



ORIGINAL COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

September 2025

REVISED COURSE IMPLEMENTATION DATE:

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

February 2031

Course outline form version: 26/01/2024

## OFFICIAL UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE FORM

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

<b>Course Code and Number:</b> GEOG 256		<b>Number of Credits:</b> 3 <a href="#">Course credit policy (105)</a>													
<b>Course Full Title:</b> Knowledge and Ethics in Geographic and Environmental Research <b>Course Short Title:</b> Knowledge & Ethics in Research															
<b>Faculty:</b> Faculty of Science		<b>Department/School:</b> Planning, Geography, and Environmental Studies													
<b>Calendar Description:</b> Examines the ethical dimensions of geographic and environmental data collection, knowledge construction, and decision-making. Emphasis on the Ethical Space as foundation for developing research practices and engagement with communities. Students are introduced to qualitative data practices used in geography and related fields.															
<b>Prerequisites (or NONE):</b>		24 university-level credits including 3 credits of AGRI, ANTH, BIO, CRIM, ENV, GDS, GEOG, IPK, PHIL, PLAN, or SOC.													
<b>Corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):</b>		None.													
<b>Pre/corequisites (if applicable, or NONE):</b>		None.													
<b>Antirequisite Courses</b> ( <i>Cannot be taken for additional credit.</i> ) Former course code/number: Cross-listed with: 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>		<b>Course Details</b> Special Topics course: <b>No</b> <i>(If yes, the course will be offered under different letter designations representing different topics.)</i> Directed Study course: <b>No</b> <i>(See <a href="#">policy 207</a> for more information.)</i> Grading System: <b>Letter grades</b> Delivery Mode: <b>May be offered in multiple delivery modes</b> Expected frequency: <b>Annually</b> Maximum enrolment (for information only): <b>36</b>													
<b>Typical Structure of Instructional Hours</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Lecture/seminar</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tutorials/workshops</td> <td style="text-align: center;">35</td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>Total hours</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>45</b></td> </tr> </table>		Lecture/seminar	10	Tutorials/workshops	35							<b>Total hours</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)</b> PLAR is available for this course.	
Lecture/seminar	10														
Tutorials/workshops	35														
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>45</b>														
<b>Scheduled Laboratory Hours</b> Labs to be scheduled independent of lecture hours: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<b>Transfer Credit</b> ( <i>See <a href="#">bctransferguide.ca</a>.</i> ) Transfer credit already exists: <b>No</b> Submit outline for (re)articulation: <b>Yes</b> <i>(If yes, fill in <a href="#">transfer credit form</a>.)</i>													
<b>Department approval</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b> September 11, 2024													
<b>Faculty Council approval</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b> October 4, 2024													
<b>Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) approval</b>		<b>Date of meeting:</b> February 28, 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. Articulate one's understanding of Ethical Space and why an Ethical Space framework is essential for applied research in geography, environmental science and conservation, and related fields of practice.
2. Define core concepts utilized in research, e.g. epistemology, positionality, subjectivity, reflexivity, generalizability, replicability, and causal inference.
3. Describe some of the major tensions between how different systems of knowledge construction (including Enlightenment/scientific method, Indigenous systems) and the specific historical contexts of those tensions.
4. Explain how to weigh the relative benefits of various qualitative data collection methods in addressing specific geographic questions.
5. Identify strategies for establishing, maintaining community-based relationships in a respectful way.
6. Articulate provisional impacts of artificial intelligence upon the field of research.
7. Engage in constructive peer assessment of research questions and proposals.
8. Reflect critically on one's role in the research process and in community (re)production of knowledge.

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

Assignments:	80%	Project:	20%		%
	%		%		%

**Details:**

- Case studies in research (review and evaluation) (20%)
- Assessment and reflection of self as researcher (20%)
- Conducting observation and maintaining field notes (10%)
- Class discussion and in-class activities (30%)
- Group project: research plan (20%)

**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 classes involve primarily seminar and small group discussion, with guest lectures.

**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.	Journal	Ermine, W.	The Ethical Space of Engagement. Indigenous Law Journal 6 (1)	2007
2.	Journal	Nikolakis, W., and N. Hotte	Implementing 'Ethical Space': An exploratory study of Indigenous conservation partnerships. Conservation Science and Practice	2022
3.	Journal	Nadeau, M., and A. Doyonne	Exploring Ethical Space in Land Use Planning: A Case study of the Upper Columbia, British Columbia. Journal of Environmental Planning and Management.	2024
4.	Textbook	Hay, I., and M. Cope	Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography 5 <sup>th</sup> edition. OUP	2021
5.	Journal	Hughes, A.	Unsettling Fieldwork: Reflections of Whiteness and anti-racist practice in the pedagogies of fieldwork. Area 54	2022
6.	Article	Mei-Singh, L	Accompaniment through carceral geographies: Abolitionist research partnerships with Indigenous communities. Antipode, 53(1), 74-94.	2021
7.	Textbook	Smith, L.T.	Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples. Bloomsbury Publishing.	2021
8.	Article	Buroway, M	Empiricism and its fallacies. Contexts, 18(1), 47-53.	2019
9.	Article	Flyvbjerg, B	Five misunderstandings about case-study research. Qualitative inquiry, 12(2) 219-245	2006
10.	Textbook	Madison, D.S.	Critical ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance. Sage publications.	2011

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

None

**Course Content and Topics**

1. How we know what we know
  - a. What is it to "discover" and expand our knowledge horizons?
    - i. Observation as system and process

- b. How we know what we know: systems of building and transmitting knowledge
    - i. Epistemology and ontology
  - c. What is research?
  - d. The scientific method and assumptions of how knowledge is validated and viewed as legitimate within research and policy
  - e. Why change is needed in how research is undertaken in geography, planning, environmental science and conservation
2. Ethical Space
    - a. Shifting from decolonization to Ethical Space to create shared frameworks for change
    - b. Why the way we *build* our knowledge of the world matters how we *act* on this knowledge
    - c. Co-producing knowledge in geography, conservation sciences, and planning
    - d. Frameworks and principles of knowledge ownership and use: OCAP, CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance
3. Whose research?
    - a. Reflecting on one's role in and reason for the research process
    - b. Inclusion, positionality, situated knowledge, and reflexivity
    - c. Participatory approaches and community-driven research questions
    - d. Who owns the tools of research collection and transmission?
    - e. Issues in Access, Management, Control, and Manipulation:
      - i. Algorithms and big data
      - ii. Private ownership of data production, collation, and use
      - iii. The impact of artificial intelligence
4. Research design and building a research plan
    - a. Whose question to ask? Identifying research questions and priorities
    - b. Moving away from the solo project to research as collaborative process
    - c. Qualitative methodological approaches
    - d. Ethical review processes: Institutional research ethics review, community-led/ Indigenous review processes
    - e. Setting realistic goals and timelines in research
    - f. Recognizing the limits to research (time, financial, trust, etc.)
5. Obligations after the research is "complete"
    - a. How knowledge can be reproduced, used and/or misused
    - b. Maintaining connections to community
    - c. Supporting other research(ers)