



Geography & Planning
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

MA Human Geography Core Course

Fall 2015

Tuesdays 12-3 pm

Sidney Smith Hall 2124A

Instructor

Sarah Wakefield

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Office Hours: Fridays 1:30-3 or by appointment

Course description

This graduate seminar will provide an introduction to different theoretical perspectives and debates in human geography. It seeks to encourage students to think critically about geographical debates – and about their own work – by exploring different perspectives and lenses through which key geographical concepts can be understood. Students are then asked to apply these approaches as they discuss a series of core geographic concepts.

The course will also feature discussion of what life is like in graduate school, and the skills and experiences needed to thrive. In addition, it will include engagement with both academic and non-academic career trajectories, including how skills and experiences from graduate school can be applied in policy deliberations, activism, government and non-profit work.

Expected learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe major theoretical approaches in contemporary human geography, and explain how each approach alters understandings of core geographical concepts;
- Articulate their own positions in relation to these core concepts, using language that is both consistently respectful and constructively critical;
- Communicate a future research agenda that is clearly positioned in relation to core geographical concepts and approaches; and
- Conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner, consistent with the scholarly values of academic rigour, self-reliance, empathy, and integrity.

¹ To get to UC B202 from Sidney Smith Hall: cross St. George and go through the archway into the Sir Dan quad. Go straight ahead to the next archway – once under the arch, go through the left-hand doorway (if you reach the interior courtyard you have gone too far). Take the staircase up to the 2nd floor, and then turn right – my office is the first door on the left, just past the small classroom. Note that this location is NOT accessible: I am happy to make arrangements to meet elsewhere if need be!

Assignments & Evaluation

Assignment	Due date	% of Grade
Reading reflections	Sundays before class	35%
Initial research proposal	Tuesday September 27 th	15%
Peer review of proposals	Tuesday October 11 th	20%
Final research proposal	Friday December 9 th	25%
Class participation	ongoing throughout course	5%

More information on each assignment/mode of evaluation will be provided in class and on the course portal (see below).

Accessing materials and handing in work

The course syllabus, descriptions of assignments, and other materials can be found on the course's portal website. The portal will also be used for submitting course assignments – no paper copies will be required. For more information on using the portal, see <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>.

Readings for this course are available online through the University of Toronto library system. Any additional readings will be available on reserve at the Robarts Library, and/or circulated in class. A schedule for the readings will be provided.

Late penalties, extensions and accommodations

A late penalty of 5% of the total value of the assignment will be deducted from the grade per day for late work (including weekend days). Extensions will be granted in the case of illness or other emergencies, with appropriate documentation.

Accessibility needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability or long-term illness, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact *Accessibility Services* as soon as possible.

Academic integrity

Students in graduate studies are expected to commit to the highest standards of integrity and to understand the importance of protecting and acknowledging intellectual property. It is assumed that they bring to their graduate studies a clear understanding of how to cite references appropriately, thereby avoiding plagiarism. Other academic offences include submitting the same paper for different courses, and concocting facts or references to sources. Please refer to the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* for more information.