

GEOG 2460G – Introduction to Urban Development
Course Outline: Section 001 Winter 2026
This course is taught in-person
1. Course Information


Classes Start	Spring Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 5	February 14-22	April 9	April 10-11	April 12-30

Tuesday January 13, 2026: Last day to add a second-term half course

Monday February 16, 2026: Family Day

Monday March 30, 2026: Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

Friday April 3, 2026: Good Friday

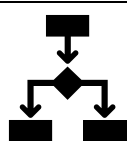


Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Godwin Arku	Message within OWL Brightspace	Thursdays 9–10 AM OR By appointment

Teaching Assistant(s)	Contact Information	Office Hours
William Yang	Message within OWL Brightspace	Mondays 2-3pm. OR By appointment



- ☒ Office hours will be held in-person on Thursday 9-10 am or by appointment
- ☒ Students will be able to sign up for an appointment using sign Up on OWL Brightspace

2. Calendar Description


Growth, structure, and morphology in industrial and post-industrial cities; theories of, and empirical research on, urban form and structure; land development decision making; land use conflict; development feasibility modelling; and urban land-use policy.

3-hour lectures, 0.5 course.

Prerequisite checking is the student's responsibility.

Senate Regulations state, “unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

3. Textbook



- ☒ All resources will be posted in OWL Brightspace
- ☒ Relevant readings will be made available on the course’s website.

4. Course Objectives and Format

	By completing the activities associated with the course, you will be able to: 1. Define what ‘urban’ means and catalogue key historical urban processes and changes. 2. Identify fundamental concepts and theories of urban development, distinguish <i>how</i> and <i>why</i> these concepts explain historic urban change, and recognize how these concepts help us understand contemporary urban development. 3. Compare and contrast urban areas' characteristics, development patterns, and spatial relationships from various geographical and historical contexts. 4. Have a clear knowledge of urban processes and the forces (e.g., geographical, economic, and social) that influence urban development and apply them in contemporary contexts. 5. Have a good knowledge of urbanization trends and associated problems. 6. Assess the economic feasibility of urban development projects by designing a project, determining associated costs and revenues, and building and running a return on investment (ROI) model. 7. Apply urban development concepts, skills, and understanding to real-world problems by selecting and investigating an urban development issue, conducting background research, evaluating arguments, and synthesizing findings. 8. Develop and enhance critical thinking skills, independent research, teamwork, and communication skills. By the end of this course, you should be able to identify and critique issues surrounding urban development from a geographical perspective and understand the role that people, history, and political-economic forces play in how cities grow, change, and operate. By investigating and explaining the role that these people and processes play, you will gain an appreciation for the breadth and complexity of urban geography as well as exercise and improve your presentation and critical thinking skills. ☒ Attendance is required in all classes
--	--

	☒ Missed work should be completed within 24 hours All course material will be posted to the new OWL Brightspace learning environment: https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/home. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class. Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled. If students need assistance, they can seek support on the OWL Brightspace Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.
--	---

5. Learning Outcomes

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to: ✓ Synthesize and evaluate geographical information from diverse sources. ✓ Describe, explain, analyze, and interpret a range of geographical phenomena outside the classroom by engagement with people, places and environments. ✓ Analyze real-world problems and policy applications using geographical concepts, skills, and understanding. ✓ Communicate geographic ideas and understanding effectively to a variety of audiences in writing, orally, and graphically. ✓ Identify, analyze, and interpret spatial patterns and processes of urbanization, financial and economic aspects of urban development, and processes in urban systems and built environments. ✓ Develop and demonstrate applied skills in urban project design and report writing. Geographical Skills ✓ Spatial thinking, spatial analysis, and spatial processes of human and/or environmental processes (e.g., cultural, social, political, economic, and scientific). Generic Skills ✓ Literature and secondary data sources: search and retrieval of information, a meta-analysis of published data, synthesis of information sources and literature, and annotated bibliographies. ✓ Critical and reflective reading, listening, and thinking. ✓ Writing – practice writing essays and reports. ✓ Visual presentation and graphical design: graphical design and production of maps, diagrams, presentations, posters, and web-based media. ✓ Oral communication/presentation: structured class discussions (seminars, small-group interaction, and debates), and individual and group presentations.
---	--

	✓ Project planning, management, and design: time management, independent major project, and research proposals. Inter-personal skills: leadership and team facilitation.
--	---

6. Course Content and Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
Jan 8	Course Overview Introductory lecture – concepts etc.	Filion & Bunting, course pack, pp. 1-14
Jan 15	The origins and growth of cities – a historical overview of urbanization in the US. Guest Lecturer: Dr Richard Sadler Lab: Detailed information session on the term project Forum Topic #1 posting	Knox & McCarthy, Ch. 3 & 4
Jan 22	Evolution and development of Canadian urban systems – historical and contemporary trends Detailed information Part 1 of the term project Responses to Forum Topic #1 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, January 22 Forum Topic #2 posting	Hillier, course pack, pp. 27-43; 44-67; Filion, course pack, 68-85; Vinodrai, course pack, 86-106
Jan 29	Models and Theories of Urban Spatial Structure, including: Sjobergs's pre-industrial city model; Burgess concentric zone model; Hoyt's model of urban structure; Harris and Ullman's multiple nuclei model; and the Bid-Rent theory of urban land use. Introduction to Part 2 of the term project Responses to Forum Topic #2 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, Thursday 29 Forum Topic #3 posting	Knox & McCarthy, Ch. 3 & 4
Feb 5	Urbanization within a Global Context Midterm Review Guest Speaker: David Stubbs Term Project: Part 1 Due Responses to Forum Topic #3 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, February 5 Forum Topic #4 posting	Cardenas & Kelly, course pack, pp. 109-125 Harris & Keil, course pack, pp. 126-144 Ogunyankin & Buckley, course pack, pp. 144-160

Date	Topic	Readings
Feb 12	Mid Term Examination	
	Responses to Forum #4 Topic must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, February 15.	
Feb 19	Spring Reading Break	
	Forum Topic #5 posting	
Feb 26	Urban Development Process: “city makers”	Knox & McCarthy, Ch. 8
	Competing interest among development actors	
	Introduction to Part 3 of the term project	
	Term Project: Part 2 Due	
	Responses to Forum Topic #5 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, Feb 29	
	Forum Topic #6 posting	
March 5	Neighbourhood change, residential structure, gentrification, migration, and filtering	Lynch & Pottie-Sherman, course pack, pp. 163-179; Harris, course pack, pp. 180-197
	Guest Speaker: TBA	
	Help with term project	
	Responses to Forum Topic #6 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, March 5	
March 12	Urban Planning – history and contemporary issues of city planning	Knox & McCarthy, Ch. 10
	Responses to Forum Topic #7 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, March 12	
	Forum Topic #8 posting	
March 19	Urban development and entrepreneurial policies: re-imaging and re-placing the urban	Bain, course pack, pp. 198-211
	Guest Lecture— Dr. Evan Cleave	
	Responses to Forum Topic #8 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, March 19	
March 26	Forum Topic #9 posting	
	Contemporary Urban Development Issues - Future Planning, Smart Cities, Smart Growth	

Date	Topic	Readings
	Guest Speaker: Dr Merlin Chatwin	
	Term Project: Part 3 Due	
	Responses to Forum Topic #9 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, March 26	
	Forum Topic #10 posting	
April 2	Urban Policy and Governance	Donald & Gray, course pack, pp. 214-227.
	Exam Review and Tips	
	Responses to Forum Topic #10 must be posted by 11:55 pm on Thursday, April 2	

7. Communication

	☒ Students should check the OWL Brightspace every 24 – 48 hours
	☒ A weekly update will be provided on the OWL Brightspace announcements
	☒ Students should email their instructor(s) and teaching assistant(s) using OWL Brightspace
	☒ For any other communication, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner. You can read about the privacy and security of the UWO email accounts here .
	☒ Emails will be monitored daily; students will receive a response in 24 – 48 hours
	☒ This course will use the OWL Brightspace for discussions
	☒ Students should post all course-related content on the discussion forum so that everyone can access answers to questions
	☒ The discussion forums will be monitored daily by instructors or teaching assistants

8. Evaluation



Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated.

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Due Date
Selection of Term Project	OWL Brightspace Messaging to TA	1%	January 22, 2026 (email the TA)

Term Project: Part 1	OWL Brightspace Assignment Tab	7%	February 5, 2026
Term Project: Part 2	OWL Brightspace Assignment Tab	7%	Feb 26, 2026
Term Project: Part 3	OWL Brightspace Assignment Tab	30%	March 26, 2026
Forum Discussions	OWL Brightspace Forums	2.5%	Various Dates
Course Reflection	OWL Brightspace Assignment Tab	2.5%	March 26, 2026
Midterm Examination	In person	20%	February 12, 2026
Final Examination	In person	30%	TBD – April, 2026

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Students are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text.

- ☒ All assignments are due at 11:55 pm EST unless otherwise specified
- ☒ Rubrics will be used to evaluate assessments and will be posted with the instructions
- ☒ After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting their evaluator; to ensure a timely response, reach out within 7 days

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.

9. Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

General Information about missed work:

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

Absence from Course Commitments

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Course Assessments that Require Supporting Documentation

For this course the following assessment has been designated as requiring supporting documentation:

Mid-Term Examination – February 12, 2026

Academic Consideration for Course Components with Flexible Deadlines

Accommodation for Religious Holidays

Students should review the policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays. Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

10. Make-up Examinations

Make-ups will be granted with approved documentation only. All documentation for missed exams must be provided to the Academic Counselling Office within 48 hours of the scheduled exam; otherwise, the instructor will assign a grade of zero.

The format and content of make-ups may differ substantially from the scheduled test or examination.

11. Use of Electronic Devices

No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

12. How to Be Successful in this Class:

	Students enrolled in this class should understand the level of autonomy and self-discipline required to be successful. 1. Invest in a planner or application to keep track of your courses. Populate all your deadlines at the start of the term and schedule time at the start of each week to get organized and manage your time. 2. Make it a daily habit to log onto OWL Brightspace to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class. 3. Follow weekly checklists created on OWL Brightspace or create your own to help you stay on track. 4. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively. 5. Connect with others. Try forming a study group and try meeting on a weekly basis for study and peer support. 6. Do not be afraid to ask questions. If you are struggling with a topic, check the online discussion boards or contact your instructor(s) and or teaching assistant(s). 7. Reward yourself for successes. It seems easier to motivate ourselves knowing that there is something waiting for us at the end of the task.
---	---

13. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of AI tools for assignments is not permitted under any circumstance in this course.

14. Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

15. Western's Commitment to Accessibility

The Department of Geography and Environment strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website.

More information about "Accessibility at Western" is available.

16. Mental Health

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit Western's Health and Wellness website for more information on mental health resources.

17. Support Services

Western's Support Services
Student Development Centre

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past),

you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

18. Important Dates

Monday January 5: Classes resume

Tuesday January 13: Last day to add a second term half course

Monday February 16: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 16-20: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

Monday March 30: Last day to drop a second term half course

Thursday April 9: Classes end

April 10 and 11: Study days

April 12-30: Examination Period