

University of Victoria

Department of Geography

GEOGRAPHY 477, FALL 2016

“FIELD STUDIES IN PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY”

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Dr. Dan Smith, **Office:** Inside SSM B123, **Phone:** 250-721-7328 (office),

E-mail: smith@uvic.ca **Office Hours:** Open door or by appointment.

Course Description

The purpose of Geography 477 is to provide students with the opportunity to observe and study various aspects of Physical Geography, in the field, in a diverse and spectacular mountain environment. Rogers Pass, situated in the Selkirk Range and within Glacier National Park in the interior of BC, is the field base for Geography 477. This area, in addition to presenting some spectacular mountain scenery and fine examples of temperate mountain rainforest and sub-alpine and alpine ecosystems, is of great historical significance to trans-continental transportation in Canada and to the emergence of mountain tourism in North America.

Today in much of the area, land uses of all types are carefully controlled and managed under the National Parks Act as part of Glacier and Mount Revelstoke National Parks. While most of the emphasis of the field excursion will be on aspects of Physical Geography, namely geomorphology, hydrology, climatology, glaciology, biogeography, soils and environmental chronology and change, such topics as resource and hazards management, land use histories, public lands policy and tourism and recreation will be considered as well.

Course Logistics

Participants in the field excursion are housed at the Parks Canada facility located at Rogers Pass on Highway #1 (the Trans Canada Highway). Transportation to and from Rogers Pass, and during the time in the field as needed, is by mini-van. For most daily excursions, participants will be relying on their own two feet to travel to some of the most spectacular and demanding mountain trails in western Canada for the purpose of observing and studying various aspects of the physical geography, as noted above.

Accommodation at the Parks Canada facility consists of individual rooms, shared bathrooms with showers, a well-equipped kitchen, a large eating and common use area and some recreational facilities. Food is supplied as part of the excursion and all participants are expected to prepare their own breakfasts and packed lunches and to take part in dinner preparation and clean-up, and the major facility clean-up at the end of the stay.

Participants should bring a sleeping bag or sheets/blankets and a towel. You may want to bring your own pillow, as there are not always any to be found. You will need a day pack to carry lunches, extra

clothes, etc. Bring a water bottle or two. Some folks also like to bring along a thermos to fill with something warm.

You can expect all types of weather during the field camp and you should be prepared to “weather” rain, snow, wind and sun. A toque and gloves sometimes come in handy. A small portable umbrella also is handy especially when you are trying to take field notes in the rain! Footwear is always an issue and it is recommended that you have some type of hiking shoe/boot for trail and off-trail walking and scrambling. Sturdy running-type shoes are fine on many of the trails but on steep, gravelly trails they can be dangerous. In wet and snowy conditions they quickly become “uncomfortable”. Thus the recommendation of hiking shoes/boots. You will need a notebook. Cameras are always useful but not required. Basic first aid material comes with the course. Ibuprofen, as in Advil, is useful to have along to deal with minor aches and pains, as is “moleskin” for foot blisters if you are so prone.

The first 3–4 days will be devoted to introductory lectures and field visits to various sites, several of which involve a day-long hike. During this period you are expected to settle on a topic for a research paper to be done in groups, usually averaging +4 people. The next 2 days will consist of field data collection, using available equipment and methods. A final day is set aside for additional data collection and/or a voluntary hike.

Following the field camp the project groups are expected to work on non-field data collection, data analysis and preparation of a final group research report. Geography 477 is meant to provide you with some experience in field data and secondary data collection and data analysis.

Course Schedule and Structure

Friday, Sept. 9: **depart UVic Stadium Parking Lot at ca. 530 am** and travel to Rogers Pass, arriving in the early evening.

Saturday, Sept. 10 to Tuesday, Sept. 13: introductory lectures and daily field trips to such places as Asulkan Valley/Glacier, Balu Pass, Mt. Revelstoke, roadside avalanche and debris flow/landslide sites – exact location dependent upon on weather conditions.

Wednesday, Sept 14 and Thursday, Sept. 15: student group projects data collection, etc.

Friday, Sept. 16: ‘spare’ day for further data collection and/or “wind-up” hikes, e.g. Abbott Ridge – depending on weather.

Saturday, Sept. 17: depart Rogers Pass at 7am and travel to Victoria, UVic Stadium Parking Lot in early evening.

Early- November: a class meeting/gathering for presentation of student projects, date, place and time to be announced.

November 1: written project reports due.

Evaluation

The course grade is based on the oral (20%) and written (80%) presentations of the research report. The requirements of the report include: introduction with objectives, review of relevant research literature, description of methods, summary and interpretation of results, conclusions relevant to the objectives, appropriate illustrations and reference list.

Course Text

The online Geography 477 readings @
<http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept2/faculty/smithd/477/477resource.htm>

Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

UNIVERSITY GRADING AND POLICY INFORMATION

Note the new undergraduate grading information presented in the 2014-2015 calendar.
(<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2014-09/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html>)