

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
**GEOGRAPHY 2090a (Space Exploration) Fall 2012**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course concerns the exploration of 'outer' space, past, present and future, and looks at many ways in which space exploration interacts with our lives and our culture. We will look at space as a place, as a newly accessible part of the domain of human activity. In ancient times Geography was the study of different lands, territories which could be reached only after undertaking a voyage. Now we can look to new lands, new continents far away, but within reach of our senses, our robots and we ourselves, if we choose to make the journey. We will look at these new places as geographers, studying their physical characteristics, their resources and hazards, and the ways we can interact with them: scientifically, politically, economically, legally, artistically, or just as interested spectators.

It is important to note that this is not an astronomy or planetary science class. We will look at topics related to these fields, but not in great detail. However, more emphasis will be given to the planets this year than in previous years in response to requests from students. NOTE: until recently this course carried the number GEOG 136.

The objective of this course is to demonstrate the wide range of human activity now associated with space, including connections to all our lives. The many links from lecture pages serve in place of a text book. Students are expected to spend time browsing among these links. It is impossible to read everything, but the lecture notes provided indicate the topics to be looked at. Students are expected to attend all classes, and to be suitably prepared for the in-class tests. Preparation for classes should include having read through the lecture page for that week before class.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Radu Dan Capitan, room 2223 SSC  
e-mail: rcapita@uwo.ca website: publish.uwo.ca/~pjstooke

**INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday 12:00 to 13:00, or by appointment, or just drop by any time (best days - Tuesday to Thursday). - come to my office, or phone or e-mail to set up a meeting.

**TEST PICK-UP:** Students can pick up tests after class on ----day: ---- to ---- (still to be determined), in the Geography TA office, Room SSC 2304.

**CLASSES:** (held in SSC-2050) Tuesdays 8.30 - 9.30 Thursdays, 8.30 - 10.30

**READINGS:** There is no textbook for this course. Readings may be assigned, and if so will be placed on reserve in the Weldon or Taylor Libraries.

**EVALUATION:** The final mark is the sum of marks for three in-class tests and a final project. There will not be a final examination after classes end.

In-class tests: 60 % Term project, final: 40 %

Marks will be assigned or adjusted in such a way that the class average will meet the expected level of 75%.

So... to get a high mark in this course, you must do well on both the tests and the project. Only a very few students with truly exceptional work can expect to get marks in the 90 % range.

The tests will involve the ability to remember details from class notes and web readings. That type of study is easier if it is done gradually over the term, not by studying all night just before the test! Students who do less well at memory-work will have a chance to redress that in the final project, which will favour other qualities such as imagination, creativity, systematic study and careful presentation.

The tests will be held in class as indicated in the schedule. If tests are missed, whether due to illness or any other factor, they must be made up during the remainder of the term on a schedule agreed by

the student and instructor. For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable SMC see:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** 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 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

**PLAGIARISM:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>

All work you hand in must be your own. Any offence will trigger the procedure outlined on the linked website.

**PREREQUISITES:** Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may 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.”

Program or degree questions? Refer to Department of Geography or Registrar Services. Other student assistance: Student Development Services.

**Schedule** (subject to minor modifications)

Week	Dates	Topic
1	Sep. 8 – 9	Introduction to the course.
2	Sep. 12 – 16	History - early years: Sputnik, Apollo and Zond.
3	Sep. 19 – 23	History - Apollo on the Moon.
4	Sept. 26 – 30	History - Shuttle, Mir, Space Station. <b>THURSDAY: Test 1 (mainly history) (20%)</b>
5	Oct. 3 – 7	Geography of the solar system.
6	Oct. 10 – 14	Robotic exploration of space.
7	Oct. 17 – 21	Space in our lives. <b>THURSDAY: Test 2 (mainly solar system and exploration) (20%)</b>
8	Oct. 24 – 28	Space business, space tourism, space law.
9	Oct 3 -Nov 4	Space and the military, Space in culture; science fiction.
10	Nov. 7 – 11	Life in Space. <b>THURSDAY: Test 3 ('Space in our Lives' to 'Life in Space') (20%)</b>
11	Nov. 14 – 18	UFOs and SETI.
12	Nov. 21 – 25	Current Planetary Exploration.
13	Nov 28-Dec 2	Where do we go from here? Conclusion.
14	Dec. 5 – 7	Question and Answer session, Evaluation. Hand in Term Project Final Report (40%)