

## GEOG 2160B – Course Name

### Course Outline: Section 001 Winter 2024

This course is taught in-person with some asynchronous elements

#### 1. Course Information



Classes Start	Spring Reading Week	Classes End	Study day(s)	Exam Period
January 8	February 19-23	April 8	April 9 & 10	April 11-30

January 16, 2024: Last day to add a second-term half course

February 19, 2024: Family Day

March 7, 2024: Last day to drop a second term half course without academic penalty



Course Instructor	Contact Information	Office Hours
Alexander 'AJ' Wray	geog2160inbox@uwo.ca	Available by request

Teaching Assistant(s)	Contact Information	Office Hours
Olivia Caruso	geog2160inbox@uwo.ca	Tuesdays virtually from 10-11am
Josh Grignon	geog2160inbox@uwo.ca	Mondays 10-11am by appointment on campus
Desmond Oklikah	geog2160inbox@uwo.ca	Thursdays 12-1pm by appointment on campus



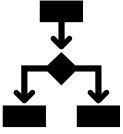
All course-related communication with the instructional team must be done through [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca) given the large size of the course and scheduling of TA workloads. Course communication sent to the Instructor or TA directly may be ignored.

Office hours will be held in person in the Department of Geography and Environment's Teaching Assistant Consultation Office (SSC 2316) during scheduled hours or remotely via Zoom during scheduled hours or by request.

Remote consultations outside of the scheduled office hours may be requested by emailing [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca), however, please contact us at least two days before the requested meeting date to accommodate scheduling of a time.

## 2. Calendar Description

A survey course exploring the connections between urban environments, health, and wellbeing, including key historical developments, theories, problems, and solutions. Hands-on activities throughout will teach skills and knowledge suitable for careers in planning, urban development, public health, medicine, business, civil engineering, and municipal government.



3.0 lecture hours, 0.5 course

Antirequisite(s): None

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."

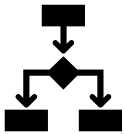
## 3. Textbook



There is no primary text for this course. Mandatory readings, videos, and activities posted on OWL should be completed prior to the date listed in the class schedule. Material listed for a particular week is expected to be completed prior to the lecture time. This material is included in the evaluation of all assessments.

## 4. Course Objectives and Format

The places we live, work, and play impact our health and wellbeing. This introductory course explores the concept of the “healthy city” from the perspective of the fields of geography, urban studies, real estate, psychology, economics, health studies, and medicine. This course is suitable for students from all faculties interested in learning about how urban places can shape our health. Through dynamic lectures and hands-on lab activities, students will discover the theories, methods, and techniques that can be used to create healthier cities for all. This is a career-focused learning opportunity that will be practical, realistic, and informative. Skills developed in this course will be transferable to a wide range of disciplines and are expected to be in significant demand among employers in government, corporate, and commercial sectors.

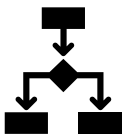


The objective of this course is to explore how historical development patterns have led to a wide range of unhealthy landscapes in North America; the impact of prescribing nature to improve wellbeing; designing cities for all children and older adults; the role of food in shaping urban health; the urban response to climate change; the triple-bottom line of public transit; and the importance of walkable and bikeable cities. Exercises will be conducted throughout the term for students to learn how to complete policy evaluations, walkability audits, geographic information system (GIS) mapping, and other techniques that are in-demand skills for employers.

Notes on course format:

- There is asynchronous coursework posted on OWL and Microsoft Stream that should be **COMPLETED PRIOR TO** the lecture.
- Attendance is required to participate in the quizzes.
- Missed work should be completed within 72 hours.
- 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](#).



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.

## 5. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the built and natural features of a city that can impact human health and wellbeing;
- Define and explain the theories that inform research, policy, and practice around healthy cities across a range of academic disciplines;
- Apply the skills that are useful for analyzing complex urban problems and developing solutions that are practical and cost-effective; and
- Articulate the value of interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration in urban health to a range of public, professional, and academic audiences.

This course contributes to achieving the Department of Geography's learning outcomes, by encouraging students to:

- Combine geographic knowledge with a focused understanding of theories and practices in other disciplines;
- Describe and explain, analyze, and interpret geographical phenomena outside the classroom by engaging with people, places, and environments;
- Analyze real-world problems and policy applications using geographical concepts, skills, and understanding; and
- Communicate geographic ideas and understanding effectively to a variety of audiences in writing, orally, and graphically.



This course contributes to achieving Western University's degree learning outcomes, by providing opportunities for students to:

- Develop a sense of discovery that drives their ability to ask and frame questions, seek out connections that are not immediately obvious, and identify, analyze and solve problems;
- Use disciplinary discourse, technical language, and research methods to identify, locate, and evaluate oral, print, graphic, numerical, scientific, or digital information in the process of solving complex problems;
- Interact and collaborate with other individuals and groups using appropriate language and reasoning so that it is clear and accessible to a variety of audiences; and
- Develop habits of constructive skepticism, differentiation, and intellectual adaptability in approaching phenomena, artefacts, issues, or arguments to identify underlying assumptions, agendas, purposes, audiences, points of view, paradigms, evidence, implications, and logical strategies that inform careful judgments.

## 6. Course Content and Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1	Jan 9	<b>Course Introduction &amp; Overview</b>
		<i>How We Live</i>
2	Jan 16	<p><b>The History of Planning &amp; Health</b> - Explore the linkages between the urban planning and public health professions. We will review various public health crises over time, and the shift from vector-based infectious disease to chronic long-term disease. We will explore the various theories that have informed how to think about health and place, and identify the legislative basis for creating healthy safe communities.</p> <p>Read <i>Tam (2017) Designing Healthy Built Environments</i> report and <i>Hancock (1993) The evolution, impact and significance of the Healthy Cities Movement</i>.</p>
3	Jan 23	<p><b>Climate Change &amp; Nature</b> - Climate change is the fundamental challenge of the next century. Changing temperatures, rising sea levels, and more extreme weather events will have a profound impact on all communities. We will examine how climate change intersects with health, through exploring the Chicago Heatwaves. We will also discuss the role of parks and nature in affecting our physical, social, and mental health.</p> <p>Read <i>City of London Climate Emergency Action Plan</i> and <i>Tillman et al. (2018) Mental health benefits of interactions with nature in children and teenagers: A systematic review</i>.</p>
4	Jan 30	<p><b>Housing &amp; Affordability</b> – This week will explore how housing and the ability to affordably access daily essentials are the foundation for health. Through historical and present-day case studies, we will examine the successes and failures of housing-based interventions to improve population health in North America.</p> <p>Read <i>Baxter et al. (2019) Effects of Housing First approaches on health and well-being of adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness: Systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials</i>.</p>
5	Feb 6	<p><b>Careers</b> - This week consists of interviews with a wide range of researchers and professionals that are involved in building healthy and thriving communities. Many are even alumni of Western's Geography and Urban Development programs. We hope these videos provide some insight into the potential of a career related to geography and healthy cities.</p>
		<i>How We Move</i>
6	Feb 13	<p><b>Automotive</b> - This week we will begin our discussion of how transportation intersects with supporting healthy and thriving communities. We begin with a discussion of the impacts of automotive transportation on health and planning. We will examine research on distracted driving, motor vehicle collisions, and interventions used to reduce injury from these collisions, helping create healthy and thriving communities.</p> <p>Read <i>Charyk Stewart et al. (2021) Evaluation of a population health strategy to reduce distracted driving: Examining all “Es” of injury prevention</i> and <i>NYT Opinion (2020) I’ve Seen a Future Without Cars</i></p>
	Feb 20	<b>Reading Week</b> – No Class

Week	Date	Topic
7	Feb 27	<p><b>Public Transit</b> - This week the transportation theme continues with a discussion of public transit and its impact on creating healthy communities. We explore how accessibility to transit impacts access to health services, opportunity structures, and amenities.</p> <p>Read <i>Lee &amp; Miller (2018) Measuring the accessibility impacts of new public transit services</i></p>
8	Mar 5	<p><b>Walk, Bike, Roll</b> – This week we will learn about active transportation, particularly the health benefits from walking, cycling, and rolling. We will explore case studies from North America and Europe on how active transportation infrastructure is built, and then has an impact on population health.</p> <p>Read <i>Wilson et al. (2018) Understanding child and parent perceptions of barriers influencing children’s active school travel</i> and <i>Healthy City Active London</i> report.</p>
9	Mar 12	<p><b>Geographic Info Systems</b> - Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are tools that can be used to organize, manage, and analyze information with a spatial element. Cartography, or map-making, is a related but separate element of GIS, whereby we communicate geographic patterns through visual representations. This week we will learn about GIS and cartography, how it is applied to real-world scenarios, and try it hands-on for ourselves.</p>
		<b>How We Play</b>
10	Mar 19	<p><b>Food Environments</b> - This week we will explore the role of food environments in shaping health and wellbeing. This is now a well-established research area in healthy communities, focused on how diet, water quality, and access to amenities impacts health.</p> <p>Read <i>Larsen &amp; Gilliland (2008) Mapping the evolution of ‘food deserts’ in a Canadian city: Supermarket accessibility in London, Ontario, 1961-2005.</i></p>
11	Mar 26	<p><b>Substance Use</b> - This week we will discuss substance use as it relates to building healthy communities. The content shared and reviewed this week is serious and may be upsetting to some, given it touches on subjects of addiction, mental health, and controlled substance use. We will share insights into how substance use and healthy communities intersect as a research and policy area.</p> <p>Watch <i>VICE (2019) Overdose crisis on the US-Canada border: Steel town down</i> and read <i>Martin et al. (2021) Examining how changes in provincial policy on vape marking impacted the distribution of vaping advertisements near secondary schools in London, Ontario.</i></p>
12	Apr 2	<p><b>Inclusive Design</b> – This week will be a live panel discussion with experts in accessibility and inclusive design.</p> <p>Read <i>Yantzi et al. (2018) The community-based revitalization of the Ridgecrest accessible neighbourhood playground in Sudbury, Canada.</i></p>

## 7. Communication



Students should check the OWL site every 48 hours.

Students should only communicate with the course instructor and TAs via [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca)

For communication to students, the centrally administered email 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.

Emails received at [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca) will be monitored daily; students will typically receive a response within 48 hours.

## 8. Evaluation

Below is the evaluation breakdown for the course. Any deviations will be communicated. The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Assessment	Format	Weighting	Due Date
Weekly Quizzes	OWL Tests & Quizzes	5% each (40%)	Jan 16, Jan 23, Jan 30, Feb 13, Feb 27, Mar 5, Mar 19, Mar 26, Apr 2
Assignment #1	Submission to OWL	15%	Feb 6
Assignment #2	Submission to OWL	10%	Mar 12
Assignment #3	Submission to OWL	15%	Apr 2
Multimedia Assignment	Submission to OWL	20%	Apr 8

Refer to OWL for a more complete evaluation schedule.



Notes on evaluation in this course:

- Quizzes are completed on a weekly basis, opening the Wednesday following the lecture at 130pm, and are due at 125pm on the day of the next class. You may complete the quiz on OWL at any time in this window. Quizzes have a time limit of 10 minutes with 10 questions unless you have a registered academic accommodation. Quizzes will only cover content from the classes immediately preceding them. The lowest quiz mark out of the 9 will be dropped at the end of the course. Therefore, the total weighting (40%) for that evaluation category will be calculated based on the top 8 of 9 quiz marks.
- Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned materials posted to OWL.
- All assignments are due at 11:55 pm EST unless otherwise specified.
- Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin.
- Assignments are evaluated using fair, objective, and structured assessment criteria that is based on the assignment instructions, course objectives and learning goals.
- After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca). Requests for a review of a mark received must be done within one week (168 hours) of an assignment being returned to the class.

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:**

- This year as an experiment, I am offering a no-questions asked extension policy to assignments. In past years, this course generated a lot of unnecessary paper work from extensions and academic consideration requests. As adults, I expect you to manage your own time and workload which may mean not following the deadlines I have laid out in the syllabus. This policy does not apply to the quizzes, as you have a full one-week window to complete any of the quizzes.
- Should you require academic consideration for more than a week, which would mean missing a quiz, that must be arranged via academic counselling. It is important to remember that your lowest quiz mark is also automatically dropped, which means one missed quiz will count as the dropped quiz.
- Therefore, you may request a "no-questions asked" extension to any assignment deadline by emailing [geog2160inbox@uwo.ca](mailto:geog2160inbox@uwo.ca) at least 24 hours in advance of the due date with a new proposed due date. Be realistic and reasonable in the due date you propose to us. You do not have to provide any justification or disclose any reason as part of the request - the 'no-questions asked' element of this policy. The instructional team will either approve your proposed date or provide you with a new reasonable due date to submit the assignment by, which is final. You may only receive one extension per assignment.
- Quizzes cannot be submitted late, and are exempt from this policy.
- All other requests outside the scope of this policy should be handled through academic counselling. Should a pattern of behaviour or reliance upon this policy emerge among a student or group of students, I reserve the right as course instructor to cancel this policy and revert to the standard university policies and procedures at any time. Late assignments without counselling documentation or completing the no-questions asked procedure above, will be subject to a late penalty of 10% per day.
- Assignments cannot be submitted after it has been returned to the class; the weight will be transferred to the multimedia assignment, if providing sufficient documentation from academic counselling.

**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](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

See the above policies related to academic considerations made for student absences.

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness - Undergraduate Students](#)

[Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)

### **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](#).

## **10. Use of Electronic Devices**

The use of an electronic device capable of accessing OWL Tests & Quizzes and the web-based client of ArcGIS is required in this course.

## **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. 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.

## 12. 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 written assignments 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 assignments 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> ).

Computer-marked multiple-choice quizzes may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## 13. 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.

## 14. 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.

## 15. 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](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](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

## 16. Important Dates

Monday January 8: Classes resume

Tuesday January 16: Last day to add a second term half course

Monday February 19: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 17 to February 25: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

Thursday March 7: Last day to drop a second term half course without academic penalty

Friday March 29: Good Friday – Department Office Closed

Monday April 8: Classes end

April 9 and 10: Study days

April 11-30: Examination Period