

## MCGILL DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

### COURSE OUTLINE

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<b>GEOG 503</b>	<b>ADVANCED TOPICS IN HEALTH GEOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Fall 2014</b>
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**Instructors:** Dr. Nancy Ross and Dr. Lea Berrang Ford

**Lectures:** 11h35-14h25 Wednesdays

**Location:** Burnside 429

**Contact information:** Dr. Ross, Burnside Hall Rm. 420, [Nancy.Ross@McGill.ca](mailto:Nancy.Ross@McGill.ca), 514-398-4307  
Dr. Berrang-Ford, Burnside Hall Rm. 419, [Lea.BerrangFord@McGill.ca](mailto:Lea.BerrangFord@McGill.ca),  
514-398-4944

**Readings :** A list of readings is attached. Readings are available electronically through *MyCourses*.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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This course provides a critical review of advanced topics in health geography, including perspectives chronic and infectious disease research and environmental and social determinants of health. Seminars will focus on critical appraisal of conceptual and methodological approaches in health geography research. Students will develop independent project topics throughout the course, and have the opportunity to focus on selected themes in health geography.

Students are not required to have specific expertise in health, geography, and environment. Students should, however, have relevant interest/ courses in one of these areas.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

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By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe dominant paradigms and conceptual approaches in health geography.
2. Critically appraise literature in the health and geographic sciences.
3. Evaluate alternative methodological approaches to health geography research.
4. Facilitate seminar discussions on selected health geography themes.

### INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD

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There will be one 3-hour seminar every Wednesday. Seminars will include both instructor-led and student-lead group discussion. Students are expected to complete readings and prepare to participate actively during class discussions.

## METHOD OF EVALUATION

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### Evaluation

Thematic presentation (1)	20%
Proposal for Systematic Review	10%
Final Paper – A publishable quality systematic review	50%
Final presentation of review paper	10%
Participation	10%

Thematic presentations: Students will present and facilitate a review of a selected paper for one of the course themes (Weeks 5-10 only). Students will be expected to identify an application paper appropriate to the week's topic, provide it to the instructor to post for class-wide reading, present a summary and critical appraisal of the research, and facilitate discussion related to the research and thematic topic.

Proposal for Systematic Review: Students will propose a systematic review in an area of interest to them. The proposal should be about 3 pages in length and communicate the need for a systematic review of a particular body of work. Search strategy and study inclusion criteria should be described as well as an estimate of the number of studies to be included in the review. **The proposal is due Oct. 15, 2014 [week 7] at the beginning of class.**

Final paper: Students will prepare a systematic review of the literature (5,000-word maximum) on a topic related to their research interests. This review should incorporate principles of systematic review learned in class and incorporate critical appraisal of a body of literature. The aim is to produce a publishable quality paper that will also inform the student's research. Students will present their reviews to the class in the final course session. **The papers are due Dec. 3rd.**

Final presentation of review paper: Students will prepare a short presentation of their independent review paper, including a summary of the background, review objective, methodology, key findings, and implications of their work.

Participation: Class participation is a requirement of the course. Quality of contribution is preferred over quantity. Overall class preparation and participation as well as performance in student-led discussion will be assessed for the participation grade. Class participation will be evaluated based on evidence that students have read assigned readings and prepared for class, and regular, thoughtful contribution to weekly discussions.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

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Policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities, Charter of Students' Right (online at <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/secretariat/greenbookenglish.pdf>).

**Academic Integrity:** McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/student/srr/honest](http://www.mcgill.ca/student/srr/honest) for more information).

**Language of Submission:** In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Student assessment:** For information on university and department policies for student assessment, please go to <http://www.mcgill.ca/geography/studentassessment>

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**COURSE SCHEDULE 2014**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	
<b>Week 1</b> 3 Sept	First Meeting: introductions, student-led discussion about their research interests, course expectations, review of the syllabus	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Week 2</b> 10 Sept	An Introduction: health geography, epidemiology, population level perspectives	<b>NR+LBF</b>
<b>Week 3</b> 17 Sept	Critical appraisal – student brainstorming on their topics	<b>NR+LBF</b>
<b>Week 4</b> 24 Sept	Systematic review preamble Pragmatics of systematic review - getting a handle on the health literature	<b>NR+LBF+Librarian</b>
<b>Week 5</b> 1 Oct	Context and Composition	<b>NR+LBF</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 8 Oct	The Social Gradient in Health	<b>LBF</b>
<b>Week 7</b> 15 Oct	Climate Change and Health	<b>NR+</b>
<b>Week 8</b> 22 Oct	Infectious Disease Population Health Perspectives	<b>LBF+</b>
<b>Week 9</b> 29 Oct	Obesogenic Environments	<b>NR+</b>
<b>Week 10</b> 5 Nov	Student Paper Presentations	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Week 11</b> 12 Nov	Student Paper Presentations	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Week 12</b> 19 Nov	Student Paper Presentations	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Week 13</b> 26 Nov	Summary and Conclusions	<b>ALL</b>

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