# GEOG 219 - Geography of British Columbia

## FALL 2013 - COURSE INFO

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<tr>
<th>Dr. Cameron Owens</th>
<th><a href="mailto:camo@uvic.ca">camo@uvic.ca</a></th>
<th>(250) 721-7330</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Office Hours:</strong></td>
<td>M 14:30-16:30 in room David Turpin Building (DTB) B210</td>
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Cam Owens, PhD (SFU), has a wide range of interests in the fields of political ecology, sustainable community development and critical pragmatic theory. He is originally from Alberta but now treasures living on the coast (in Vic West) with his wife, Kristi - a green building consultant and son Finn - an aspiring Jedi.

**Course Schedule:** W, R, 15:30-16:50 Room: DTB A104

## OVERVIEW

This course introduces students to the physical and human geographies of British Columbia. Struggle is central to the province’s social experience recognized in persistent disputes around such matters as resource exploitation and environmental protection, Aboriginal land claims, immigration and urban development. Through engaging lectures, class discussions, videos, the text and a reading of the acclaimed story “The Golden Spruce” by John Vaillant, this course will carefully consider his historic and present struggles critically interrogating the values and assumptions of different groups vying to define our province and its future.

## REQUIRED READINGS

**Mandatory Texts:**


**Additional readings** will be posted on the course Moodle site ([http://moodle.uvic.ca/](http://moodle.uvic.ca/)). Note: You will access the Moodle site not only for required readings but also for important announcements, instructor notes, your grades and additional information.

**Reading effectively** is absolutely essential to 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) is essentially useless (i.e. the material has no chance of moving from short to long term memory).
**COURSE POLICIES**

**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. Be respectful to the instructor and colleagues. Note that the instructor receives a high volume of emails and may not always be able to respond in a timely manner. Be sure to plan ahead. Being at university is a unique and fleeting opportunity. Be sure to make the most of it!

**Late / Missing Work:** If for a legitimate reason (e.g. verifiable serious illness or family emergency) you miss a test you must notify the instructor before writing to make alternative arrangements. Failure to do so will result in a zero. Late assignments will be accepted up to 5 days after the deadline with a 10% per day penalty applied.

**Withdrawal:** For information regarding withdrawal from class, please see: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2011/FACS/UnIn/UARe/With.html for dates and other information.

**Academic Integrity:** Please review http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2011/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.

**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/.

**ASSESSMENT**

**Assessment:** Students will be evaluated on the following required elements:

1. Midterm Oct 16th (25%);
2. Golden Spruce Comprehension Quiz Oct 29th (15%)
3. Assignment - independently or in a group of 2-3, you will undertake a short written assignment concerning updating our text (to be discussed in class), due Nov 20 (20%);  
4. Participation - evaluation of contributions to in-class discussion and Moodle forum + filed trip attendance (15%);  
5. Final Exam - take home exam distributed on Dec 3 and due Dec 10 submitted to the Geog 309 dropbox next to the Geography office DTB B205 (25%)  

**Note on Undergraduate Grading:** Grading practices and procedures are guided by University policies specified in the Calendar. The 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 Chair may ask the instructor to justify or revise those grades. Instructors submit grades online, and those grades are available to students 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. see http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2012/GRAD/FARe/Grad.html
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Successful students will leave this course with:

1. The enhanced ability to think geographically (i.e. have a superior grasp of geographic concepts - region, place, human-environment interaction etc.- and how spaces / places are represented and contested), the recognition that geographic facts are contested social constructions and the recognition of the value of a critical approach to geographic inquiry.

2. A more sophisticated understanding of the physical, historical / cultural and political geographies of BC and the social / environmental challenges faced here.

3. 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 our own), defining questions and problems, evaluating evidence and arguments and arriving at defensible positions on issues.

4. Enhanced ability to learn from multiple sources - i.e. lectures, group discussions, video and literature.

5. Through the assignment: better research and creative thinking skills...

6. .... as well as an appreciation for and connection to our place and important place-based stories in our region.

7. Enhanced appreciation of the importance of a critical education for one’s own well-being and civic responsibility (i.e. recognition of one’s own linkages to societal challenges and solutions).

GUIDING IDEAS:

1. “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)

2. “Profound aversion to resting once and for all in any one total view of the world and enchantment with opposing points of view, refusal to be deprived of the stimulus of the enigmatic”. - Friedrich Nietzsche

3. “There is only perspective seeing, only a perspective “knowing”; and the more affects we allow to speak about a thing, the more eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our “concept” of this thing, our “objectivity”, be”. - Friedrich Nietzsche

4. “If you look at the science about what is happening on earth and aren’t pessimistic, you don’t understand the data. But if you meet the people who are working to restore this earth and the lives of the poor, and you aren’t optimistic you haven’t got a pulse. What I see everywhere in the world are ordinary people confronting despair, power and incalculable odds in order to restore some semblance of grace, justice and beauty in this world”. - Paul Hawken (2009)

5. “When a crisis occurs, the actions taken depend on the ideas that are lying around... [we need to] develop alternatives, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable”. - Milton Friedman
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Mapping BC (CH 1)</td>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Assignment Intro</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Physical Geography (2&amp;13)</td>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>Physical Setting</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Sept 24</td>
<td>Climate Change and “Natural” Hazards (3)</td>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Climate Change &amp; “Natural” Hazards</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>European Colonialism (4)</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>Geographies of Asian Settlement and Racism (6)</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>First Nations (5)</td>
<td>Oct 9</td>
<td>First Nations (5)</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Midterm</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td>Resource struggles (7 &amp; 15)</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Resource Struggles (7 &amp; 15)</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Forestry (8)</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Food (9&amp;12) (field trip)</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Mining &amp; Energy (10-11)</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Mining &amp; Energy</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Tourism (14) - Assignment due</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Nov 26</td>
<td>Urban Geographies (16)</td>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td>Urban Geographies (field trip)</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Review and Final Take-Home Exam</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>No class</td>
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