place" is often a highly contested process, especially when there are competing visions and claims over space. The aim of the Place-Making Research Paper is to provide the opportunity for each student to examine a particular case study of place-making from anywhere around the world that involves two or more conflicting social uses or cultural practices associated with a given "place." Topics will vary from one student to another, but the overall themes to be considered should relate in some fashion to the broad thematic areas of this course (Note: since this is a course on social and cultural geography, paper topics should focus on these aspects of the place-making process in particular). Below are step-by-step instructions for completing this assignment:

- 1) **Selecting a topic:** Get an early start on the first few weeks' assigned readings for the course to get a sense of what the notion of "place" is all about. Then, begin to think of any examples you are aware of that involve an attempt to actively construct a "place" which involves a conflict between two or more social groups. This could be anything from a conflict over the naming of a street to a struggle over whether particular types of religious architecture are permissible in a given area, to name just two among the many potential topics. Students should consult their lab instructor about selecting a relevant topic. *Note:* students may either work individually or in pairs of two on this assignment, although partners should be from the same lab section.
- 2) **Submitting a proposal:** During Week 4, submit a 1-page proposal to your lab instructor at the start of the lab session including: your name, preliminary paper title, a purpose statement paragraph explaining the topic and case study to be investigated, and a preliminary bibliography listing between 5-10 relevant citations.
- 3) **Conducting the research:** Once you have selected a research topic and it has been approved by your lab instructor, you should continue to collect popular media sources (newspaper or magazine articles) as well as academic sources (geography journal articles, scholarly books, etc.) related to the general topic. Keep in mind that the media sources you find will likely deal with the details of a particular event, whereas the scholarly literature may address a more general theme of relevance to your topic.
- 4) **Writing your research paper:** After the initial groundwork is completed for conducting your research, you should begin writing a draft of your paper. The paper should be 8-10 pages, double-spaced, 12-pt font size, 2.54 cm margins, not counting any other accompanying materials such as photographs, maps, etc., all of which should be included in an appendix at the end of the document. Also, please do not include large spaces between paragraphs to increase the page count! The paper should draw upon a combination of popular media, academic geography journal articles/books, and a selection of the assigned readings for this course. It should be divided into different sections with bold headings, and below is a guide to help you format the paper:

1. Introduction (approx. 1 page)

Introduce the goal and objectives of the paper in this short section.

2. A section that reviews academic geography literature on the broad themes of relevance to your research topic (approx. 3 pages)

For instance, if you were to write a paper on a particular case study of a dispute over a street name in New York City, this section would review the geographic literature on the cultural politics of street naming more generally without necessarily getting into the details of the New York case study.

3. A section that examines the details of the case study topic itself drawing upon popular media sources and relevant academic literature (approx. 5 pages)

In this section, provide a descriptive account and critical analysis of the case study you have chosen to investigate drawing upon relevant media sources, etc.

4. Conclusion (approx. 1 page)

In this concluding section, provide a summary of your main arguments and discuss how your analysis of the case study contributes to the broader literature in social and cultural geography.

For both in-text citations and your bibliography, please use the APA citation guide available on CourseSpaces

Note: all images, maps, photographs, etc., should be listed with appropriate reference numbers (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.) in an appendix at the end of the paper, not within the text itself, although you should make direct reference to each figure in the body of the essay, by saying "(Figure 1)," etc., at the end of a sentence just as you would for in-text citations. Make sure to also include a "figure caption" that describes the content of each figure that is placed directly below the image.

- 5) **Deadline for submitting the paper:** The paper should be submitted at the start of class on Monday, April 1. Please note that absolutely no late papers will be accepted. Exceptions will be made only if the student and course instructor have made special arrangements prior to the due date to accommodate any legitimate university-excused absences or for a medical emergency. **[Note: Make absolutely sure to include your name, lab instructor's name, and lab section on the first page of your paper.]**

6) **Journals worth considering as sources for your essay**

ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies; Alternatives: Global, Local, Political; Anarchist Studies; Annals of the Association of American Geographers; Antipode; Area; Economy and Society; Environment and Planning A; Environment and Planning D: Society & Space; Gender, Place and Culture; Geografiska Annaler Series B; Geographical Journal; Geography Compass; Geopolitics; Global Networks; International Journal of Urban and Regional Research; International Political Sociology; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Journal of Peace Research; Nations and Nationalism; New Left Review; Political Geography; Professional Geographer; Progress in Human Geography; Public Culture; Radical Philosophy; Rethinking Marxism; Security Dialogue; Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography; SubStance; Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers; Urban Studies

Lab Assignments: There will be a total of 6 labs over the course of the semester. Students will be evaluated based upon lab assignments. For further details, see the GEOG 218 Lab Manual, which is accessible on CourseSpaces. (Note: In order to get a passing grade in the course as a whole, each student must have a passing grade in the Lab component of the course.)

Lab Participation: This includes engaging in discussion, asking questions, offering answers, and active listening. This is not an attendance grade, however, if you don't attend it is impossible to participate.

IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT NOTES:

Assignment: For all assignments use 12 pt. Font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, number pages, and a list of references. **DO NOT include a title page** (save paper!), but **DO** include your title, your name, my name, the name of your TA, the course number, and the date at the top of the first page. Staple your paper in the top left corner (**NO FANCY BINDERS!**). Please follow the word length requirement.

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

Resources on Campus

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 www.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: www.uvic.ca/svp

Centre for Academic Communication (the Writing Centre): <https://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/home/home/centre/>

Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) (formerly RCSD): <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>

Counselling Services: <https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/>

Research tips: <http://www.uvic.ca/library/research/tips/index.php>

WEEKLY CALENDAR

(Subject to revision as the course proceeds; required readings available on coursespaces)

WEEK	DATE	SEMINAR AND LAB TOPICS
1	January 7 & 10	Introduction to Social and Cultural Geography and Understanding Place
2	January 14 & 17	Place-making and place names LAB 1: REIMAGINING "PLACE" IN UVIC'S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
3	January 21 & 24	Reading Cultural Landscapes
4	January 28 & 31	Geographies of public art and resistance LAB 2: FIELD TRIP: STREET ART AT THE WILDFIRE BAKERY DUE: RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE IN-LAB AS WELL AS LAB 1 WRITE-UP * Note: Make sure to read Mitchell's "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape" before class on Monday
5	February 4 & 7	Midterm Exam Review Session February 4 th Midterm Exam February 7 th
6	February 11 & 14	Race, space, and the cultural politics of social identity LAB 3: RACE, SPACE AND SOCIAL IDENTITIES
7	February 18 & 21	Reading Break No Class or Labs
8	February 25 & 28	Internationality and Geography LAB 4: GENDERED SPACES IN VICTORIA
9	March 4 & 7	Gender, Place, and Culture
10	March 11 & 14	Geographies of Sex, Sexuality and the Body LAB 5: CONTESTED LANDSCAPES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
11	March 18 & 21	Music Geographies
12	March 25 & 28	Cultural heritage and the politics of collective memory LAB 6: PLACE-MAKING RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS
13	April 1 & 4	Final exam review in-class and course wrap-up DUE IN CLASS ON APRIL 1: PLACE-MAKING RESEARCH PAPER