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**COURSE OUTLINE**  
**GEOGRAPHY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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*In grateful acknowledgement of the L'kwungen & WSÁNEĆ peoples upon whose territories we are able to live and learn.*



**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the physical and human geographies of this land now known as British Columbia. Beyond a simple identification of geographic “facts”, the course will push you to think critically, creatively, and multi-perspectively, engaging with historic and pressing issues and struggles central to the province’s social experience. Through engaging lectures, readings, videos, podcasts, and group discussions, this course will provide you a more sophisticated appreciation of the place you presently call home and of the importance of a creative, critical geographic education.

**COURSE FORMAT**

The expectation is that this course will be delivered in a regular way with face-to-face lectures. However, given the continuing uncertainty around the pandemic, the course may need to be adapted. Lecture notes will be posted, but attending all sessions will help you grasp the nuance of the material.

**Brightspace** is the main course hub where you will access materials (e.g. the course outline, schedule, readings, links), complete quizzes, submit assignments, check your grades, and engage in forum discussions.

**CONTACT**

If you are unable to find the information in this outline or on Brightspace, you can reach me through the following means:

- email: [camo@uvic.ca](mailto:camo@uvic.ca) or phone: 250-721-7330
- office hours: 4:00-6:00 pm on Mondays in DTB B210 or through ZOOM (arranged ahead of time)

\*Note: I receive a high volume of messages and am often not able to respond immediately. I will aim to reply within 24 hours (not including weekends). *Please do not leave important matters to the last minute.*

The Marking Assistant for this course is Colby Harder ([colbyheddon@gmail.com](mailto:colbyheddon@gmail.com)).

## EVALUATION

You will be evaluated on the following required elements:

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Discussions             | 20% |
| Quizzes                 | 15% |
| Term Assignment (Op/Ed) | 30% |
| Final Exam              | 35% |

See Brightspace for more info and due dates.

## GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

| Grade | Grade point value | Grade scale | Description   |
|-------|-------------------|-------------|---|
| A+    | 9                 | 90-100%     | 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. |
| A     | 8                 | 85-89%      |   |
| A-    | 7                 | 80-84%      |   |
| B+    | 6                 | 77-79%      | Very good, good and solid performance. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one or more areas balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other areas.                                    |
| B     | 5                 | 73-76%      |   |
| B-    | 4                 | 70-72%      |   |
| C+    | 3                 | 65-69%      | Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a mere satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.   |
| C     | 2                 | 60-64%      |   |
| 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.   |

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

There is no single, required text for this course. Readings and other materials including journal articles, book chapters, videos, podcasts, and other sources will be found online (i.e. through [Brightspace](#) or the [UVic Library](#)).

**Please ensure you have access to the relevant readings during class sessions.**

**Reading effectively is absolutely essential for success in this course.** Along with lecture and lab material, assigned readings will be tested on the midterm and final. Be mindful that simply reading without engaging with the material is essentially useless in that the material has no chance of moving from short to long term memory. It is critical to mark up, highlight, take notes, and critically reflect while reading anything. While it seems cliché, investing time and effort in the short time you are here will pay off in often unexpected ways. Make a commitment to focus this semester!

## COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to revision; please check Brightspace for latest information & links to materials)

| Week (date)                  | Topic  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Week 1</b> Sep 8          | Welcome; course overview; teaching philosophy  |
| <b>Week 2</b> Sep 12-15      | BC Geography Primer  |
| <b>Week 3-5</b> Sep 19-Oct 6 | Physical Geography, Climate Crisis, & “Natural” Hazards                              |
| <b>Week 6</b> Oct 10-13      | No Class - Thanksgiving  |
| <b>Week 7-9</b> Oct 17-Nov 3 | Land, Conflict & Indigenous Resurgence   |
| <b>Week 10</b> Nov 7-10      | No Class - Reading Week  |
| <b>Week 11-12</b> Nov 14-24  | Social Issues (racism, political polarization, housing, public health/opioid crisis) |
| <b>Week 13</b> Nov 28-Dec 1  | Looking forward, Looking back  |
| <b>Week 14</b> Dec 5         | No Class - National Day of Action on Violence Against Women                          |

## LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Keep the following in mind to succeed in this course:

1. Think deeply about why you are here and what you want to get out of your experience at UVic in the short time you'll be here. Use this time wisely to develop skills and good habits - e.g. effective written and oral communication, critical thinking\*, problem solving, empathic listening, organization, perseverance, and initiative.
2. Such skill development and good habit formation is at least as important as content mastery in this course. While I want you to learn important things about BC's geography, I also want you to develop particular skills and habits. Keep in mind employers are much more concerned with your skills and habits than your marks.
3. Effective learning involves recognizing how the course material is directly relevant to your life – in this case how your own story is weaved into the story of BC and how you have the responsibility to shape its future.
4. \*Note: Critical thinking is often misrepresented as cynical, pessimistic, or “being against things”. In this class it should rather be understood in terms of healthy skepticism with received wisdom recognizing the world could / should be otherwise; ceaseless, piercing questioning of status quo “common sense”; trying to make important linkages and connections; recognizing and evaluating multiple perspectives and the values and assumptions underlying each (including our own); evaluating evidence and arguments (while recognizing power relations in knowledge claims), arriving at defensible positions on issues and working towards a more respectful, inclusive, just, and fair world.

## **GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO**

- Geography Department website: [uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/](http://uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/)
- Geography Department Chair: [geogchair@uvic.ca](mailto:geogchair@uvic.ca)
- Geography Undergraduate Advising: [geogadvising@uvic.ca](mailto:geogadvising@uvic.ca)

## **BRIGHTSPACE**

You will access the [Brightspace](#) site for important announcements, to submit assignments, and to access information handouts, instructor slides, readings, your grades, and other stuff. Guidance for navigating Brightspace is [available](#).

## **EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR**

I will do everything I can to create an effective, engaging learning environment. I invite you to be part of something special. Please be punctual, respectful, compassionate, and attentive.

## **POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Discussion posts, quizzes, and assignments will be accepted with a 5% late penalty per day.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on [academic integrity](#), including policies on cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission, and aiding others to cheat. If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For other resources on writing see the [Centre for Academic Communication](#).

## **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. The RCSD 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**

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 [uvic.ca/svp](http://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](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca)  
Web: [uvic.ca/svp](http://uvic.ca/svp)

## **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.

## **NOTES ON SELF CARE**

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)