

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING GEOGRAPHY ESSAYS

The following guidelines must be followed precisely. It would be a mistake to decide that one of the requirements stated here is not really important.

If you are unsure of the precise meaning of any of these guidelines, consult the instructor. It is in your interest to get the essay right the first time.

Bad spelling can be lethal. For example, the greedy Seriph of Al-Ybi was once cursed by a badly educated deity and for some days everything he touched turned to Glod, which happened to be the name of a small dwarf from a mountain community hundreds of miles away who found himself magically dragged to the kingdom and relentlessly duplicated. Some two thousand Glods later the spell wore off. These days, the people of Al-Ybi are renowned for being unusually short and bad-tempered.

[Witches Abroad]

FORM

- 1 All essays must be typewritten or computer printed. All print must be double spaced and on one side of the paper only. Use one inch (25 mm) margins all round. Pages (except the first) must be numbered.
- 2 The title page must show your name, the course title and number, the date of submission, and the *exact* wording of the essay as given on the list of essay topics. ***Do not change the title in any way. Do not make up your own title.***
- 3 There must be a list of References (bibliography) at the end of the essay. See **Referencing** below for the format to be used. ***No other format will be accepted.***
- 4 Maximum essay length will be specified for each course. In each case, maps, diagrams and the References list are not included in the word count. *Essays longer than the maximum will be penalised in proportion to the excess length (e.g. an essay limited to 1600 words that is 2000 words long would lose 25% of its mark).*
- 5 An excess of spelling and/or simple grammatical errors will result in loss of marks. This includes uncorrected typing mistakes. Do not use contractions (don't; won't; can't) unless they occur in direct quotations.

The confusion of the possessive “its” (no apostrophe) with the contractive “it’s” (with apostrophe) is an unequivocal sign of illiteracy and sets off a simple Pavlovian “kill” response in the average stickler. The rule is: the word “it’s” (with apostrophe) stands for “it is” or “it has”. If the word does not stand for “it is” or “it has” then what you require is “its”. *This is extremely easy to grasp.* Getting your itses mixed up is the greatest solecism in the world of punctuation. No matter that you have a PhD and have read all of Henry James twice. If you still persist in writing, “Good food at it’s best”, you deserve to be struck by lightning, hacked up on the spot and buried in an unmarked grave.

(Lynne Truss: *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*: Gotham Books, New York 2003: 43-44)

Avoid using American spellings (center, behavior) unless they appear in direct quotations. **If you are using a spell-check program, be sure to set the language to Canadian English** (this is done through the *Tools* menu in both WordPerfect and MS Word).

CONTENT

- 6 The essay must be an answer to one of the questions from the list of Essay Topics. Do not answer only part of the question. Do not change the question to something you would rather write about.
- 7 There must be an introduction, in which you explain what you understand the question to mean and in which you outline your approach to answering it. Do not put your conclusions in the introduction.
- 8 You must use at least eight (Year 2 courses), ten (Year 3 courses) or twelve (Year 4 courses) **academic** references in writing your essay, at least two of which must be articles from journals. Dictionaries, encyclopaedias and similar books of reference, newspapers and popular magazines such as Maclean's and National Geographic do **not** count as academic references (they may be used if relevant, but do not count as one of the required number). Internet sources may be used but do not count towards requirements unless evidence is provided to the instructor *before submission* that the source is a recognised academic electronic journal. Lecture notes (for this or any other course) are *not* an acceptable source unless the material is clearly based on the instructor's own unpublished research (in which case it is referenced as "Personal communication from..."). Otherwise find the sources from which the lecturer got the information. Personal communications do not count towards the required total. Remember that this is a *Geography* course and that geographical books and articles are likely to be most useful. **There must be evidence that the references were actually used in the compilation of the essay.**
- 9 The body of the answer contains the main argument. This should follow a logical sequence of topics and not jump from point to point. It is often useful to organise the essay under subheadings, though this is not a requirement.
- 10 There must be a conclusion, in which you summarise the main points of your argument, and relate them back to your introduction. It is quite legitimate to conclude that there are two or more possible answers to the question. Your approach to or conclusions about any question do not have to be the same as those of the instructor.
- 11 There must be evidence of some reasonable degree of personal input into the essay — the essay must be more than a string of extracts from the literature put down in order. You are not expected to uncover new information nor to develop new theories. You **are** expected to comment on the sources used, to weigh up rival arguments, and to draw your own conclusions. The essay must show some of your thoughts, as well as those collected from others. Putting arguments into your own words, and giving examples of general points made, all help.
- 12 Maps and diagrams must be used where appropriate. They should not be used simply for illustration, but to explain something in the answer more clearly and/or concisely. It is

not always necessary to use maps or diagrams — but failure to use them where the need is obvious will be cause for loss of marks.

PLAGIARISM

- 13 Every piece of information obtained from another source must be acknowledged when used. ***This applies not only to direct quotations, but also to any piece of factual information, any map or diagram, any distinctive theory or argument, any idea taken from any source*** (book, journal article, newspaper, television program etc). Rewriting part of a book or article in your own words, or redrawing a map, does not make it your own work. It must still be acknowledged. ***Listing the source in the References does not constitute full and proper acknowledgement.*** The only exception to this need for acknowledgement is information widely available from many different sources (e.g the date of Confederation, the total population of Canada).
- 14 ***FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE SOURCES FULLY AND PROPERLY IS PLAGIARISM.*** This is a serious academic offence which carries serious penalties. Copying someone else's essay is also plagiarism: this includes two students sharing the work on an essay and copying the parts done by the other. An essay should be your own work — though it is quite acceptable to ask someone else to read it over for you once completed. See the University Calendar under *Regulations on Cheating* and also the *Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures*. **Any essay not fully and properly acknowledged will automatically be given a mark of zero.**

REFERENCING

When you draw upon the work of others, whether it be a direct quotation, an idea, a set of data or a map, it must be referenced. The system to be used in this course for referencing such materials is one that closely resembles the system used by *The Canadian Geographer*, the scholarly journal of the Canadian Association of Geographers. A number of modifications of the Canadian Geographer style are incorporated into our LU Geography system so you should take time to review the following pages.

The art of referencing can be divided into two stages: using references in the body of the text and providing a detailed list of the references cited in the text at the end of the document.

Alert students may note that the system described here is slightly different from that used by the Instructor in his list of readings. That is because the Department system, devised for

Honours Thesis use, was a compromise amongst Geography faculty. Dr Dilley stubbornly continues to use his own preferred system for his own use – but expects students to use the official method.

In-text Recognition of Sources

The standard technique is to refer to sources by the author's last name followed by the year of publication. The simplest case involves single author papers. Here are two examples.

Rather, there is a need to emphasize the flow of knowledge and competence generated by FDI in a region (Ivarsson 1999).

Ironside (1990) observed that the fundamental objective of economic development in northern Aboriginal communities is one of organizing the collective resources, ingenuity and communal spirit of neighbouring small communities which are not viable individually.

When a paper or book you wish to reference has two authors, list both authors in the order in which they appear in journal.

Economies develop along pathways or trajectories: the condition of the industry in each time period bears the seeds of its condition in the following period (Nelson and Winter 1982).

When a source has three or more authors, convention is to name only the first author followed by the Latin phrase “et al.” meaning “and others”.

The connection between elderly migration and income is well-noted by both Wiseman (1979) and Biggar et al. (1987) in their studies of interregional patterns of elderly migration in the United States.

In situations where you wish to back up a point by referring to several sources, you should list the sources in alphabetical order according the surname of the author (or first author if more than one for a given paper). Note below that Baker precedes Novak which precedes Warnes.

Gerontological research has begun to advocate a non-pathological perspective of the elderly and the aging process (Baker 1988; Novak 1985; Warnes 1987).

You may run into situations where you want to reference multiple papers all by the same author. In such a situation, the sources should be listed in chronological order beginning with the earliest date of publication. If there are two publications in the same year, you may distinguish between them by adding a letter to the date. Here is an example.

During earlier research which sampled the views of port authorities, urban planners, real estate developers and government officials (Hoyle 1994; Hoyle 1995a, Hoyle 1995b) it was apparent that an important element missing from the investigation was the input of community groups.

If a direct quotation or a specific fact or item of information is used, a third piece of information, the page number, must be included. The following example shows a direct quote from page 8 of a 1986 article by Wilkie.

The affective or emotional dimension is added by Wilkie (1986, 8) who states that consumer behaviour consists of 'the activities which people engage in when selecting, purchasing, and using products and services so as to satisfy needs and desires. Such activities involve mental and emotional processes, in addition to physical action.'

A final example pertains to the referencing of personal communication and interviews. For example, if you obtained some information during an interview with Mr Ken Boshcoff, when he was mayor of Thunder Bay:

A conversation with the Mayor further revealed that no plans currently exist to redevelop the property in question (Boshcoff, 2002).

When you have two or more successive citations from the same source in the same paragraph it is only necessary to acknowledge this *once*: after the last citation. Otherwise the text becomes too broken and interrupted. Here is an example of what not to do.

Sentence one based on material from Jones (Jones 2005). Sentence two paraphrases an idea from the same paper by Jones so you reference the paper again (Jones 2005). Sentence three mentions yet another idea from the same paper so you reference it for the third time (Jones 2005).

In this case, as the references to Jones come uninterrupted by another source, you only need to reference Jones once. Here is the corrected version of the same example.

Sentence one based on paper by Jones. Sentence also based on a paper by Jones. Sentence three mentions a final idea from the same paper (Jones 2005).

However, if another author's work intervenes then the acknowledgement must be repeated.

Sentence one taken from Jones (Jones 2005). Sentence two taken from Smith (Smith 1955).

Sentence three taken from Jones (Jones 2005).

End of Document Reference List

At the end of your thesis, essay or term paper, you must include a complete listing of all materials referenced. All references must be listed in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author. Where there are multiple authors of one source, do *not* alphabetise their names. Record them in the order they are given on the title page or at the heading of the paper.

The syntax to be followed for various types of sources is presented below. ***This style and this style only must be used.***

[Note that this style does not exactly match that used by the Instructor in this document. The Instructor has his own preferences for personal use; but thinks it less confusing to ask you to use that agreed on by the Department of Geography for honours Thesis work.]

1. Published Book

Livingstone, D.N. 1992. *The Geographical Tradition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

Harrington, J. and Warf, B. 1995. *Industrial Location: Principles, Practice and Policy*. London: Routledge.

Where the place of publication is a less well know location, you may choose to add more detail such as the abbreviation of a US state or Canadian province.

Preston, S.H., Heuveline, P. and Guillot, M. 2001. *Demography: Measuring and Modeling Population Processes*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

2. A Collection of Articles / Readings

In the case where you wish to reference a book that is a collection of articles that has been edited by an individual, use the following format.

Bourne, L. and Ley, D. eds. 1993. *The Changing Social Geography of Canadian Cities*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill – Queen’s University Press.

3. Chapter in a Collection of Articles

Phillips, B. and Ross, B. 1995. The glacial period and early peoples. In T. Tronrud and A.E. Epp eds. *Thunder Bay: From Rivalry to Unity*. Thunder Bay: Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, 2-15.

4. Article in a Journal

Single Author

Bain, A. 2006. Resisting the creation of forgotten places: artistic production in Toronto neighbourhoods. *The Canadian Geographer* 50 (4), 417- 431.

Two Authors

Hernandez, T. and Simmons, J. 2006. Evolving retail landscapes: power retail in Canada. *The Canadian Geographer* 50 (4), 465-486.

Three Authors

Nielsen, G., Hsu, Y. and Jacob, L. 2002. Public culture and the dialogics of democracy: Reading the Montreal and Toronto amalgamation debates. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 11(1), 111-140.

5. Journal – Entire Issue

Mackenzie, S., and Norcliffe, G. eds. 1997. Restructuring in the Canadian newsprint industry [Feature Issue]. *The Canadian Geographer* 41(1).

6. Article in a Popular or Trade Magazine

Kirbyson, G. 2005. Hocus Crocus: troubles at a Manitoba labour-sponsored fund leave shareholders baffled. *Canadian Business* 78 (January 17-30), 16-17.

Jenkins, P. 2005. The valley. *Canadian Geographic* 125 (Sept/Oct), 44-57.

If both volume and issue information are not available, treat the date of publication as a volume number.

7. Newspaper Article – Author Name Available

Strauss, M. 2007. Bed Bath & Beyond eyeing Canadian market again. *Globe and Mail* April 24, B5.

8. Newspaper Article – No Author Name Provided

If the article has no author, substitute the title of the newspaper for the author.

Globe and Mail. 2007. Plans to simplify border crossings fail. April 26, A12.

9. Research Monograph

Simmons, J. and Kamikihara, S. 2004. Location Strategies in Western Canada. Ryerson University, Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity, Research Report 2004 -7.

10. Thesis

Whitney, R. 2007. Cross-Shopping Between Traditional and New Format Retail Nodes: A Case Study of Thunder Bay. HBA Thesis, Lakehead University, Department of Geography.

11. Conference Paper

Hofmann, V and Randall, T.A. 2006. Residential infill alternatives for the Interocean Park neighbourhood, Thunder Bay, Ontario. Paper presented at Canadian Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Thunder Bay, May 31.

12. Agency/Government Report

As a rule of thumb, make the jurisdiction in which the agency, ministry or department is located the author of the document. The agency, ministry or department name becomes the publisher of the document.

Manitoba. 1999. Final report of the Capital Region Review Panel. Winnipeg: Department of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Canada. 1992. Managing Immigration: A Framework for the 1990s. Ottawa: Employment and Immigration Canada

13. Personal Communication

Information obtained either through personal correspondence or interviews may be referenced as follows.

Boshcoff, K. 2002. Personal Communication, e-mail, May 15.

Additional information may be added to such references to provide a clearer notion of the source or context of the reference especially if the context is not made clear in the main body of the text.

Boshcoff, K. 2002. Personal Interview, Mayor, City of Thunder Bay, e-mail, May 15

14. Electronic media

As with all forms of print medium, the goal of referencing electronic information is to enable it to be retrieved again. Your reference should allow someone else to access it directly. It is very important to give the punctuation and capitalisation of the electronic information exactly as in the original. In addition, it is vital to give the date of publication of the information on the Internet — while remembering that this may be the date that information was added to the database, not necessarily the date of first publication. Finally, provide the date when you accessed the information. Note that electronic information has a disturbing tendency to change with time, thus the importance of covering yourself by stating clearly when it was that you found and used the data.

On-Line Magazine / Periodical / Newspaper Article

Bremner, D. 2007. China tops US as a trade partner. Business Week April 25. Retrieved May 3, 2007 from http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/apr2007/gb20070425_392152.htm?chan=top+news_top+news+index_businessweek+exclusives

Kusch, L. 2007. Manitoba economy soars in 2006: stronger consumer spending, business investment. Winnipeg Free Press April 26. Retrieved April 27, 2007 from www.winnipegfreepress.com/subscriber/business/story/3951878p-4564074c.html

On-Line Scholarly Journal (not available in print format)

Phillips, R. 2006. Unsexy geographies: heterosexuality, respectability and the Travellers' Aid Society. ACME: An International E-journal for Critical Geographies 5. Retrieved April 25, 2007 from www.acme-journal.org/Volume5-2.htm

Document Downloaded from a Web Site

Winnipeg. 2005. Waverley West Area Structure Plan. Winnipeg: Planning, Property and Development Department. Retrieved August 23, 2007 from <http://www.winnipeg.ca/interhom/WaverleyWest/>

Web Pages

If no individual is named as an author of a web page, the organization that produces / hosts the page may be used as the author. Sometimes, a web page may list the last time the material was up-dated. If no such date is available, use the nomenclature for no date (n.d) to indicate year of publication. Here are some examples.

Sprawl Busters. n.d. *A Citizen's View of Home Depot*. Retrieved April 29, 2007 from www.sprawl-busters.com/hometown.html

Winnipeg Downtown BIZ. n.d. *Downtown BIZ Programs*. Retrieved May 10, 2007 from www.downtownwinnipegbiz.com/index/programs

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2007 *State of Resources Reporting: Wolves*. Retrieved May 5, 2007 from www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/sorr/wolves.html

General Guidelines

On the Use of Italics

Use of *italics* is the preferred style to indicate the title of a published book or a professional journal. If an italics option is not available, underlining may be used in its place.

A Word about Footnotes / End Notes

Do not use footnotes or endnotes to reference sources of information. Footnotes or endnotes should be used in situations where an additional explanatory note is deemed necessary (for example, an extended definition of a term or concept) and where placing it in the body of the text would detract from the flow of the argument being presented.

Footnotes, as the name applies, are to be placed at the bottom of the page on which the reference to the note appears.

Preparing the Final List of References

Note that two or more items by the same author are listed in order of date of publication, earlier works first. If two or more items by the same author are published in the same year they are distinguished by appending a letter to the date of publication (e.g. Stewart 1980a, Stewart 1980b). Such multiple single-year publications are alphabetically ordered according to the titles of the publications. If you have two papers by one author and a third by that same author but with a co-author, the third paper is not considered part of the group that is placed in chronological order. For example, papers by Smith (2003), Smith (1999) and Smith and Wesson (1985) would appear in this order: Smith (1999), Smith (2003), Smith and Wesson (1985).