

Geography 697.01

PHILOSOPHY AND NATURE OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Fall 2022 Wednesdays 2-4:50 ES 332

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***Geographers** recognize that injustice is manifest in many different places, including in our Department and the University of Calgary, and across many scales, including metropolitan, regional, national, and global scales. The **Department of Geography** condemns longstanding and continuing injustices suffered on the basis of geographic location, class exploitation, and/or marginalized identity. We stand against racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, classism, xenophobia, able-bodied normativity, mental health profiling, and other forms of prejudice. <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/news/anti-racism-statement>*

Territorial Acknowledgement

The Department of Geography acknowledges and appreciates that we live on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. <https://www.ucalgary.ca/indigenous/cultural-protocol>

Course Description and Objectives

Philosophies of science and theories of social and physical processes underlie our understandings of how the world works, i.e., what the prime causes of various processes are, what entities are crucial to examine, how they relate to each other, how we can study and know them, etc. Philosophies of science and theories of social and physical processes are often inter-related: our ontological assumptions and epistemologies set the limits of what we believe it is possible to know.

Philosophy and theory, together, are foundational to knowledge construction. The crucial question, then, is not whether one relies on philosophy and theory, but rather what type of philosophy and what type of theory, and what the implications of one's philosophical and theoretical assumptions are for constructing geographical knowledge. Ontological (what we take to exist), epistemological (what we can know and how we can know it), and theoretical (how we explain phenomena) foundations vary among disciplines and often among their sub-fields. These differences result in different types of knowledge construction—and different blind spots.

Since the beginning of the 20th century there have been several major debates within geography, each representing shifts in the philosophical and theoretical bases for geographical research. Many of these debates are on-going—some of them hot and heavy. In this course we will examine the major debates and shifts that have taken place in geography over the past century and attempt to get different bodies of knowledge to “talk to each other”—not always an easy task. The assigned readings and class discussions should give you a good basis for understanding the wide range of research being conducted in geography today, help you reflect on the ontologies, epistemologies, and theories that may guide your own research, and foster an appreciation of engagement with perspectives that differ from your own, i.e., “engaged pluralism.”

Course Learning Outcomes

The Department of Geography is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes to which they contribute, and the expected level of achievement.

| Course Learning Outcomes | PLO(s)* | Level(s)** |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| Appraise the diverse schools of thought that have shaped the discipline of Geography. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |
| Distinguish among the epistemological and ontological assumptions underlying the schools of thought that have shaped Geography. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |
| Situate the discipline of Geography within broader debates around the construction of knowledge in the sciences and humanities. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |
| Analyze the insights and blind spots of different approaches to knowledge construction. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |
| Understand the importance of power relations and positionality in knowledge construction. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |
| Develop an appreciation for engagement with perspectives that differ from your own. | 1,2,4,5,7,8 | 3 |

**PLOs = Program Learning Outcomes: 1 = reflect and communicate diverse human-environment perspectives, 2 = identify and explain human-environment processes, 3 = implement sampling, data collection, analyses and communication methods, 4 = analyze spatial and temporal aspects of human-environment systems, 5 = employ knowledge, arguments, and methodologies for solving human-environment problems, 6 = evaluate geospatial data and manipulate it to create cartographic products, 7 = communicate geographic concepts using oral, written, graphic, and cartographic modes, and 8 = demonstrate literacy skills.*

***Levels: 1 = Introductory, 2 = Intermediate, and 3 = Advanced.*

Prerequisites

Consent of the Department.

Course Format and Grading

This course revolves around discussion of the assigned readings (listed below). Prior to each class you will need to read the assigned readings and write a brief (approximately 2 to 3 page) reaction paper. Your reaction papers should touch on the major issues raised in the readings and then focus on one or two issues that are of particular interest to you. Your reaction papers need not be comprehensive (in fact, they probably can't be comprehensive). You will most likely find some of the reading challenging, not unlike your first venture into statistics, GIS, economics, or chemistry. Please do not bang your head against the wall! I do not expect you to come to class with a perfect understanding of all the nuances of the readings. Make a good faith effort to understand the major points of the readings and then come to class prepared to ask questions and discuss. Your weekly reaction papers must be completed before the beginning of each class. They count for 30 per cent of your grade. Your lowest reaction paper score will be dropped. If you want to replace a reaction paper score, you will also have an opportunity to view and review a film (e.g., *The Botany of Desire*) which deals with a major issue in geographical knowledge construction; a film review may be used to replace another reaction paper score.

Additionally, you will be asked to give two article presentations over the course of the semester (a sign-up sheet will be circulated on the first day of class). Each student will choose two different weeks in which they will present one lengthy or two shorter articles, which may be taken from either the required or the optional reading list for that week. Presentations should be approximately 15-20 minutes in length. Together, these two presentations count for 10 per cent of your grade.

Discussion is extremely important in this seminar and you are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings. Class discussion is a significant part of your grade (20 per cent). Absence will be excused in the case of death in the family or illness (hopefully neither of these will occur!), with documentation, please.

The remainder of your grade (40 per cent) is based on an approximately 15 page (plus bibliography) seminar paper. Your paper may be on any topic of your choosing related to philosophical or theoretical issues in geography. You could, for instance, choose to write on debates over the role of structure and agency in socio-spatial processes, contrasting approaches to landscape interpretation, varieties of feminist geography, social understandings of climate change, prospects for the unification of human and physical geography, or innumerable other topics. You could also choose to pick one of the weekly topics of this course and address it in more detail. I highly recommend that you meet with me (preferably early in the semester) to discuss your topic so that we can be sure that it is well focused and do-able in one semester. I will be happy to provide you with

feedback on your paper--including comments on early drafts--over the course of the semester. Your paper should draw from at least 16 scholarly sources, at least 8 of which should be in addition to the assigned readings. The paper is due Monday, December 19.

Grading Assessment

| | |
|------------------------|-----|
| Weekly reaction papers | 30% |
| Article presentation | 10% |
| Class discussion | 20% |
| Seminar paper | 40% |

Grading Scheme

| | | |
|-----------|------|--|
| A+ | 4.00 | Outstanding performance |
| A | 4.00 | Excellent-superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject |
| A- | 3.70 | ↑ |
| B+ | 3.30 | |
| B | 3.00 | Good |
| B- | 2.70 | minimally satisfactory |
| C+ | 2.30 | unsatisfactory for graduate level study |
| and below | | |

Late assignments will be marked down 5% per day late. Exceptions will be made in the case of illness or other extenuating circumstances.

Required Texts (most can be inexpensively purchased used):

Hollis, Martin (2010) The Philosophy of Social Science, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (available at the University Bookstore)

Peet, Richard (1998) Modern Geographical Thought, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell.
(inexpensive used copies available on Amazon)

Sayer, Andrew (2010) Method in Social Science, New York and Oxon: Routledge.
(inexpensive used copies available on Amazon; you can probably find a pdf on-line as well)

Additionally, many required readings will be posted on D2L.

Highly Recommended Supplemental Texts:

You may find it helpful to read the short overviews of the major reading topics in the Dictionary of Human Geography. These overviews should help you to identify the issues to focus on in the readings and are an invaluable resource for graduate students. The AAG International Encyclopedia of Geography: People, Earth, Environment, and Technology (2016) is available from our library (online)--it is now a standard reference source for Geography. You'll find it useful!

Livingstone, D. (1992) The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise, Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. (**very highly recommended**)

Gregory, Derek, Ron Johnston, Geraldine Pratt, and Michael Watts (eds) (2009) The Dictionary of Human Geography, Oxford and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell. (you should be able to **find a pdf on-line**)

Agnew, J., D. Livingstone, and A. Rogers (eds) (1996) Human Geography: an Essential Anthology, Oxford: Blackwell.

Barnes, T. and E. Sheppard (eds) (2019) Spatial Histories of Radical Geography, Oxford: Wiley.

Castree, N., A. Rogers, D. Sherman (eds) (2005) Questioning Geography: Fundamental Debates, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell. (an upper level undergraduate book, but a good introduction)
<http://www.muthar-alomar.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Questioning-Geography.pdf>

Gregory, Derek (1993) Geographical Imaginations, Oxford and Malden: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1997) Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference, Oxford and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Livingstone, D. (2003) Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Additional Course Information

If you are unable to complete a component of this course on time, please contact me as soon as possible. Valid reasons for not meeting course requirements in a timely fashion will be considered.

In the event that you miss a midterm or any course work due to illness, supporting documentation, such as a medical note or a statutory declaration may be requested <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html> Please refer to <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals/student-faq> for frequently asked questions concerning the provision of a medical note/statutory declaration.

Exams & Deferrals <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams>

Supplementary Fees

There are no supplementary fees.

Referencing Standard

The APA (American Psychological Association) is preferred for all written work presented in this class: <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/apa-citation-guide> However, any commonly used academic reference format will be accepted, e.g., Chicago Manual of Style.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and receive a tuition fee refund is **Thursday, September 15th, 2022**. The last day to add or swap a course for Fall 2022 is **Friday, September 16th, 2022**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Wednesday, December 7th, 2022**. Please note that the University is closed on Friday, September 30th; Monday, October 10th; and Friday, November 11th, 2022.

For additional detailed course information posted by the instructor, visit the course Desire2Learn page online at <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home>.

Resources and Writing Support

Please note writing support resources provided by the Student Success Centre <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support> and the library <https://libguides.ucalgary.ca/guides/>

University of Calgary Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity is the foundation of the development and acquisition of knowledge and is based on values of honesty, trust, responsibility, and respect. We expect members of our community to act with integrity. The University Calendar includes a statement on the principles of conduct expected of all members of the university community (including students, faculty, administrators, any category of staff, practicum supervisors, and volunteers), whether on or off university property. This statement applies in all situations where members of the university community are acting in their university capacities. All members of the university community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the principles of conduct statement, which is available at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Student Misconduct

The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect.

Academic dishonesty is not an acceptable activity at the University of Calgary, and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section in the University Calendar at:

www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html. Often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are (1) presenting another student's work as your own, (2) presenting an author's work or ideas as your own without adequate citation, and (3) using work completed for another course. Such activities will not be tolerated in this course, and students suspected of academic misconduct will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the calendar at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/student-academic-misconduct-procedure>

For students wishing to know more about what constitutes plagiarism and how to properly cite the work of others, the Department of Geography recommends that they attend Academic Integrity workshops offered through the Student Success Centre: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>

Instructor Intellectual Property

Information on Instructor Intellectual Property can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/intellectual-property-policy>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation in Alberta disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, such as outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc. Term assignments will be returned to students individually, during class or during the instructor's office hours; if students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they must provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Research

Students are neither expected, nor allowed, to participate in research involving human subjects as part of this course.

Posting of Grades and Picking-up of Assignments

Graded assignments will be returned by the instructor or teaching assistant personally during scheduled lecture or laboratory periods, unless they are made available electronically through the course D2L webpage. Grades and assignments will not be available at the Department of Geography's main office and assignments cannot be dropped off at the Department Office.

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations, according to the university policies and procedures listed in the University Calendar.

The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/accommodation-students-disabilities-procedure>

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need, preferably in writing to their instructor or the Department Head (email: freeman@ucalgary.ca).

Learning Technologies and Requirements

While we have no plans to conduct online course activities, the evolving characteristics of the Covid-19 pandemic makes a return to online learning a (hopefully unlikely) possibility. In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology.

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security and malware updates
- A current and updates web browser
- Webcam (built in or external)
- Microphone and speaker (built in or external) or headset with microphone
- Broadband internet connection

Use of internet and electronic devices in class

Discussion is a very important part of class. Questions will be posed and ideas and information solicited from you. This enables us to learn from each other. For this approach to be maximally successful, it is important that you come to class prepared (having read the assigned readings) and ready to discuss the topic of the day. Many students take notes in class using laptops and occasionally use laptops to look up information related to class discussion, which is fine. However, please do not use your laptop or phone in class for purposes unrelated to class, e.g., checking email, texting, watching movies, facebook, etc. Doing work unrelated to class disturbs others and should be done outside of class.

Guidelines for Zoom Sessions

At present there are no plans to utilize Zoom for this course. If a new wave of Covid-19 should require a return to online learning, the following will apply:

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a “live” video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor’s permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith and respect (as per the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment.

Please be mindful of how your behavior in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g. Student Non Academic Misconduct Policy). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your Zoom sessions visit:

<https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review a recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class – such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session.

Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Media Recording

There are no plans to record student presentations for this course, unless necessitated by a return to online learning or to accommodate specific student accessibility needs; if recording of student presentations becomes necessary, recording will be guided by the University of Calgary policies listed here:

https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf

Course evaluations and student feedback

Student feedback will be sought at the end of the course through the standard University Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) and Faculty course evaluation forms. If, however, you have helpful suggestions before the end of the semester, by all means please speak to me about them.

Accessibility

For most classes visual information will not be an integral component of communication. However, student presentations will often include visual presentations. If you have need of captioning, please let me know early in the semester and we can arrange for the use of YuJa captioning:

<https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/category/yuja/getting-started-yuja/>

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Act.

Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness, and academic success and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support, or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370, MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

Students requiring assistance are encouraged to email the **Student at Risk line** if they or others appear to need wellness assistance: sar@ucalgary.ca For more immediate response, please call: 403-210-9355 and select option #2.

Sexual Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/sexual-and-gender-based-violence-policy>

Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation

- Student Union VP Academic 403-220-3911, suvpaca@ucalgary.ca
- Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts – 403-220-3913, arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
- Student Ombuds Office information can be found at: www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. Assembly points are designed to establish a location for information updates from the emergency responders to the evacuees; from the evacuated population to the emergency responders. For more information, see the University of Calgary's Emergency Management website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management> In the unlikely event of an emergency evacuation, our Assembly Point is the **ICT Food Court**.

Campus Safewalk

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day, to any location on Campus, including the LRT station, parking lots, bus zones, and university residences. Contact Campus Security at 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security officer will accompany you to your campus destination.