

## GEOG 2160B – Healthy Cities

### Course Outline: Section 001 Winter 2025

This course is taught in-person with some asynchronous elements

#### 1. Course Information

| Classes Start | Spring Reading Week | Classes End | Stay Day(s) | Exam Period |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| January 6     | February 17-23      | April 4     | April 5 & 6 | April 7-30  |

**January 14, 2025:** Last day to add a second-term half course

**February 17, 2025:** Family Day

**March 31, 2025:** Last day to drop a second term half course without penalty

| Course Instructor | Contact Information | Office Hours |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Olivia Caruso     | ocaruso@uwo.ca      | TBD          |

| Teaching Assistant(s) | Contact Information | Office Hours |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Josh Grignon          | jgrigno@uwo.ca      | TBD          |
| Neil Kovacs           | nkovac3@uwo.ca      | TBD          |
| Luis Patricio         | lbritopa@uwo.ca     | TBD          |

#### Communicating with the Instructional Team

- Students should direct all questions related to assignments to their assigned teaching assistant and all questions related to course content or quizzes to the course instructor.
- Students should email the instructor and teaching assistants using OWL Brightspace.
- Remote or in-person consultations may be requested by emailing the instructor or teaching assistants; however, requests must be made at least two days in advance of the requested meeting date to accommodate scheduling.

#### 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.

#### 2 lecture hours, 1 lab hour, 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

All course materials will be posted to OWL Brightspace. Materials will be posted one week in advance of the scheduled lecture. Students are expected to attend all lectures having completed the assigned materials. This material is testable on 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.

- There is asynchronous coursework posted on OWL Brightspace 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 the new OWL Brightspace learning environment: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/home>. Any changes will be indicated on the OWL site and discussed with the class.

Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled.

If students need assistance, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace 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        | Themes                                    | Topic                                     |
|------|-------------|---|---|
| 1    | January 7   | Foundational Knowledge                    | Introduction to Healthy Cities            |
| 2    | January 14  | Healthy Cities for Whom?                  | Health Inequities & Environmental Justice |
| 3    | January 21  | Key Issues                                | Housing                                   |
| 4    | January 28  |   | Climate Change                            |
| 5    | February 4  |   | Green Infrastructure                      |
| 6    | February 11 |   | Transportation                            |
| 7    | February 25 |   | Food Environments                         |
| 8    | March 4     |   | Substance Use                             |
| 9    | March 11    | Skills Week                               | Geographic Information Systems            |
| 10   | March 18    | Healthy Cities throughout the Life Course | Child Health & Urban Environments         |
| 11   | March 25    |   | Healthy Communities & Ageing              |
| 12   | April 1     | Healthy Cities of the Future              | Smart Cities                              |

## 7. Communication

- Students should check the OWL site every 48 hours
- A weekly update will be provided on the OWL announcements

- Students should email their instructor(s) and teaching assistant(s) using OWL Brightspace. Students will typically receive a response within 48 business hours (i.e., Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm).
- 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.

## 8. Evaluation

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

| Assessment    | Format                          | Weighting     | Due Date  |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Quizzes       | OWL Brightspace Tests & Quizzes | 2% each (20%) | January 14, 21, 28;<br>February 4, 11, 25;<br>March 4, 11, 18, 25;<br>April 1 |
| Assignment #1 | Submission to OWL Brightspace   | 20%           | February 4  |
| Assignment #2 | Submission to OWL Brightspace   | 20%           | February 25   |
| Assignment #3 | Submission to OWL Brightspace   | 20%           | March 18  |
| Assignment #4 | Submission to OWL Brightspace   | 20%           | April 1   |

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course. Alternative assessments are not possible as they would not match the intended learning objectives for the course.

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned materials posted on OWL Brightspace.

Quizzes are completed on a weekly basis. Quizzes will open on Tuesdays at 9:30pm EST and close on Fridays at 11:55pm EST. They may be completed at any time during this window. Quizzes must be completed within 10 minutes of starting and will only cover content from the classes immediately preceding them. The lowest quiz mark will be dropped at the end of the course and the total weighting (20%) will be calculated based on the top 10 of 11 quiz marks.

All assignments are due at 11:55pm EST on the identified due date 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. All assignments are evaluated using fair, objective, and structured assessment criteria that is based on the assignment instructions, course objectives, and learning goals.

In this course, you are encouraged to use AI tools to generate ideas, explore topics, and assist in brainstorming. However, AI tools may not be used to write or complete your assignments. All submitted work must be your original writing, analysis, and reasoning. Using AI-generated content in your

assignments is considered academic misconduct and will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary actions.

After an assessment is returned, students must wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting the teaching assistants. Requests for a review of a mark must be submitted within one week 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 on Late or Missed Evaluations:**

- All assignments will have a flexible deadline. You may submit any assignment within 72 hours (i.e., by Friday at 11:55pm) of the assignment deadline specified above. You do not need to email the course instructor or teaching assistants to request this option nor are you required to provide any justification or documentation. Quizzes are exempt from this policy.
- All other extension requests outside the scope of this policy will only be granted to students with approved documentation from their faculty's academic counselling office. All documentation must be submitted to academic counselling within 48 hours of the identified assignment deadline, otherwise a late penalty will be applied.
- Late assignments submitted more than 72 hours after the identified assignment deadline and without formal documentation from academic counselling will be subject to a late penalty of 10% per day.
- Late assignments submitted 1 week (or more) after the identified assignment deadline and without formal documentation from academic counselling will receive a mark of zero.

**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](#).

**General Information about missed work:**

University policy on academic considerations are described here. This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

### **Flexibility statements**

Please note, because not all quizzes are required in the calculation of the final course grade, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for these missed elements.

Please note that because the submission deadlines for all assignments already include flexibility in the form of a 72-hour submission window, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.

### **Absence from Course Commitments**

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

### **Course Assessments that Require Supporting Documentation**

None

### **Academic Consideration for Course Components with Flexible Deadlines**

This course has 11 quizzes with only 10/11 quizzes counted towards your final grade. Academic consideration will not be granted for missed quizzes. If students miss 1/11 quizzes, the remaining 10 quizzes will be used in the calculation of the final grade. If students miss more than 1 quiz, they will receive a grade of zero on each missed quiz.

This course uses flexible deadlines for assignments. The assignment deadlines can be found above in the course outline. For each assignment, students are expected to submit the assignment by the deadline listed. Should illness or extenuating circumstances arise, students are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without academic penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 72 hours past the deadline, a late penalty of 10% per day will be subtracted from the assessed grade. As flexible deadlines are used in this course, requests for academic consideration will not be granted. If you have a long-term academic consideration or an accommodation for disability that allows greater flexibility than provided here, please reach out to your instructor at least one week prior to the posted deadline.

### **Accommodation for Religious Holidays**

Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

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

An electronic device capable of accessing OWL Brightspace Tests & Quizzes and the web-based client of ArcGIS is required for 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 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>).

### **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 6: Classes resume

Tuesday January 14: Last day to add a second term half course

Monday February 17: Family Day – Department Office Closed

February 17-23: Spring Reading Week (No classes; Department Office open)

Friday March 31: Last day to drop a second term half course

Friday April 4: Classes end

April 5 and 6: Study days

April 7-30: Examination Period