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**PERSONAL SPACE: EXPLORING GEOGRAPHIES OF GENDER, SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY**

Monday and Thursday 11:30am – 12:50pm

MAC D114

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is specifically designed to allow you to explore how our collective disciplinary geographical interests in gender, sexuality, and identity intersect with your own personal and unique spaces of reflection, action and interaction. It was developed at the request of past and present students in Geography who wanted to explore a variety of identity issues in a safe environment. For this reason, the course is designed to be somewhat co-created and student directed. I will bring content knowledge, introduce you to some geographers who are well-known (and definitely worth getting to know) in the field, help you sample the literature and key ideas, and generally support your learning in any way I can. I hope you will bring your own context and questions to explore.

Why does understanding geographies of gender, sexuality and identity matter so much? For me, critical human geographies are about understanding, and taking action, to reduce suffering caused by social injustice. Many of the current social injustices we see across the globe are rooted in discrimination (or even outright hatred) against the “other,” and some of the strongest “othering” occurs as a result of particular social constructs. As such, it seems essential to critically interrogate socially constructed identity markers if we are able to make a difference. Further, as Geographers have long pointed out, our identity is inextricably and intimately linked to matters of space, place and location (often on a very personal level), which makes it essential to always position our work in a geographical context.

Within the field, feminist geographers and geographies have contributed enormously to our knowledge and understanding of social constructions of gender, sexuality, and identity since at least the 1970s. However, there are several other approaches that are also important including post-structural, anarchist, and post-modern theorists. More recently they have been joined by scholars contributing LGBTQ2+ insights and critiques, as well as those informed by discussions of masculinities. Together these scholars have produced a rich and diverse field of vibrant and dynamic inquiry, as well as suggesting ways to grapple with how to apply our greater understanding to practical and relevant action in our lived experience of the workplace, the home, schools, recreational facilities, and other personal activity spaces.

While this course is designed to be co-constructed the following are some of the themes and sites of inquiry that I anticipate we will explore:

- Feminist, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Non-binary, Queer, Two-Spirit and Masculinist discourses as they relate to geography
  - Creation, loss, and (re)claiming of identities
  - The body as a site of struggle
  - Private, public (and intermediate) personal spaces at different scales
  - Intersections with locations of home, work, volunteering and service, education, environment, leisure, and so on.
  - Intersections with identities of kinship and family, (dis)ability, indigeneity, class, ethnicity, race, religion, belief systems, age, nationality, ways of knowing, relationships to nature, and so on.
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**REQUIRED TEXTS**

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

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## EVALUATION

Participation	10%
Class Facilitation	20%
Activity Space Journaling	15%
Paper proposal	5%
Term Paper	20%
Creative Identity Representation	10%
Take-home Final Exam	20%

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## OFFICE HOURS

**Tuesday 4-5pm**

Zoom link will be listed  
on Brightspace

Email:

[jennifercmateer@gmail.com](mailto:jennifercmateer@gmail.com)

## GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: <https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/index.php>
- Undergraduate Advisor: [geogadvising@uvic.ca](mailto:geogadvising@uvic.ca)

## BRIGHTSPACE

I will post the course syllabus, outlines of slide presentations, and any additional relevant materials on the course's BrightSpace website.

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## 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) *even 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, and should not be posted publicly online unless specified.

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism in writing 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.

## **POLICY ON CHILDREN IN CLASS**

It is my belief that if we want women and parents in academia, 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. Nonparents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

## **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
<b>A+</b> <b>A</b> <b>A-</b>	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	<b>Exceptional, outstanding</b> and <b>excellent</b> 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> <b>B</b> <b>B-</b>	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	<b>Very good, good</b> and <b>solid</b> 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.
<b>C+</b> <b>C</b>	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	<b>Satisfactory</b> , or <b>minimally satisfactory</b> . These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
<b>D</b>	1	50-59%	<b>Marginal</b> Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
<b>F</b>	0	0-49%	<b>Unsatisfactory</b> performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.

### COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of the 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.

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## OUTCOMES & RESPONSIBILITIES

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### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Gain the ability to link theoretical perspectives to lived experiences and realities.
- Ability to recognize, critique, and challenge “othering based on gender, sexuality, and identity.
- To allow students to develop a critical appreciation for the complex roles and multiple ways in which geographies are implicated within and woven through our everyday lives.
- Apply concepts from the course to your own personal space.
- Read and be inspired by critical thinkers in the field.
- Demonstrate, and engage in, co-created learning with your peers.
- Improve your understanding of how the social constructs of gender, sexuality and identity underlie many issues of social injustice.

You can expect to acquire the following skills:

- Classroom Comportment: Do your part to ensure an engaging classroom. Be punctual, respectful, compassionate and attentive.
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- 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 as well as student presentations.
- Time Management and Personal Responsibility: by attending seminars and by handing in assignments on time.

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## ASSESSMENT & ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

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### **PARTICIPATION - (10%) – ONGOING THROUGHOUT TERM**

- 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.
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### **CLASS FACILITATION – (20%)**

- Starting in week 3, each student (or pair of students) will pick one class where they will prepare and lead a 60 minute discussion on an article of their choosing. I will meet with the facilitator(s) ahead of the class to help them prepare a discussion outline, develop key questions for us all to think about, and communicate the reading(s) to everyone. The presenter(s) will identify and explain the main concepts from the reading, and then generate a discussion based on the questions identified. Articles should be chosen from Gender, Place and Culture (accessed via the library) OR from another journal relevant to your interests (please check with me first if choosing something from another journal).
  - Please join a group on BrightSpace to sign up for a date.
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### **ACTIVITY SPACE JOURNALING – (15%)**

- Choose one activity space you will be in at least once per week (home, school, workplace, gym, volunteer site, etc.) and commit to reflecting (free writing) on the application of concepts learned from class and readings to that space for 15-20 minutes in your journal after each class. What application might concepts from class have in your activity space? What connections does thinking about these concepts help you make as you navigate your daily life? Does your learning change your behaviour or your experience in any way? Sometimes you might make profound connections; other times not. Don't worry, just keep writing and I anticipate you will be surprised at what emerges.
  - October 14<sup>th</sup> Journal Check-in
  - Due November 25<sup>th</sup>
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### **CREATIVE REPRESENTATION – (5%)**

- Our identity(ies) and understanding of same is often hard to express in words. By the end of the course I will ask you to submit a creative piece that represents (re)claiming identity(ies). This need not be explicit - it can reveal as much or as little as you wish. You also do not have to be a skilled artist. It could be a photo, a graphic, a craft application, a ceramic tile, as well as a drawing, sketch or painting, etc. The choice is yours. We will share and reflect on our creations in the last class of the term.
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### **TERM PAPER PROPOSAL – (10%)**

- Due October 21<sup>st</sup>
- There are two necessary components for your proposal 1) write-up of your research questions and rationale and 2) a bibliography.
- For your write-up, please describe what you proposed to research. What questions you will answer, the reason why it is a relevant question, and what theory you will include in your analysis.
- For your bibliography, please include ten sources (a minimum of six academic) relevant to your topic and recent (i.e., from 2005 – present). If you are using an older source, please describe why this is still relevant even with age.

- Format: Include your name on the top right-hand corner of your first page (not a title page)  
The proposed title of your paper
    1. Description of the proposed research
      - a. Research question (10)
      - b. Rationale (10)
      - c. Theories used / theoretical framework (Be specific!) (10)
    2. Bibliography high-quality academic sources relevant to the topic above. (10)Mechanics will also be evaluated (10)
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### **TERM PAPER – (20%)**

- Throughout the course, you are encouraged to think critically about the theoretical and empirical relevance of the issues we will explore, as this will prepare you for your final essay.
  - Although the thesis and aim of the essay are up to you, you will need to demonstrate your critical engagement with (at least) one the course's major themes.
  - In this essay, I want you to demonstrate that you understand the concepts you have chosen at a theoretical level. You will also need to show a 'real world' application of the concepts by providing empirical examples, or a case study – preferably one that has not been addressed in one of the weekly presentations (but we can discuss this further).
  - Empirical examples may include drawing on a newspaper article, a TV show or film, a song or music video, or some other life experience, which should put the theoretical concept at an 'everyday' level to you. Make the theoretical material!
  - Due December 2<sup>nd</sup>
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### **TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM – (20%)**

- I will post a .pdf file with a series of short (1-2 paragraphs) answer questions and an essay question that you will have time to complete during the final exam period. Questions will be posted online on the 13<sup>th</sup> and will be due on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December.
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### **IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT NOTES:**

**Assignment:** For all assignments use 12 pt. Font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, number pages, and a list of references using the APA guide posted online. **DO NOT include a title page** (save paper!), but **DO** include your title, your name, my name, 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 BrightSpace.

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## WEEKLY CALENDAR

(Subject to revision as the course proceeds)

WEEK	DATE	SEMINAR TOPICS
1	SEP 9	Course Introduction
2	SEP 13 & 16	Feminist Geographies
3	SEP 20 & 23	Rethinking space through the body
4	SEP 27 & 30	Latinx Gendered Spaces September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, No class
5	OCT 4 & 7	Queer Geographies
6	OCT 11 & 14	Queer Geographies Continued October 11: Thanksgiving, no class October 14: Journal Check-in
7	OCT 18 & 21	Trans Geographies, Embodiment and Experience October 21: Proposal Due
8	OCT 25 & 28	Decolonizing Feminist Geographies
9	NOV 1 & 4	TBD
10	NOV 8 & 11	November 11: No class, reading break
11	NOV 15 & 18	TBD
12	NOV 22 & 25	TBD
13	NOV 29 & DEC 2	TBD
14	DEC 6	Class Presentations of Creative Representations



## **DISCLAIMER**

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change.

### **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/](http://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/](http://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/](http://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](http://uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php)