DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY and PLANNING
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

JPG111HF: Research Practice in Geography and Planning
Fall 2018

Class: Monday 2-4pm, Sidney Smith Hall, Room SSH 5016

Instructors: Dr. Jun Zhang  Dr. Christine Gibb
Email:  zhang@geog.utoronto.ca  christine.gibb@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: Tue 10-11am; Thurs 10-12pm  By appointment on Skype or phone

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This graduate course introduces students to the philosophical and methodological approaches to research in geography and planning. Through seminar and lecture modules, students will acquire an understanding of different research paradigms, quantitative and qualitative methods, and the knowledge necessary for developing sound and reflective geographic and planning-based research strategies. The goals of the course will be to provide students with the knowledge needed to effectively evaluate research, understand the process of research design, formulate research questions and develop a geographic and/or planning-based research proposal.

This course has an approach to research practice that is grounded in critical social theory. In learning about different approaches to research practice in geography and planning, we will explore how theory, questions and method are intertwined.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Ponderation</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation and weekly written responses</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaired class session</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research proposal outline</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Peer comments on outline + draft   | 10%         | Outline: Week 5  
|                                    |             | Draft: Week 11 |
| Research proposal                  | 35%         | Week 12       |
| Research proposal presentation     | 10%         | Weeks 11 and 12 |

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation: We expect all students to have thoughtful and respectful engagement with everyone in the class, to actively participate in each class, and to approach this course (and your topic) with enthusiasm.
**Weekly written reading responses:** Students are expected to complete all readings and submit weekly reading responses in advance of class, and to attend each class well prepared to engage in critical discussion.

Each week, starting from Week 2, write a 1-page, single-spaced response to the readings. In the first paragraph, summarize the main contribution of the readings. This is a useful, practical exercise aimed to help you develop skills in writing concise, on-point summaries of scholarly texts. In the second paragraph, write a critical reflection of the readings. We encourage you to be reflective and to consider readings in relation to each other and to broader methodological and theoretical debates in geography and planning.

Due: Reading responses must be posted to the course Quercus page by noon on the Sunday before each class. Late reading responses will not be accepted.

**Chaired class session:** Each student will Chair the discussion for one class. The Chair will co-facilitate the class by leading the initial discussion. The Chair is responsible for preparing key points that extend our critical analysis of the weekly readings or themes (not a mere summary of the readings), and for posing 2-3 questions that will help to guide class discussion. Chairing a class will help to improve your facilitation skills and is another opportunity to learn from each other in a supportive environment.

**Research Proposal outline:** The Research Proposal outline should include: i) introduction (introduce the topic and justify its importance, including its relevance in geography and/or planning); ii) research question(s); iii) description of proposed methods; iv) the timeline for conducting the research. (2 pages, single-spaced)

Due Week 4 (Oct 1): Please bring a hardcopy to class.

**Peer review of research proposal outline + draft:** For this assignment, you will review and comment on the research proposal outline and draft of one of your peers. Further instructions on peer review will be discussed in class, and resources will be made available on Quercus.

Due Week 5 (Oct 8): Please bring a hardcopy to class.

**Research Proposal:** Research Proposals should include: i) an introduction to the topic, including a justification for the topic, and its relevance to geography and/or planning; ii) a statement of the research question(s) to be addressed; iii) a discussion of the research context for your topic; iv) an overview of the literature and a statement of the relevance of your research to this body of work; v) a detailed discussion of research methods and a timeline for completion. In addition, the proposal should address issues related to rigor in research, positionality and the politics of representation. Research proposals must engage extensively with theoretical and methodological literature beyond the course reading list. (20-25 pages, double-spaced)

Due Week 10 (draft-Nov 19), Week 11 (review of a peer’s draft-Nov 26), Week 12 (final-Dec 3): Please bring a hardcopy to class.

**Research Proposal presentation:** The last two classes (or three, depending on class size) will be dedicated to Research Proposal presentations. Each student will give a 10-minute oral presentation
on their Research Proposal and have opportunity to answer audience questions (5 minutes). This is a
great opportunity to work on oral presentation skills and to obtain constructive feedback on your
Research Proposal.

COURSE OUTLINE:
Note: Readings may change or be substituted depending on the interests of the class.
Advance notice will be given of any changes to readings.

Week 1: September 10 (Jun)

Introduction and Overview


Week 2: September 17 (Jun)

The Field, Theory and Praxis


Week 3: September 24 (Jun)

Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Research


Week 4: October 1 (Jun)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL OUTLINE DUE

Research Ethics


University of Toronto: Ethics Review (overview of forms and process).

Workshop – Peer review

Exchange proposal outline with partner for commenting

OCTOBER 8: THANKSGIVING MONDAY, NO CLASS

Week 5: October 15 (Jun)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL OUTLINE PEER REVIEW DRAFT DUE

Fundamentals of Comparative Methods


**Week 6: October 22 (Jun)**

**Archives**


**Week 7: October 29 (Chris)**

**Linking Theory, Questions and Method**


**Week 8: November 5 (Chris)**

**Feminist Approaches to Research**


**Week 9: November 12 (Chris)**

**Interviews and Focus Groups**


**Workshop - Interview**

**Week 10: November 19 (Chris)**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL PEER REVIEW DRAFT DUE**

**Ethnographic Research**


Exchange proposal draft with partner for commenting

Supplementary:


Week 11: November 26 (Chris)

PEER REVIEW COMMENTS ON RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

Research Proposal presentations
Visual Methodologies


Lucchesi, A. (Forthcoming) “Mapping missing and murdered indigenous women.” Gender, Place and Culture.

Supplementary:


Week 12: December 3 (Chris)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE

Research Proposal presentations

Writing and Disseminating Research


Supplementary Sources:

There are numerous edited collections, special editions and journal articles that focus on research
methodologies and practice. Here are some supplementary sources that you may find helpful, however we encourage you to research further sources that best pertain to your own research interests and practice.


*Geographical Review*, Special Issue: Doing Fieldwork, No. ½, (Jan-April, 2001)

*Professional Geographer*, Special Issue: 1994

*Geoforum*, Special Issue: 1999

*Progress in Human Geography*, reports on methodologies


Support and Accommodation

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a
disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials,
please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or
paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without proper use of
citation (and quotations marks when using an author's words). Students also should not be
submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought,
without first discussing with the instructor. Please consult the SGS policy on Academic Integrity
(http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx) for further
information and check the 'How not to plagiarize' website:

http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize

Copyright in instructional settings

If a student wishes to record (tape, video, photograph, etc.) any lecture presentations or other similar
materials provided by the instructor, the instructors written consent must be obtained beforehand.
Otherwise, all such reproduction is infringement of copyright and prohibited. In the case of private
use by students with disabilities, the instructor’s consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.