

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY  
GEOGRAPHY 2090a (Space Exploration)  
Fall 2013  
COURSE DESCRIPTION

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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. Many of my attitudes to this subject are expressed in Carl Sagan's book [Pale Blue Dot](#) - not a text for this course, but well worth reading.

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.

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 lectures indicate the more important 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.

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Philip J. Stooke, room 2425 SSC  
Phone: 661-2111 ext. 85022

**INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS:** Monday to Thursday, each day, 11:00 to 12:00 in the MAP AND DATA CENTRE, Weldon Library, or by appointment, or just drop by my office any time (best days - Tuesday to Thursday). **NOTE:** Because those office hours are held in the Weldon Library, you can not reach me on my office phone during those times.

e-mail: [pjstooke@uwo.ca](mailto:pjstooke@uwo.ca)  
website: [publish.uwo.ca/~pjstooke](http://publish.uwo.ca/~pjstooke)

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**We have three Teaching Assistants:**

(to be determined)

They will not be teaching, but will help administer class tests, mark them and arrange for test pickup afterwards.

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**CLASSES:** (held in SSC-2050)

Tuesdays 8.30 - 9.30

Thursdays, 8.30 - 10.30

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**READINGS:**

There is no textbook for this course. Readings are online, linked via the course website:

<http://instruct.uwo.ca/geog/2090/>

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**EVALUATION:**

The final mark is the sum of marks for two in-class tests and a final project in two parts. In the middle of the term a preliminary description of the project will be submitted and marked, giving a chance for feedback at that stage. At the end of term the finished project will be handed in. There will not be a final examination after classes end.

In-class tests: 40 %

Project proposal: 20 %

Term project, final: 40 %

Marks will be assigned or adjusted in such a way that the class average will meet the level of 75% defined as a 'B' grade.

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, research skills, 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. Students are directed to the [Policy on Accommodation for Medical illness](#) for additional information.

**Electronic Devices:** No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations.

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#### **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.

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#### **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/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

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

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**PREREQUISITES:** It is the student's responsibility to check prerequisites. Students without the necessary prerequisites for this course **must** request special permission from the instructor to take the course, and this will usually be granted to non-Geography students.

Regulation:

"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."

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Program or degree questions? Refer to [Department of Geography](#) or [Registrar Services](#). Other student assistance: [Student Development Services](#).

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#### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [mentalhealth@western](mailto:mentalhealth@western) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

# Schedule for this term

(September to December 2013)

(subject to minor modifications)

| Week | Dates             | Topic   |
|------|-------------------|---|
| 1    | Sep. 9 - 13       | Introduction to the course.   |
| 2    | Sep. 16 - 20      | History - early years: Sputnik, Apollo and Zond.  |
| 3    | Sep. 23 - 27      | History - Apollo on the Moon.   |
| 4    | Sept. 30 - Oct. 4 | History - Shuttle, Mir, Space Station.  |
| 5    | Oct. 7 - 11       | Geography of the solar system. <b>THURSDAY: Test 1 (mainly history) (20%)</b>   |
| 6    | Oct. 14 - 18      | Robotic exploration of space.   |
| 7    | Oct. 21 - 25      | Space in our lives. <b>THURSDAY: Hand in project proposal (20%)</b>   |
| 8    | Oct. 28 - Nov. 1  | Space business, space tourism, space law.   |
| 9    | Nov. 4 - 8        | Space commercialization: a new era  |
| 10   | Nov. 11 - 15      | Life in Space. <b>THURSDAY: Test 3 ('Solar System' to 'Life in Space') (20%)</b>  |
| 11   | Nov. 18 - 22      | UFOs and SETI.  |
| 12   | Nov. 25 - 29      | Current Planetary Exploration.  |
| 13   | Dec. 2 - 6        | Where do we go from here? Conclusion. <b>Thursday: Question and Answer session, Evaluation. Hand in Term Project Final Report (40%)</b> |