


GEOG 2071G World Rivers Course Outline: Winter 2021



Although this academic year might be different, Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**. We encourage you to check out the [Digital Student Experience](#) website to manage your academics and well-being. Additionally, the following link provides available resources to support students on and off campus: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

1. Technical Requirements



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer



Zoom application installed

Recommended technical specifications:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/timetables.html>

Western Zoom webpage, including privacy

information: <https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/index.html>.

2. Course Information



Delivery Mode
Online

*Details about design and delivery of the course are listed below in Section 5

Classes Start	Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 11	February 13-21	April 12	April 13	April 14-30

* January 19, 2021: Last day to add a second-term half course

March 15, 2021: Last day to drop a second-term half course without academic penalty



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Lara Middleton	lmiddle7@uwo.ca	Wednesday 10:30-11:30

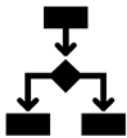
Teaching Assistant(s)	Contact Information	Office Hours
Corey Dawson	cdawso46@uwo.ca	By appointment



- Office hours will be held remotely using Zoom every Wednesday from 10:30-11:30
- Students will be able to drop into session on Wednesdays at 10:30
- Group office hours will be held, recorded, and posted for everyone to view

3. Calendar Description

This course introduces students to the interactions between rivers, their physiographic environments, and human activities.



2 lecture hours, 1 practical work hour. 0.5 course
Antirequisite(s): The former Geography 2071 A/B
Prerequisite(s): None
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."

4. Textbook



- All resources will be posted in OWL
- There is no required textbook or study guide
- Any additional resources will be posted to OWL

5. Course Description, Objectives and Format

Course Description:

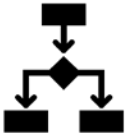
River channels convey water and sediment, ships and barges, sewage leakages and industrial pollution. They are used for sand and gravel extraction, and as artificial storage sites. They are natural habitats for flora and fauna. They are sources of health and wealth, as well as of major calamities by the way of catastrophic floods, erosion and destruction, and conveyance of epidemics. Yet we like to live by them, swim in them, drink their water, fish from them, and relax by them. Hence, it is not difficult to see why rivers become zones of conflicting interests, public litigation, and international dispute.

Rivers are features of the landscape which profoundly affect environment, agriculture, industry, economy, politics, and culture. Yet, at the same time, rivers are affected by their physiographic environment. This course examines these mutual relations for several major river systems around the world.

Course Objectives:

This course introduces students to the mutual relations between rivers, their physiographic environments, and human endeavours. At the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- Understand the importance of water resources and water quality
- Assess the human impact of river systems and its consequences
- Relate defining properties of a river to anthropogenic influences
- Understand the important of river systems to society, culture, and environment
- Relate aspects of societal behaviour to the defining properties of a river
- Effectively produce a comprehensive paper using academic literature and other resources



Mode	Dates	Time (hours)	Frequency
Virtual asynchronous	N/A	2	weekly

- Lectures will be posted every Monday as a PDF document
- A short video introduction will be posted with every lecture as a Zoom link
- Closed captioning can be provided on audio or video recordings

All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class.

Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#). [Using the right browser is important, especially when using different features integrated with OWL]

If students need assistance, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

6. Course Content and Schedule

This course takes a case-study approach, by which a different river will be explored each week. Various aspects of these rivers will be discussed: physiography, climate, geology, natural environment, ecology, wildlife, natural resources, erosion, flooding, agriculture, navigation, settlements, pollution, industry, dams, hydropower, geo-politics, religion, and literature. However, not all these topics will be considered for each river. Each week's lecture will introduce three or four different topics pertaining to the selected river.

The following schedule/list of lecture topics is *tentative* and may change if guest lecturer(s) can be arranged.

Week	Dates	Topic
1	Jan 11 – 17	Introduction
2	Jan 18 – 24	Amazon
3	Jan 25 – 31	Mississippi
4	Feb 1 – 7	Yangtze
5	Feb 8 – 14	Mackenzie
6	Feb 15 – 21	Reading Week
7	Feb 22 – 28	Rhine and Danube
8	Mar 1 – 7	Jordan
9	Mar 8 – 14	Tigris/Euphrates
10	Mar 15 – 21	Nile
11	Mar 22 – 28	Ganges/Brahmaputra
12	Mar 29 – Apr 4	Colorado
13	Apr 5 – 11	Okavango
14	Apr 12	Exam Review



7. Online Participation and Engagement



- Students can attend online office hours, every Wednesday 10:30-11:30 on Zoom to ask any questions regarding course content or assignments
- Students can also participate by interacting in the forums on OWL with their peers and instructors.

8. Communication



- Students should check the OWL site every 24 – 48 hours
- A weekly update will be provided on the OWL announcements
- Students should email their instructor(s) and teaching assistant(s) using OWL “messages”
- 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 forum 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

9. Evaluation

Students will have to complete a combination of 5 assignments/labs/term paper during the term. The first two assignments prepare the students for their final term paper. In addition, there are two labs. Detailed assignments instructions will be provided on OWL.

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

Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Assignment #1: Essay topic description	5%	January 29th
Lab #1: My River	15%	February 12th
Lab #2: Hydrographs	15%	February 26th
Assignment #2: Annotated Bibliography	15%	March 12th
Final Essay	30%	April 12th
Take Home Final Exam	20%	Final exam period



Take Home Final Exam: 20%

The final exam will be a take-home exam during the final exam period. Students will have multiple days to complete the questions. There is no mid-term exam for this course.

Description of Assignments:

Further details will be provided when the assignments are introduced in class- below the assignments are summarized.

- Assignment #1 (5%): Students are required to create an outline of their final paper (maximum 2 pages).

- Lab #1 (15%): Students are asked to prepare photo portfolio of a river in their surrounding area, providing descriptions of different river features.
- Lab #2 (15%): Students are required to analyze river discharge data from various Canadian rivers and answer questions about them.
- Assignment #2 (15%): Students are to prepare an annotated bibliography for their final paper.
- Term Paper (30%): Students are required to write a long essay of a river that was not introduced in class on the themes that were focussed on in class and tie it all to the importance of water resources and quality (6-8 pages)

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures.

- All assignments are due at 11:55 pm EST unless otherwise specified
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin (statement in policies below)
- Students will have unlimited submissions to Turnitin
- 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

Information about late or missed evaluations:

- Late assessments without illness self-reports will be subject to a late penalty 10 %/day
- Late assessments with illness self-reports should be submitted within 24 hours of submission of the last illness self-report
- An assessment cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class; an alternate assessment will be assigned OR the weight will be transferred to the final grade

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.

10. 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](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

11.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 to ensure you have seen everything posted to help you succeed in this class.
3. Follow weekly checklists created on OWL or create your own to help you stay on track.
4. Take notes as you go through the lesson material. Treat this course as you would a face-to-face course. Keeping handwritten notes or even notes on a regular Word document will help you learn more effectively than just reading or watching the videos.
5. Connect with others. Try forming an online 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.



12.Use of Recordings

All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals under special circumstances. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

13.Statements concerning Online Etiquette

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Please “arrive” to class on time
- Please use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, please turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak
- Please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable

- Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question
- Remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking
- Self-identify when speaking
- Remember to mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise)

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. “Flaming” is never appropriate.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

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 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](#)

18. Important Dates

January 11: Classes resume

January 19: Last day to add a second term half course

February 15: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 13 to February 21: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

March 15: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

April 2: Good Friday

April 12: Classes end

April 13: Study day

April 14 to April 30: Examination Period