

ORIGINAL COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

September 2025

REVISED COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

September 2026

COURSE TO BE REVIEWED (six years after UEC approval):

February 2031

Course outline form version: 29/08/2024

OFFICIAL UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE FORM

Note: The University reserves the right to amend course outlines as needed without notice.

Course Code and Number: GEOG 160	Number of Credits: 3 Course credit policy (105)												
Course Full Title: Settlements: Why We Live Where We Do Course Short Title: Settlements													
Faculty: Faculty of Science	Department/School: Planning, Geography, and Environmental Studies												
Calendar Description: <p>Explores the relationships between people and place by examining why and how people live where they do. Considers patterns, processes, and scales of settlement within and across natural systems. Analyzes rights to access and/or control land and resources as an organizing principle for settlements. Interprets settlement patterns and placemaking and examines how effectively communities can adapt to technological and climate changes.</p>													
<p>Note: This course is offered as GEOG 160 and PLAN 160. Students may take only one of these for credit.</p>													
Prerequisites (or NONE):	None.												
Corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):	None.												
Pre/corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):	None.												
Antirequisite Courses (Cannot be taken for additional credit.) <p>Former course code/number: Cross-listed with: PLAN 160 Equivalent course(s): <i>(If offered in the previous five years, antirequisite course(s) will be included in the calendar description as a note that students with credit for the antirequisite course(s) cannot take this course for further credit.)</i></p>													
Typical Structure of Instructional Hours <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lecture/seminar</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tutorials/workshops</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total hours</td> <td>45</td> </tr> </table>		Lecture/seminar	25	Tutorials/workshops	20							Total hours	45
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Scheduled Laboratory Hours <p>Labs to be scheduled independent of lecture hours: No</p>													
Department approval Faculty Council approval Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) approval													
Course Details <p>Special Topics course: No <i>(If yes, the course will be offered under different letter designations representing different topics.)</i></p> <p>Directed Study course: No <i>(See policy 207 for more information.)</i></p> <p>Grading System: Letter grades</p> <p>Delivery Mode: May be offered in multiple delivery modes</p> <p>Expected frequency: Every semester</p> <p>Maximum enrolment (for information only): 36</p>													
Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) <p>PLAR is available for this course.</p>													
Transfer Credit (See bctransferguide.ca.) <p>Transfer credit already exists: No</p> <p>Submit outline for (re)articulation: Yes <i>(If yes, fill in transfer credit form.)</i></p>													
Date of meeting: April 25, 2025													
Date of meeting: May 30, 2025													
Date of meeting: December 19, 2025													

Learning Outcomes (*These should contribute to students' ability to meet program outcomes and thus Institutional Learning Outcomes.*)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe how settlements emerge in relationship to and, at times, in conflict with natural systems (topography, hydrology, ecology, etc.).
2. Discuss how colonization influenced the progression of settlements, and their ongoing impacts on culture worldwide.
3. Develop preliminary assessments of settlement patterns through use of online geographic data and tools (census, Google Earth, etc.).
4. Analyze relationships between spatial trends (population growth, economic influence, land rights, and internal geographies) at local and global scales.
5. Explain how different cultures (including Indigenous cultures) influence settlement geographies through varied conceptions and systems of property (commons, private, etc.).
6. Reflect on how one's connection to home and community are shaped by cultural, environmental, and global relationships.
7. Assess the strengths and vulnerabilities of settlements in the face of changing climate and technologies.
8. Examine one's own personal and cultural biases in regard to how communities should adapt to future technological and environmental shifts.

Recommended Evaluation Methods and Weighting (*Evaluation should align to learning outcomes.*)

Assignments:	55%	Quizzes/tests/midterm:	20%	Project:	25%

Details:

Assignments for this course will include:

1. Reflecting on personal geography, incorporating Google mapping tools in written response: 10%
2. Understanding, collecting, and comparing census data (Statistics Canada): 10%
3. Relating property ownership to settlement patterns (case study): 10%
4. Decolonizing settlements discussion piece: 10%
5. In-class rapid research and presentation exercises: 15%

Additional assessment:

6. 2 quizzes or midterm exam: 20%
7. Future settlement geographies group project/ presentation: 25%

NOTE: The following sections may vary by instructor. Please see course syllabus available from the instructor.

Typical Instructional Methods (*Guest lecturers, presentations, online instruction, field trips, etc.*)

In-person instruction consists primarily of weekly faculty presentations, seminar discussions, and workshop exercises utilizing online and observational tools. Online instruction includes synchronous course meetings, interactive online activities and data collection with course material and assessment organized in modules.

Texts and Resource Materials (*Include online resources and Indigenous knowledge sources. [Open Educational Resources](#) (OER) should be included whenever possible. If more space is required, use the [Supplemental Texts and Resource Materials form](#).*)

Type	Author or description	Title and publication/access details	Year
1. OER	Villagomez, E	The Laws of Settlement: 54 Laws Underlying Settlements Across Scale and Culture. KPU	2020
2. Article	Coates, Ta-Nehisi	The Case for Reparations. The Atlantic, June 2014	2014
3. OER	Caldaruru, A., et al.	Canadian Settlement in Action: History and Future (selected chapters). Open Education Alberta network	2024
4. Other	Harris, C.	Making Native Space. UBC Press	2003
5. Other	Wiseman, Alan	The World Without Us. St. Martin's Thomas Dunne Books	2007
6. Other	Gandhi, E. L.	Archipelago of Resettlement. UC Press	2022

Required Additional Supplies and Materials (*Software, hardware, tools, specialized clothing, etc.*)

None

Course Content and Topics**Module 1/ Weeks 1-3: Why we live where we do**

- What if we all disappeared tomorrow? Considering the legacy of human settlement across the globe
- Our personal geographies and the footprints (palimpsests) of home(s): reflecting on our settlement histories, communities, and placemaking processes. How globalized are we and our home spaces?

- Settlements: Interdependence across multiple scales
- Geographic tools used to examine settlement sites, situations, patterns, trends, and relationships
- Building a glossary of course terminology

Module 2/ Weeks 4-6: Patterns of settlements across time, place, and environmental conditions

- Land as “blank slate” or land as family? Different ways of thinking of evolving human-environment relationships in settlements
- Historical perspectives on human settlement patterns (e.g., hydraulic civilizations, agricultural revolution)
- Colonization and the myth of empty space, historically and today
- Expansionism, development, and the (problematic) efforts to define, quantify, and model settlement types and hierarchies (e.g., Christaller, Innis)
- Why settlements decline or disappear, while others thrive and grow larger
- Environmental change and health within settlements

Module 3/ Weeks 7-10: Critical dimensions of property, claims to space, and wealth within settlements

- Beyond sedentarism and individual property rights: reframing settlement narratives using Indigenous geographies
- How private property and commons property regimes shape distinct settlement patterns, belonging, and environmental relationships
- Segregation and the reproduction of wealth within and across settlements
- Technology, mobility, and globalization as redistributors of population

Module 4/ Weeks 11-14: The Ecumenopolis (“one global city”) and other settlement futures

- Power, economic nationalism, and the changing shape and constitution of settlements
- Why and where settlements will disappear
- Three trends that will reshape settlements in Canada and globally:
 - Artificial Intelligence and other technologies of work/ production
 - Indigenous land claims
 - Climate change and environmental displacement
- Is the Ecumenopolis inevitable or impossible?