

GEO 293  
Approaches to Research in Human Geography  
Fall 2019  
M/W 10:00 – 11:30  
EV3 3412

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University of Waterloo  
Faculty of Environment

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**Office hours:** Mondays 12 pm to 2 pm or by appointment

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**Course description:**

This course will introduce students to the tools of doing, consuming and communicating research: how to ask a good question; how to answer a question; how to critically read and synthesize literature; how to judge the source and quality of evidence; how to frame a research problem; how to operationally define and measure the factors necessary to answer a good research question; how to report the results of that research well. It's a lot to do in a very short time! And you may not be ready for all this BUT the goal really will be to INTRODUCE you to these aspects of research in order that you may apply them across your other courses over the next few years AND BEYOND.

**LEARN:** Users can login to LEARN via: <http://learn.uwaterloo.ca/> use your WatIAM/Quest username and password. LEARN is an important component of this course, so please be sure to login for course updates and information. You will find lots of useful information there AND that's where grades will be kept. I will also use LEARN for any announcements/updates so keep an eye out!

**Required Textbook:**

Bryman A., Bell E. (2019) *Social Research Methods (5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Edition)* Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Yes, the textbook is required. You MUST have a copy of the text book, and you must read it, in order to successfully complete this course.

**Course Format and Evaluation:**

We will operate with an active learning environment in this course. We will have several guest speakers in attendance throughout the term. These people are experts in their field and are outstanding contributors to the science around methodology and methods.

It is important to note that all material covered in the course (lectures, readings, guest speakers, films) is eligible for testing on exams.

### **Course structure:**

Do you know what a 'flipped' classroom is? The definition of flipped learning is:

...a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space, and the resulting group space is transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the instructor guides students as they **apply** concepts and **engage creatively** in the subject matter (*Flipped Learning Network (2014) The Four Pillars of Flip*).

So, that's what we're going to do! Students will review lecture material and course text reading assignments **PRIOR** to arriving in class. Class time will be spent **applying** the concepts and ideas gained through the pre-class preparation in order to meet the overall learning objectives of the course.

This class will meet twice per week for 80 minutes each time. We also have the luxury of tutorial times that are in the schedule and that **CAN** and **WILL** be used on occasion for: extra sessions, class presentations, and group work time.

Throughout the entire term, you are expected to be a **present** and **active** participant in every class. The evaluation components will reflect active participation in the course at all stages.

### **Elements of Evaluation:**

Assessment	% Final	Comments
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Activity	Grade	
Class participation	20%	<p>Class participation is an essential component of a flipped classroom. This involves being present in class, being an active contributor, and being a helpful colleague.</p> <p>This grade will reflect a combination of <b>attendance</b>, <b>review submissions</b>, and <b>additional participation</b> throughout the term.</p>
Completion of ethics tutorial*	5%	<p>If completed by October 13<sup>th</sup>, you will receive the full 5%; If you complete between October 13<sup>th</sup> and October 30<sup>th</sup>, you will receive 2%; after this date, you will receive 0 on this assignment.</p> <p>Once complete, you will receive a certificate. You will e-mail a copy of that certificate to the TA.</p>
Research question assignment	10%	This will be done in small groups <b>due Sept. 25th at beginning of class.</b>
Literature review assignment	10%	This will be done in small groups. <b>Due October 21 at beginning of class</b>
Survey assignment	10%	This will be done in small groups. <b>Due November 4 at beginning of class</b>
Research proposal (presentation)	10%	This will be done in small groups.
Final Exam - TAKE HOME	35%	This will be done individually. <b>Due Monday December 16 by 11:55 pm via LEARN</b>

**Participation:** you will be assigned a grade that reflects your contribution in class. It will be a function of BOTH your presence in class AND your contributions to the

discussions and interactions with other students as well as the one-page review submissions presented to the TA as your ticket for entry into each class. These will be the form of a review of the key concepts in the chapter IN YOUR OWN WORDS to indicate that you have reviewed the totality of materials required to actively engage in the class activities.

**Written assignments** must be typed and double-spaced. Please include a title page with all students' names and numbers, the title of the paper and the date. All work is due on the date stated, at the beginning of class, unless otherwise arranged **in advance**. Late penalty: 5% each day after the due date (weekends included). Please ensure you save an electronic copy of your work just in case!

\* The link for the ethics tutorial is:  
[www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/).  
The tutorial takes around 3 hours to complete, but you must register with your @uwaterloo.ca address on the site - this process can take a few hours to be completed on their end, so don't leave this till the last minute. Once you complete, **save your certificate** (it will clearly identify your name) in a safe place, and e-mail a copy to the TA.

**\*\*\*EXTREMELY IMPORTANT INFORMATION\*\*\*PLEASE READ THIS\*\*\***

**Accommodations and Access:** I want this class to be open and accessible to everyone, and to be a safe, welcoming, and collegial environment. So, please feel free to sit where you like, eat snacks, use a laptop, and come and go from the classroom when you need to, so long as none of these activities disturb the learning experience of others. I recognize that classroom learning can be challenging, and I will try and reduce barriers to access in general and also work to meet any specific accommodation needs you may have. You can approach me directly, after class, in my office hours, or via email to discuss any accommodation. Some specific accommodations, such as note taking, extended test writing times, learning technology support, and others can be arranged at the AccessAbility office (located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, (<https://uwaterloo.ca/disability-services/>)). Please register with this office at the beginning of each academic term, if you feel accommodation is required.

**Mental Health:** Pretty much every student has or will face some type of mental health challenge in their time at

university. There are many types of physical and emotional challenges that can make it difficult to do your best work and enjoy your studies. **You are not alone, and help is available from many different places.** If you need help, go immediately to the place you feel most comfortable; your residence don, your friends, your professors or to Counselling Services <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services>, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the new Needles Hall expansion. Counselling Services is an inclusive, non-judgmental, and confidential space for anyone to seek support. They offer confidential counseling for a variety of areas including anxiety, stress management, depression, grief, substance use, sexuality, relationship issues, and much more. Above all, seek help – these are challenges that you do not need to face alone.

### **Academic Integrity Policies**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/.](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties that may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is grounds. A student who believes he/she has grounds for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

**What does a grade mean?** Students come to the University of Waterloo from a variety of backgrounds, where numeric grades may not be used, or have very different meanings. The following table gives a general definition for what type of work constitutes a particular grade.

Assigned Grades	Description
80-100	Grades in this category signal a sign of excellence and are not something that should be expected for work that simply meets the requirements of the assignment. In this category, a student has demonstrated a full understanding of the subject matter, has capacity to analyze, has demonstrated critical thinking, shows evidence of creative thinking, familiarity with literature and previous work in area, highly developed communication and presentation skills. The work is of outstanding quality according to the criteria established for evaluation.
70-79	Student has shown good comprehension of subject matter, evidence of critical and creative thought, familiarity with literature and previous work in subject area, competence in communication and presentation skills, but none of the above to the degree found in A category. The work is of very good quality according to evaluation criteria
60-69	Student has demonstrated some understanding of subject matter, can assimilate and communicate basic aspects of the subject matter. The work is of satisfactory or adequate quality according to evaluation criteria
50-59	Student has demonstrated minimal understanding of the subject matter, poorly developed communication skills, inability to apply subject matter understanding in other contexts, little evidence of critical or creative thinking. The work is of unsatisfactory but passable quality according to evaluation criteria.
0-49	Inadequate understanding of subject matter, failed to complete course requirements, no demonstration of critical thought, communication skills very poor. The work is clearly of unacceptable quality according to the evaluation criteria.

#### A NOTE ABOUT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can

result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/). The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

***The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their Waterloo email and course websites weekly during the term***

#### **CLASS SCHEDULE:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Reading/preparation</b>
Sept. 4	Introduction - Who are we, what are we doing here, what is a flipped classroom, and what is research?	
Sept. 9	<b>GUEST</b> - Ethics - Karen Peiters, UW Office of Research Ethics	Text, Chapter 3 – <b>REVIEW of chapter 3 required for entry to class</b>
Sept. 11	Leadership & learning styles - the importance for good research	

Sept. 16	What are the SDGs and what is THE research process?	Text, Chapter 1 LEARN, Oligies and Isms slides; Oligies and Isms table  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
Sept. 18	Project Management  <b>GUEST</b> - Ms. Anne Burgoyne, Project Management Expert	
Sept. 23	The research process - wait, what was the question?	Text, Chapter 2 LEARN, research process slides  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
Sept. 25	WHAT is a literature review and WHY do I have to do it and TO WHAT END???  Literature reviews <i>on the hot seat</i>  Dr. Buba Manjang and Ms. Roxanne Springer to speak on their literature review experience	Text, 363-365 LEARN, Lit Review Slides  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>  <b>Bring</b> your very inquisitive mind to ask lots of questions about literature reviews!
Sept. 30	Conceptualization, operationalization - what is what? How do we define stuff?	LEARN, Conceptualization and operationalization slides  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
October 2	Choosing a method: Quantitative: Surveys	Text, Chapters 4 LEARN, Survey Slides



		<b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>  <b>Bring</b> a copy of EITHER a survey that you've recently completed OR a media report of some type of survey results
October 7	Designing a 'good' survey	Text, Chapter 5, pp 96-122  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
October 9	Design a research question and analytical strategy around a secondary data set	Text, Chapter 5 pp. 122 - 132 LEARN, slides on Secondary Data  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
October 14	<b>Thanksgiving - no class</b>	
October 16	<b>Study day - no class</b>	
October 18	<b>FRIDAY - make up class for study break</b>	Literature review boot camp
October 21	Qualitative research - interviews	Text, Chapter 9 & 11  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
October 23	Qualitative research - focus groups	
October 28	Qualitative - (non) participant observation and other stuff	Text, Chapter 10 & 12  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
October 30	Sampling - how to draw a sample	Text, Chapter 7

		LEARN, Sampling slides  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
November 4	Group presentation check in	
November 6	Writing up your research in a clear and concise and understandable manner - a critical appraisal exercise - qualitative	Text, Chapter 17 LEARN slides, How to Read  <b>REVIEW of these materials required for entry to class</b>
November 11	Writing up your research in a clear and concise and understandable manner - a critical appraisal exercise - quantitative	
November 13	<b>GUEST:</b> How to give an effective presentation (Dr. Kristin Brown, Research Associate, Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo)	
November 18	Class presentations	
November 20	Class presentations	
November 25	Class presentations	
November 27	Class presentations	Introduce take home exam -  <b>Due Monday December 16 by 11:55 pm via LEARN</b>
December 2	Final Class	Q & A re: course & final exam
<b><i>The instructor reserves the right to shift things around in this lecture schedule with due notice to students via class announcements as well as postings on LEARN.</i></b>		