

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
GEOG 4911 – CURRENT CULTURAL GEOGRAPHIES- 2018
COURSE OUTLINE

Instructors: Prof. William Wilson, Department of Geography, RC 2006D, 343- 8274
Office Hours: immediately before and after class.

Introduction

Welcome to GEOG 4911 – Current Cultural Geographies. This is an advanced theory course in cultural geography. The course is intended to act as a type of capstone experience for those students interested in the application of cultural geography in the 21st century. This course includes elements of the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. In short, it is a geography course. If you are successful in this course, you will emerge with the experience and skills necessary to pursue advanced cultural geography in the field. Our job is to facilitate your movement to this new stage in your geographical career. If you have any questions at any time make sure you ask!

Aim

By the end of this course, successful students should have a solid grounding in:

- 1) The theory of different cultural geographies;
- 2) The practice of different cultural geographies;
- 3) The application of cultural geographies to fieldwork;
- 4) Basic philosophies that support cultural geographies.

Successful students will emerge from this class with the ability to participate in conversations about cultural geography at an advanced academic and professional level. This means that you will be familiar with the language, terminology, and theories used by academics and professionals in this field of cultural 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. Opportunities for international and national fieldwork are available at Lakehead should you be interested. Our goal is to provide you with the same level of instruction that you would receive at one of the top-rated undergraduate universities in Canada. We take this goal seriously; we see no reason that this course should not be experienced at the same level as a similar course at Mount Allison or Bishop's.

Learning Methods

- Lecture – Tues and Thurs from 10:00 to 11:30.
- Independent preparation for lecture participation
- Individual discussions.

Readings

The required textbooks are:

- 1) Cresswell, Tim (2013). **Geographic Thought: A critical introduction**. Wiley-Blackwell;
- 2) Solnit, Rebecca and Rebecca Snedeker (2013). **Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas**. University of California Press;
- 3) Other readings from the Internet or made available to you on reserve in the Library.

It is expected that at you will find readings on your own which will contain information that you can contribute to class discussions and assignments. You will want to become particularly familiar with the academic geographical journals.

Workload and Expectations of Excellence

Details of the following assignments will be provided later in this class.

3 of 4 philosophical essays	– 60%
Critical book review	– 20%
Classroom participation	– 20%

Workload: You should anticipate doing at least 5-6 hours of reading and class preparation per week (Note: This is 5-6 hours of good quality work). 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 and knowledge is often challenging and difficult, and that you will need time to practice and perfect your own geographical craft 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!