

FIELD METHODS AND PRACTICES:  
Lake Superior ON – Geographic Field Techniques  
and Research Methods

*Course Outline*

Mandatory Pre-Trip\* Organizational Meetings:

- Thursday, September 10<sup>th</sup>\*: 5:30-7:30, SSC 2322E Pleva
- \*\*\* Bring \$525 cheque, OHIP #, Emergency contact name & phone # \*\*\*

\* See page 7 for Post-Trip Meeting Dates



Foci: (1) Geographic Techniques — Field Techniques, Research Methods; (2) Physical Geography; and (3) Rural, Urban and Wilderness Geography

Field Trip Dates: Sunday September 27 —> Friday October 2, 2015  
Departure: 6:30 AM Sunday from the Social Science Loading Dock  
Return: Late Friday Night October 4<sup>th</sup>.

INSTRUCTORS/LEADERS: Prof. Micha Pazner, Ms. Erika Hill  
Office Hours: Dr. Micha Pazner - Wed 3:30-5:30  
or by Appointment, Room 1416 SSC  
Cell: 519 854 2433 (during trip)

For the Course Description in the 2015 *ACADEMIC CALENDAR*, See:  
<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015/pg915.html#34823>



***COURSE EXPECTATIONS:***

The course is rated as the equivalent of a one-term conventional course (“0.5 Course”) It consists of mandatory pre and post trip meetings, pre-trip assignments, six (6) days in the field, and completion of a research paper within five weeks following return. It is expected that students will:

- a. Prepare for the course by attending the pre-camp meeting in September and by completing the Pre-Trip Map and Write-up Assignment.
- b. Put in the equivalent of at least 24 hours of Field Work, briefing and discussion during the camp, recorded in a *Field Notebook*; and
- c. Complete the specified Graded Requirements (see Evaluation below), before, during and after the time in the field.

*EVALUATION:*

5%	Pre-Trip Assignment 1: Soft and Hardcopy Map Set
5%	Pre-Trip Assignment 2: Topic Write-Up
5%	Topic Presentation (at a Field Stop)
10%	Cooperation, Participation and Discussion
30%	Field Notebook
10%	Field Image Mini Portfolio
35%	Research Project Term Paper

As with other courses, do not commit scholastic offenses, eg. Plagiarism when you submit written assignments or papers for this course (See more on this in the last section of this document)

Although 3000Y is a ‘full-year course’, you should have your mark by the end of the Fall Term.



## ONLINE COURSE MATERIALS:

Course Hand-Out Materials are posted digitally and will be available on-line. Please **print hard copies** and bring them with you in the field. Find them at (assuming this is unchanged from last year..):

Log in to the SSC server and access the list of 'network drives'.  
Select 'user lib on student server'  
Select 'Course Library'  
Select 'Geography'  
Select 'G3000Y Lake S'  
View Online and make **Printouts** of the files you will need for this course.

### **PRE-TRIP PREPARATION**

- You should be aware of the course's structure, trip plan and geography of the region(s) we will be visiting. Familiarize yourself with the course hand-outs, and with maps of the areas in Ontario we will be in (using the web, including Google Maps and Google Earth, and optionally, The Map and Data Centre, etc). Read and learn as much as you can before the trip.
- A Mandatory Pre Trip Meeting will be held (See p.1).
- Do the mandatory Pre-Trip Assignments 1 and 2 (See Below).
- Get all the gear you will need ready for the trip. Give this critical logistic task the ample time it will require and START ASAP.

#### *PRE TRIP ASSIGNMENT 1: SOFT AND HARDCOPY MAP SET*

Prepare a set of 5-10 digital imagemaps (e.g. using Google Maps with Terrain ON) that show the planned Route for the trip and some of the 'target' field sites. Do the Route Map at a small scale that portrays the entire journeyed area (ie. the complete route). All maps must have a Scale (e.g. a Scale Bar). Include an indication of Direction of Travel. Mark each Day segment with a number, and mark the Night Stop. Provide approximate distance of segments and overall distance (in Kms). **Do not submit a Satellite Image/Map.** Accompany your map with a text sheet that describes how you did it (what data, software, methods you used, etc.). Do imagemaps at various scales, with the scale being appropriate for the Area of Interest (AOI) for each particular map (ie. Not too big and not small...). Comment what you thought of this exercise, and comment on the trip plan itself. Submit a softcopy and a hardcopy version. Deadline: By the morning of the trip. Consider bringing an additional hard copy for your own reference on the trip.

#### *PRE-TRIP ASSIGNMENT 2: TOPIC WRITE-UP and TOPIC PRESENTATION (AT A FIELD STOP)*

This Two-Stage Assignment involves preparation of information to be delivered (by individual students or, with special approval, by pairs of students) at a designated Field-Stop as a student oral presentation. This will require rather urgent academic work at Western prior to departure. Each student or student pair must select a topic and be prepared to give a 15 minute presentation

during the trip, and act as the trip guide on the topic. In addition, a write-up of the presentation material will be submitted.

There are six steps in this ‘Assignment Duo’: (i) choose your Pre-Trip and (tentative) Research Paper general topic at the Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, (ii) advise the instructors and get our approval for this (or an alternate, if you change your mind) specific theme and title within 24 hours (via e-mail) i.e. by Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, (iii) prepare the material prior to departure on Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, (iv) submit a softcopy via e-mail (v) submit the hardcopy written Pre-trip assignment upon departure on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>, and finally (vi) make the *TOPIC PRESENTATION at a Field Stop* during the trip.

OPTIONAL TEXT: Margot Northey, Dianne Draper, and David B. Knight. *Making Sense in Geography and Environmental Sciences – A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing*, Sixth Edition (Oxford University Press, 2015). Note: Earlier Editions, e.g. fourth or fifth are also ok.

MORE ON TEXT AND RELEVANT MATERIALS: Contact Dr. Pazner to access his “*Field Library*” collection — and to get guidance on what’s out there and where to find the information.



### ***DURING THE TRIP***

#### ***FIELD NOTEBOOK:***

During the time in the field, you are responsible for maintaining a Field Notebook. The Field Notebook is the comprehensive, personal record and reference for the course.

The important Field Notebook course component will be further discussed before and during the trip. *An optional textbook* for this section of the G3000Y (see above) includes several chapters

relevant to field research.

Your Field Notebook should include five main elements;

1. The record of any Pre-Trip Preparation, e.g. including readings, but not including the actual Pre-Trip Assignment.
2. The Daily Record of events, i.e. routes and places visited, what was observed and any research questions and hypotheses that come to mind. Also, other thoughts, reflections, impressions, etc. In addition, a Trip Summary will be written on the last day of the trip.
3. Field notes of material delivered by the instructor(s).
4. Summaries of peer field-stop presentations
5. A record of work undertaken, of information gathered, and any analysis done during Field Exercises and Assignments

Note: Primary contents include your text and drawings/sketches. Attachments, such as clippings, extracts from web sources are considered secondary (not your own) information.

The Field Notebook will be due on return from the field and is to be handed to your leader/van driver, on return to Western on Friday, October 2.

### *FIELD IMAGE MINI PORTFOLIO*

This assignment involves preparation of a digital folder with Ten to Twenty-Five (10-25) pictures taken by you on the trip with a digital camera. Pictures can be of nature, culture, people, adventure, geography, etc. and are to be delivered *in full resolution (!)* by the end of Thursday October 15th. The up-to-25 pictures per person will be shown to the whole group at a post-trip gathering. You must accompany your collection with a *text file* (in softcopy PDF format) that contains a brief Title and Caption for each picture.



## ***AFTER THE TRIP***

### ***RESEARCH PROJECT TERM PAPER:***

This component usually takes the form of a *Research Design Proposal*, where you submit a *research proposal* in paper form to conduct research on a topic which relates to questions and/or hypotheses that you have identified as suitable for this field-research course. Specify in detail how field research methods will be used in the (imaginary) proposed study. *Each individual must prepare and submit their research proposal paper.*

How the Research Project works:

You can choose a topic prior to departure and start to work on it, or

You can choose a topic on the trip.

You can do the research alone or in pairs, but each student must submit their own Research Proposal Paper.

The topic must relate to a place we visit and must include, or be somehow connected to, some data or field observations (e.g. digital photos).

The topic should be discussed with the instructors and meet with their approval.

You should think about, and make notes on the topic during the trip.

Post-trip work involves researching and preparing your Research Proposal Paper.

Please note that the Optional Text (Northey et al) material offers some guidance that can be used for this project.



### **Mandatory Post-Trip Meetings, Activities and **DUE** dates:**

- *Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup>\**: Field Image Mini Portfolio (Electronic) Submission deadline.
  - *Thursday, October 15<sup>\*</sup>*: 5:30-7:30, SSC 2322E Pleva. Research Project Meeting.
- *Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>\**: 6:00-10:00 PM. *Research Project paper submission AND Post-Trip Group Dinner and Social Evening. Venue: Pazner Residence. Bring along your appetite, **selected** photos, digital slideshow, trip videos. Program: Dinner, pictures, hand-in Projects.*

## ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

### *GROUND RULES:*

Do not register for this trip unless you are prepared to accept the following obligations:

- No Alcohol and No Drugs
- No Smoking in Vehicles
- No electronic gadgets (eg. Headphones) during field work, while in van reconnaissance and when walking/hiking
- All participants will share in the preparation, maintenance, and cleaning of vehicle, camp, and equipment. Follow the instructions from your Trip Staff.
- If you are on medication or special diet, or have other essential health needs, it is your responsibility to advise the instructors well in advance of departure.
- All participants must carry identification and OHIP cards. Should you need it, “Travel Cuts” and Banks offer Supplemental Insurance at a very reasonable daily rate.
- Prior to being allowed in the vans, all participants must sign a waiver of responsibility for accidents, as well as provide emergency contact information.

### *LIVING CONDITIONS:*

- Travel in a 15-seater passenger van with room for gear: individual gear incl. tenting/sleeping gear, group camp gear, professional equipment, food and camp supplies.
- Accommodations are camping, typically in campgrounds and designated sites.

### *COURSE OBJECTIVES:*

An underlying objective of the field camp is to allow students to gain practical experience in carrying out fieldwork. In this respect, the camp will build upon the principles of geographic research methods and analysis introduced in Geography 2250 *Research Methods* and other courses. Students will gain experience in map and image use, use of a field notebook, planning fieldwork, carrying out and assessing field observations, and using basic instrumentation. It is important that students review) Geography 2250 and Geography 2210 *Introduction to Spatial Analysis* notes prior to the trip. Specific Objectives are:

1. To conduct advance preparation (of text, maps, graphics, instruments, gear) for the field research trip, including: preparing Pre-Trip Assignments and the Research Project.
2. To practice geographic observation, data collection and interpretation techniques during the field trip.
3. To identify researchable hypotheses through field observation.
4. To organize and maintain a field book containing information, observations, questions, hypotheses, and findings.
5. To integrate field notes text and drawings with photography, and maps, including field maps (in your research paper).
6. To practice geographic documenting and mapping techniques after the field trip (Research Paper).
7. To practice orienteering and navigation techniques during the field trip.
8. To visualize local landscapes in a broad regional context.
9. To observe the expression of human values in landscape organization.
10. To acquire general travel and camping skills.



11. To communicate thoughts on the above through discussions.
12. To get to know one another, enjoy the trip, and have fun.



#### *UWO POLICIES:*

\* **ACADEMIC OFFENCES:** Do NOT commit scholastic offenses, eg. **Plagiarism:**

*"Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar)."*

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/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

\*For UWO Policy on Accommodation for MEDICAL ILLNESS and a downloadable SMC see:  
[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf)

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

**\* MENTAL HEALTH:**

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit the site below for more information on mental health resources: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>.

**Support Services**

Registrarial Services: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>

Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

**COST**

The trip cost is C\$ 525.-\* per student. This covers group meals, accommodation (camping), travel in a van, special fees (entrance fees to sites, ferry, canoe rental, etc.) and supplies/misc (camp supplies, field materials, handouts incl. maps and images).

Please bring a \$525 cheque, made out to ‘The Dept. of Geography, UWO, to our pre- trip meeting on the September 10th. You may also pay by credit card on-line at: <https://rabbit.vm.its.uwo.ca/GeographyStore/Default.aspx>. Fees must be paid no later than Friday, September 18th.

In addition, students will need to bring an extra amount of CAD 100.- for non-group meals and incidentals.



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