

Geography of Canada

GEOG 2570

Syllabus

Contacting your instructor

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter link in your course website.

Course description

The *Undergraduate Calendar* of The University of Manitoba describes GEOG 2570 as follows:

A regional study of Canada. Lectures are the same as those given during one term of GEOG 2560 (or 053.256). May not be held with GEOG 2560, 053.256, 053.330, GEOG 3430, 053.343, GEOG 3650 or 053.365. Prerequisite: a grade of "C" or better in a minimum of three credit hours from Geography courses numbered at the 100 level, or written consent of department head.

Geography is a multi-disciplinary science that analyzes variations in phenomena from place to place on the earth's surface. Geography has traditionally been divided into **physical geography**, which examines the spatial patterns of the physical environment and attempts to understand why these patterns occur, and **human geography**, which examines and attempts to explain the spatial patterns of the cultural, social, and economic environments.

Geography can also be described as having both systemic and regional approaches to study. Systemic geography examines individual topics such as climate, geomorphology, and population. On the other hand, the regional concept is an approach within the physical-human framework that has long been used to understand and describe the likenesses and differences of places on the earth's surface. In defining a region, Broek (1965) says:

A region has some kind of internal homogeneity which distinguishes it from surrounding areas. Its distinct character may be perceived in the uniformity of its landscape features or in its mode of life, or it may be inferred from the way all parts work together in a functional system. A region is an areal generalization.¹

Course goals

There are three specifically geographic goals:

- to introduce Canadian geography as a field of study in its various ramifications;
- to examine the major geographical regions of Canada, with attention to their physical and human characteristics, and how these affect the economic, social, political, and cultural aspects of human life; and
- to increase your knowledge of Canada, both generally and specifically.

There are two general educational goals:

- to encourage your reading about Canadian geography in both academic and general sources; and
- to strengthen your critical thinking and analytical abilities through the preparation of several written assignments.

Course overview

Our study of Canada focuses on several regions and begins with an examination of the core, or heartland, and continues through a study of the various other regions, or hinterlands, which comprise the nation. For our purposes, the regions we examine are as follows:

- the Heartland
- the Atlantic provinces: the Maritimes and Newfoundland and Labrador
- the West – Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta
- the Cordillera – British Columbia and the western mountains
- the Territorial North.

As you will soon learn, these regions are not always entirely separate and often other geographers have identified different regions. Our study of Canada will examine many components and interrelated regions making up a distinct and complex nation.

- We begin our study in unit 1 with an overview of the nation's biophysical characteristics and its early history.
- Unit 2 examines the development of the nation's heartland, or core, and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Subsequent modules explore Canada's hinterland regions.
- Unit 3 examines the Atlantic region comprised of Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.
- Unit 4 looks at Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.
- Unit 5 completes our study with British Columbia and Canada's three northern territories.

It is important to remember that while each region is, in many ways, distinctly separate from others in Canada, there are many instances of overlap and interrelationships. Remember, you will be examining regional components of a single nation. Even though a region may have distinct cultural, political, or physical characteristics, it is linked strongly to the nation and the other regions.

Four recurring concepts will guide your study of Canada:

1. The physical and biological components of the region: How do people make use of the land's biophysical resources (historically and currently)?
2. The historical development of the region: By interpreting the historical patterns of settlement and resource use, present day patterns of settlement and the economic strengths and weaknesses of a region can be better understood.
3. The physical, cultural, and economic interrelationships of a region which combine to give Canada and Canadians a national identity.
4. The region's and the nation's relationships with the North American market.

When you complete a unit you should review these concepts to ensure that you understand them for each region.

Unit organization

In general, each unit of this course is organized according to these topics:

- **Learning objectives:** a complex statement of what you are expected to accomplish or be able to demonstrate upon completion of the unit.
- Useful Website Links

- **Study and review questions:** also found in your course materials folder, these are designed to focus your attention as you read and review the commentary; not to be submitted for evaluation, but useful in preparing for the final examination. Most of the answers can be found by carefully reviewing the commentary and referring to the assigned readings.
- **Assignments:** a set of questions to be submitted for grading available under the Lessons tab of your course. Click on the “How to submit” link for further information on how to submit your assignment.
- **Sketch Maps of Canada:** Sketch maps are often appropriate in helping complete an answer. Therefore, basic maps of Canada are supplied on your course website. You will find additional maps at the Atlas of Canada website. The URL for the Atlas of Canada is <http://atlas.gc.ca/site/english/index.html>.
- **Assigned reading:** selections from the required texts, online articles in the course website.
- **Introduction:** opening remarks on the detailed commentary that follows.
- **Commentary notes:** an overview of the material to be studied, along with references identified in the Endnotes section. A specific Case Study is included.

Course materials

The required materials for this course are the textbook, and three articles from *The Canadian Geographer* all available online in the course website.

Other resource materials useful for exploring topics in greater depth may be obtained from the University Library, your local library, and other sources. Your learning experience can be enhanced by making use of current events in your answers, so do not ignore newspapers and magazines. Sketch maps are often appropriate in completing an answer. Basic maps of Canada are supplied with the assignments.

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Required texts

Bone, Robert M. *The Regional Geography of Canada*. 6th ed. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2014.

The textbook is available through the University of Manitoba Bookstore.

Recommended material

You will find some Internet resources at the end of each module. All of the addresses were current at the time of the course being released to students. However, URLs do change. If you find one that doesn't work, please email de_support@umanitoba.ca, or call (204) 474-8012.

Other resource materials, should you wish to explore topics in greater depth, may be obtained from your local library, through inter-library loans, or via other means. As discussed in the *Student Information Handbook*, you also have access to the University Library system

Do not ignore newspapers and current events magazines. Making use of current events in your answers to study questions and assignments can enhance your learning experience.

A book on Canadian history may be useful to you. The Riendeau text below is a recommended one:

Riendeau, Roger. *A Brief History of Canada*. Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2000.

How to proceed

The following steps will assist you in your study of each unit.

1. **Read** the learning objectives of the unit.
2. **Read** the commentary and endnotes.
3. **Note** any study and review questions.
4. **Preview** the assignment questions.
5. **Read** the text and other assigned readings and **make notes**.
6. **Answer** the study and review questions you noted in step 3.
7. **Review** the learning objectives.
8. **Complete** the assignment questions and **submit** them for grading. The “How to Submit” link located under the Assignments section describes the procedure for submitting assignments. If you have problems or wish further clarification, discuss the matter with your instructor.

Each unit is designed to highlight important facts or concepts. Your textbook and the reprint articles will provide much more detail required in the completion of the assignment questions.

When you have finished your reading and note-taking, and have reviewed the learning objectives, you are ready to complete the assignment questions. Answer these questions in your own words, but feel free to use quotations from your readings or other sources in support of your answers. Be sure to cite your sources properly. Type your answers clearly and concisely, using examples to illustrate your answer. The use of maps and tables is encouraged, as is reference to current events.

Evaluation and grading

General guidelines

To meet the course requirements you must complete the following:

- Three written assignments, each of which is worth 20 percent of your final grade. Altogether, the three assignments are worth 60 percent of the final grade. The assignments can be found by going to the assignments section in the course website.
- A final examination will test your understanding of key facts and concepts, and your ability to integrate them with the various sections of the course. The final exam, worth 40 percent of your final grade, will be scheduled by the University as indicated in the *Distance Education Guide*. Specific information about the nature of the final examination will be provided by the instructor during the course.
- Review the sections on assignments and final examinations in the *Student Handbook*.

General guidelines for assignment and exam preparation

A word of caution about the assignments and the final examination

Some students find that they do very well on the assignments, but they do not do nearly as well on the final examination. While your grades on the assignments will give you some idea of how well you are mastering the material, they may not indicate how well you will do on the examination, because the examination is written under very different circumstances. Because the assignments are open book, they do not require the amount of memorization that a closed-book examination requires nor are they limited to a specific time period. Some students have told us that, based on the high marks they received on the assignments, they were overconfident and underestimated the time and effort needed to prepare for the final examination.

Please keep all this in mind as you prepare for the examination. Pay careful attention to the description of the type of questions that will be on your final examination. Preparing for multiple choice questions involves a different type of studying than preparing for essay questions. Do not underestimate the stress involved in writing a time-limited examination.

Assignment due dates

Unit	Sept.-Dec.	Jan.-Apr.	May-Aug.
1	September 30	January 31	May 31
2	October 21	February 21	June 21
3	November 15	March 15	July 15

Note (1): If you need to write the final exam at a location other than the University of Manitoba Campus, please submit the “Application Form for Examination at a Location Other than the University of Manitoba Campus” immediately.

Note (2): If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date, for we cannot guarantee that the instructor will accept late assignments.

Distribution of marks

Assignment	Value
1	20%
2	20%
3	20%
Final examination	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

Grading scale

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	90 - 100	Exceptional
A	80 - 89	Excellent
B+	75 - 79	Very good
B	70 - 74	Good
C+	65 - 69	Satisfactory
C	60 - 64	Adequate
D	50 - 59	Marginal
F	0 - 49	Failure

Please note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Endnote

¹ Broek, Jan. (1965). *Geography: Its Scope and Spirit*. New York: Charles E. Merrill, p. 73.

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contacting Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgments

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The University of Manitoba, Distance and Online Education

This course manual was developed at the University of Saskatchewan (Geog 202.3 X01 Regional Geography of Canada) and is used by The University of Manitoba by special arrangement.

Please note that there is no agreement implied or otherwise, that students registered in this course (Geography of Canada, GEOG 2570) at The University of Manitoba are simultaneously earning credit at The University of Saskatchewan.