

# GEOG 631 Methods of Geographical Research

Winter Semester 2022

Tuesdays 10:05 – 11:25 AM EST

The purpose of this course is to introduce graduate students to geographical research leading to the preparation of the thesis proposal and its presentation to the class in the winter term. During the Winter term, there will be a series of seminars on research topics and seminars presented by Geography faculty on their research area. For some seminars, two to three articles or book chapters will be assigned, and students are expected to have read them before the seminar and to participate in discussion. Students will be evaluated on depth of their reading, breadth of participation in discussion and, ultimately, their ability to articulate their research project and its broader significance.

**This course will take place entirely online.** We will primarily use the following three platforms:

- **MyCourses** will be the primary platform for documents (access readings and submit assignments) and official announcements (e.g., updates on assignments and deadlines).
- **Zoom** will be used for class time. A link to the recurrent Zoom meeting is available on MyCourses.
- **Microsoft Teams** will be the primary method of communication outside of classes (discussions, office hours, etc.). You will have to download the desktop app to be able to make calls on Teams.

## Instructors:

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## Requirements (Winter):

GEOG 631 is graded as “pass/fail”. Attendance is strongly encouraged. If you cannot make it to a class, please notify the instructors in advance to make arrangements. Students are asked to read all the required readings prior to each session. Reading materials for each session will be made available on myCourses\* as PDF files or links at least one week in advance. Additionally, the following are required:

Proposal workshop with proposal draft	April 6 (draft due March 30)
Thesis/dissertation proposal presentation	<b>April 13-14</b> (9a - 12p)
Thesis/dissertation proposal	April 14
Attend GeoSpectives lectures	Various dates
Discussion questions	As required

**It is imperative that you keep your supervisor apprised of your progress towards your thesis/dissertation proposal. It is also important that you notify your supervisor as to when you will be presenting (either April 13 or April 14) so that they can plan on attending your presentation.**

### **Details on assignments:**

- *Thesis/dissertation Proposal:* You must work closely with your supervisor to establish mutual expectations for the thesis or dissertation proposal, including length and content. Proposals generally include a clear statement of your research question, the theoretical and empirical context of the research, the research design and methodology (including proposed data and analysis), the expected findings, and a demonstration of the originality and relevance of the research.
- *Thesis/dissertation proposal presentation:* At the end of the winter term, each student will give a 20-minute presentation of their thesis/dissertation proposal. Plan to speak for 15 minutes, with 5 minutes for questions. For MA/MSc students, this presentation should be based on the written proposal for GEOG-698, which is submitted to and marked by your supervisory committee in mid-April. For PhD students, the proposal is submitted as part of the Comprehensive Examination, usually taken at the end of the first year, or beginning of the second year.
- *Proposal workshop:* On April 6th, students will meet in small groups (3-4 students) to discuss drafts of each other's proposals. *Therefore, you need to have a working draft of your proposals completed and circulated by March 30<sup>h</sup>.* The purpose of this session will be to offer each other constructive criticism and suggestions before the final presentations.
- *Geospectives:* Students are expected to attend lectures given periodically in the Department's Geospectives Series.
- *Discussion questions:* For some classes, students will be required to bring questions and comments to class on the readings assigned for that day. We will let you know in advance when that is the case.

**Coursework.** MA/MSc students need to enroll in four graduate-level (-500 or -600 level) courses, plus 631 and 698 (thesis proposal): a total of 21 credits in the first year. The thesis course (GEOG-699) contributes a further 24 credits, in the second year. PhD students need to enroll in at least two graduate-level courses and 631. Enrolment in the Comprehensive Examination courses (GEOG700, -701 and -702) should take place before the examination.

**Readings.** Readings for the course, when there are any (e.g., faculty research discussions), will be made available on myCourses a week or more in advance of the classes.

## Schedule of Classes

Please, note that modifications may be introduced to the schedule as the semester progresses. Updated schedules will be made available to all students via myCourses as soon as possible.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	11/01	Faculty research discussion I
2	18/01	Multi/inter/trans-disciplinary research
3	25/01	Faculty research discussion II
4	01/02	Student writing workshop
5	08/02	Quantitative methods in Geography
5	15/02	Qualitative methods in Geography
6	22/02	Faculty research discussion III
Winter break		
8	08/03	Finding a job
9	15/03	Research in progress I
10	22/03	Research in progress II
11	29/03	Research in progress III
12	05/04	Proposals workshop among students
13	<b>13/04</b>	<b>Proposal Presentations (9a - 12p)</b>
13	<b>14/04</b>	<b>Proposal Presentations (9a - 12p)</b>

**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/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information). Any case in which the instructor suspects plagiarism will be referred to the Dean of Students.

**Absences:** Attendance is strongly encouraged for all fixed sessions. Given the difficulties inherent to the current context, absences will not be penalized. However, students are required to contact the instructor prior to any missed fixed session to arrange alternatives.

**Announcements:** Students are expected to log in to their myCourses page and check announcements regularly. It will be considered that the information posted on myCourses is known to all.

**Changes to evaluation scheme:** In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the evaluation scheme is subject to change, provided that there be timely communications to the students regarding the change.

**Copyright:** Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

**Dialogue:** In a course involving discussions around present-day issues among people from multiple backgrounds, you may at some point be confronted with ideas, words or opinions that make you uncomfortable. If such a situation arises, please bring it up with the person at the origin of the discomfort or with the instructor, to the extent that you feel safe doing so. Opening dialogue can help clarify positions, dispel misunderstandings, and sometimes help the person at the origin of the discomfort see realities they weren't aware of. This helps foster a culture of respect and care in academia.

**Etiquette and "netiquette":** Please use appropriate and respectful language with each other and with the instructor, whether in person or online. Emails starting with "hey prof" and/or containing multiple grammatical errors will be ignored. To maintain a clear and uninterrupted learning space for all when attending remote teaching, you should keep your microphone muted throughout your class, unless invited by the instructor to speak. You should follow instructors' directions about the use of the "chat" function on remote learning platforms.

**Format and style:** All assignments are to be submitted through myCourses as Pdf documents. Students are required to type their text in 12-point font with standard margins and double spacing. Use single spacing for block quotations, footnotes, appendices, and bibliographies. References and citations must follow a standard academic format. In-text citations are preferred: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html).

**Language:** 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.

**Mutual respect** is expected at all times among instructors, teaching assistants, support staff and students at McGill University. Students are referred to the webpage of Student Rights and Responsibilities <https://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/>. Aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. This includes offensive or harmful language arising in contexts such as usernames, visual backgrounds or chat boxes in the context of remote learning.

**Recording of lectures:** By enrolling in a remote course, you accept that fixed sessions may be recorded. You must consent to being recorded if you are attending a lecture or participating in a component of a course that is being recorded. You will be notified through a "pop-up" box in Zoom if a lecture or portion of a class is being recorded. If you are not comfortable with this, you may decide to not take part by logging off Zoom. Students who log off will be able to later watch the video recording in MyCourses. In addition to the recording of your image and voice, your name (or preferred name) may be displayed on screen, and your instructor may call your name during the lecture. As such, this personal information will be disclosed to classmates. By remaining in classes that are being recorded, you accept that personal information of this kind may be disclosed to others, whether during the lecture or in viewing the recording.

**Special Needs:** If you have a disability, you are welcome to contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. Please also make contact with the Office for Students with Disabilities.

