

**LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY**  
**GEOG 2251 - GEOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY AND INTERPRETATION – 2013**  
**COURSE OUTLINE**

***Instructor***

Dr. W. Wilson, Department of Geography, BB 1068, 343-8274

Office Hours: Wednesdays from 14:30 as needed.

Tel: (807) 343-8274

e-mail: I usually only respond to student emails during office hours so seeing then or in class with your questions is faster. I will be very occasionally sending you logistical emails about class times, etc. My email for emergencies is [wrwilson@aspencroft.ca](mailto:wrwilson@aspencroft.ca)

***Introduction***

Welcome to GEOG 2251 – Geographical Inquiry and Interpretation. This class will provide you with an exploration of the many and varied traditions of geography. In addition, you will be instructed in some basic methods of geographical investigation, analysis, and communication. The focus of this class will be on how geographical traditions undertake geographical inquiry, how they understand the interpretive task of geography, how each of these traditions can contribute to our current practice as geographers, and on how each tradition understands the importance and form of geographical communication. Workload and expectations of excellence in this class will reflect the fact that it is a specialized step towards an Honours Geography degree. My job is to facilitate your movement to this new stage in your geographical career, i.e., to facilitate your growth as a critical, professional geographer.

***Aim***

By the end of this course, successful students should understand:

- 1) The history of geographical thought and practice;
- 2) The necessary link between clear thinking and clear communication;
- 3) The full wealth of geographical methods and philosophies;
- 4) The practice of geographical inquiry;
- 5) The practice of geographical interpretation.

Successful students will also gain technical skills in:

- 1) Writing;
- 2) Research;
- 3) Cartography;
- 4) Various software packages.

Successful students will emerge from this class with the ability to participate in conversations about geography at an advanced academic and professional level. This means that they will be familiar with the language, terminology, and theories used by academics and professionals in the various fields of geography. Some advanced students should emerge from this class with concrete ideas for further, advanced research at the senior undergraduate level, i.e., ideas for undergraduate theses or projects.

## LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

### GEOG 2251 - GEOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY AND INTERPRETATION – 2013

#### *Learning Methods*

- Lectures BB 1054 – Mondays and Wednesdays 13:30– 14:30
- Labs BB 1054 – Tuesday 14:30- 16:30 or Friday 10:30 – 12:30 (weekly)

#### *Readings and materials*

The required textbooks and readings are:

##### Required

1. Philip's (2008). *Oxford New Concise World Atlas Second Edition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press;
2. Clifford, N., S. French, and G. Valentine (eds) (2010). *Key Methods in Geography, Second Edition*. Los Angeles: Sage.
3. Articles you will be able to acquire through the library (see Bibliography);
4. Either the *Chicago Manual of Style* or *APA Publishing Manual* and a copy of the Department of Geography *Thesis Manual*.

##### Recommended

5. Tredinnick, Mark (2008). *Writing Well: The essential guide*. New York: Cambridge University Press
6. Peet, Richard (1998). *Modern Geographical Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd
7. It is expected that at various times during the term you will find readings on your own which will contain information that you can contribute to class discussions and assignments. You may want to become particularly familiar with the academic geographical journals.

These are all books that you will use throughout your career as a geographer, i.e., at the undergraduate, professional, and graduate levels. In addition, you will be required to purchase some equipment and notebooks for the lab and the tutorial. More information on this will be available in the labs and tutorials.

#### *Workload and Expectations of Excellence*

Details of the following assignments are provided on the document that accompanies this class outline. We will also be working on your professional CV and application letter. There is NO final examination in this class.

Large Assignment on Global Research	– 25% of final grade	Due last week.
Medical and Urban Geography Assignment	– 20% of final grade	See Schedule.
Threat Assessment 1. Water Quality.	– 20 % of final grade	See Schedule.
Transportation log and Modeling	– 15 % of final grade	See Schedule.
Threat Assessment 2. Public events.	– 20 % of final grade	See Schedule.

## LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

### GEOG 2251 - GEOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY AND INTERPRETATION – 2013

**Workload:** You should anticipate doing at least 4-5 hours of reading and class preparation per week (Note: This is 4-5 hours of good quality work). Time needed to complete assignments is not included in this estimate, nor is time for lab work. Not all topics covered in the readings will be covered in lecture, tutorial, and lab-work. Conversely, not all topics covered in the lab and in lecture are covered in the readings. You are responsible to be familiar with all the information covered in the readings, in lectures, and in labs. My advice to you is to plan your term carefully and conservatively: Expect the unexpected. Remember that you have probably never done this type of work before, that learning new skills is often challenging and difficult, and that you will need time to practice and perfect your own geographical style to bring it in-line with professional standards. Above all, identify any problems you might encounter early on and then talk to me or other professionals about solutions: Don't wait until the last minute!

**Marking:** I will undertake the marking for this class assisted by your lab instructor. This is a core class that is preparing you for advanced work, possibly in the very demanding field of professional geography. Thus, there will be no late submissions of assignments. This rule will only be waived on presentation of a medical certificate of sickness.

The marking scheme used in this class is in-line with expectations at Canada's top undergraduate universities and with professional employment standards, both of which allow a very narrow window of appropriate performance. Again, my goal is to provide you with the same level and quality of instruction that you would receive at Mount Allison or Trent. In addition to grammar and style, which are discussed below, assignments will be graded on demonstrated critical thought, internal logic, clarity of data presentation and the number of considered academic sources. "Considered academic sources" are articles, books, and other forms of information that you find, analyse, and critique in an academic fashion.

**Grammar and Style:** It is expected that written submissions in Geography courses will conform to high standards of grammar and style. This applies to lab assignments, as well. As professional geographers and/or teachers, it is your responsibility to be able to communicate simply and directly. Although the penalty may vary from course to course, and from one kind of written work to another, poor grammar and style will be penalized in all grading of written work submitted in Geography courses. Sub-standard assignments will be returned un-marked. A required text for this course is either the *APA Manual* or the *Chicago Manual of Style*. You **must** bring your manual(s), along with proof of use, to any meeting with me that deals with issues of grammar and/or style. Of course, appropriate allowances will be made for students whose first language is not English.

The required Department of Geography *Thesis Manual* provides you with the guidelines that are used for citations for honours theses in the Geography Department. No other citation system will be accepted in this course. Note that this system is adopted from the *Canadian Geographer*, and that it is very similar to the APA style.

**Plagiarism and academic dishonesty:** Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from failure in an assignment to debarment from the University. As noted in the University Calendar:

## **LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY**

### **GEOG 2251 - GEOGRAPHICAL INQUIRY AND INTERPRETATION – 2013**

"Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:

1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

Further definitions, procedures, and penalties for dealing with plagiarism and academic dishonesty are set out in the University Calendar, available in paper and on-line. Note that many issues of plagiarism can be prevented through careful use of a manual on style and grammar.