

Department of Geography
Personal Space: Exploring Geographies of Gender, Sexuality and Identity
Geography 409, Summer 2024
Course Syllabus

Instructor	Professor Teresa Dawson (she/her), tdawson@uvic.ca
Class time	Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 10:00 AM – 12:20 PM (followed by office hours)
Location	CLHE A330.
Office Hours	After each class <u>and by appointment</u> if those times do not work for you. DTB B316.
Brightspace site:	There is a Brightspace site for this course. It is best accessed through your UVic page.

Some really important notes before we start. Please read carefully.

- 1. The intensive nature of this course and time commitment expectations**—normal UVic classes last 13 weeks. That means just one class of this intensive course is worth at least a week’s worth of learning in the regular term. Also remember, as you consider your schedule, that general university expectations would be that we prepare and work for at least as much time outside the class as we would inside the class. We will all need to be fully engaged to keep up and you should budget at least two and half hours outside of class per day in addition to attending class. Put another way, taking this class is equivalent to taking a 4 courses over the 3 ½ weeks.
- 2. Understanding the potential for triggering in this course and the need for self care**
Each of us brings our unique passions, experiences and histories with us to the class. We have no idea what others have struggled with, or overcome, to join us. For this reason, kindness to each other will be imperative if we are all to succeed. Diversity of knowledge and backgrounds can only enhance the learning for all of us. However, each of us can inadvertently be triggered by a topic, a phrase, a reference, an image, an association, and so on. While I do everything I can to prevent us from experiencing any kind of distress in this class, and would never intentionally cause anyone harm, I acknowledge that triggers are many and varied and often unpredictable for each and every one of us, particularly at present. For this reason, please have a plan to cope should something arise for you, by for example stepping away, having a cup of tea, or going for a walk. As always, do not hesitate to contact me if I can help or support you in any way, and as the need arises. If you would like me to be aware of something you are struggling with in the course material or approach, please don’t hesitate to let me know.
- 3. Community commitment and authentic presence**
It may be hard to understand this until you have experienced it but this class only works if we commit to it as a community. Unlike in a lecture course where, if you miss class, only you lose the benefit, in this course, if you miss class, then everyone may suffer. This is why the authentic presence mark (see below) for this course is so high—to reflect the crucial aspect of helping to create the class and support everyone in it. In particular, **please don’t miss the first week’s classes**. This course employs feminist pedagogy techniques. We create a community of learning from the first class including a class agreement on how we will learn together. It is impossible to recreate that conversation for anyone who misses it and it is essential for everyone’s safety that we are all part of that conversation.
- 4. One class may start at 9am instead of 10am in order to accommodate an essential guest speaker.** I will give you warning once I know the day.

Communications

- *Please look for emails or notices from me every weekday and please, if I ask you a question, do your absolute best to respond within 24 hours. I will attempt to do the same in return.* This is an unusual requirement because the course is intensive and I want to be sure no one falls behind or gets lost.
- *Course information, tips, reminders, and all notices:* I will put anything I think might help you on the Brightspace site. Please check your preferred email address is correct so you do not miss anything. Visit regularly.
- *Emailing me:* tdawson@uvic.ca. Please put **<Geog 409: your name: brief subject>** in the heading. This allows me to sort at the end of each day to check for emails and respond. I truly welcome you to come and discuss your geography ideas and questions at times other than office hours. Please email me if you need an appointment for a different time.

Description

This course is specifically designed to allow you to explore how our collective disciplinary geographical interests in gender, sexuality and identity intersect with your own personal and unique spaces of reflection, action and interaction. It was developed at the request of past and present students in Geography who wanted to explore a variety of identity issues in a safe environment. For this reason, the course is designed to be somewhat co-created and student directed. I will bring content knowledge, introduce you to some geographers who are well-known (and definitely worth getting to know) in the field, help you sample the literature and key ideas, and generally support your learning in any way I can. I hope you will bring your own context and questions to explore.

Why does understanding geographies of gender, sexuality and identity matter so much? For me, the human geography project is about understanding, and taking action to reduce, suffering caused by social injustice. Since so many of the current social injustices we see across the globe are rooted in discrimination (or even outright hatred) against the “other,” and some of the strongest “othering” occurs as a result of these particular social constructs, it seems essential to critically interrogate them if we are to make a difference. Further, as Geographers have long pointed out, our identity is inextricably and intimately linked to matters of space, place and location (often on a very personal level), which makes it essential to always position our work in a geographical context.

Within the field, feminist geographers and geographies have contributed enormously to our knowledge and understanding of social constructions of gender, sexuality and identity since at least the 1970s. However, there are several other approaches that are also important including post-structural, anarchist and post-modern theorists. More recently they have been joined by scholars contributing LGBTQ2+ insights and critiques, as well as those informed by discussions of masculinities. Together these scholars have produced a rich and diverse field of vibrant and dynamic inquiry, as well as suggesting ways to grapple with how to apply our greater understanding to practical and relevant action in our lived experience of the workplace, the home, schools, recreational facilities, and other personal activity spaces.

While this course is designed to be co-constructed the following are some of the themes and sites of inquiry that I anticipate we will explore:

- Feminist, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Non-binary, Queer, Two-Spirit and Masculinist discourses as they relate to geographies of social justice
- Creation, loss, and (re)claiming of identities
- The body as a site of struggle
- Private, public (and intermediate) personal spaces at different scales
- Intersections with locations of home, work, volunteering, service, education, environment, leisure, etc.
- Intersections with identities of kinship and family, (dis)ability, Indigeneity, class, ethnicity, race, religion, belief systems, age, nationality, ways of knowing, relationships to nature, and so on.

Note: A full schedule of readings, topics and activities will be posted as we co-construct them.

Learning Goals and Outcomes for this course

- Improve your understanding of how the social constructs of gender, sexuality and identity underlie many issues of social injustice
- Link theoretical perspectives to lived realities and community engagement
- Be able to recognise, critique and challenge “othering” based on gender, sexuality and identity; transfer understanding to action in your lived experience and personal contexts
- Read and be inspired by some leading geographical thinkers in the field
- Apply concepts learned in the course to your own “personal space” project in a location of your choice; have a chance to explore, and advocate for, your unique interests.
- Increase confidence in your geographical knowledge, analytical ability and educational facilitation skills
- Have a greater level of preparedness for personal self-reflection and understanding as well as for local and global citizenship; increase your tolerance for multiple perspectives
- Demonstrate, and engage in, co-created learning in multiple formats

Building Community

The most important pre-requisites for this course are an open heart and an open mind, as well as a willingness to engage thoughtfully with challenging material. Each of us brings our unique passions, experiences and social justice issues with us to the class. We have no idea what others have struggled with, or overcome, to join us. For this reason, kindness to each other will be imperative if we are all to succeed. I have noticed that one of the most underappreciated (and least practiced) skills in academia is listening. By contrast, the ability to listen carefully will be deeply valued in this course. Please note that students who are *not* declared geography majors are also welcome in this course. Everything happens somewhere, so I anticipate everyone will bring a locational context with them that they wish to explore. Diversity of knowledge and backgrounds can only enhance the learning for all of us.

How to prepare for class

Before each class...

- Go to the Brightspace site. Download the “class/lecture outline” and read it over. Make a note of the learning goals to see what you will be looking to learn in the next session and any additional learning goals or questions you have personally. I suggest using the session outline to structure your notes.
- Do the pre-activities you are asked to do by the facilitator(s). Their goal is to maximise your learning.

The day of...

- Come to class with all aspects of your being (show up, mentally engage, think of questions to ask, answer the questions you are asked, help and support others). I really mean it. Fully showing up is the greatest predictor of success in class.
- Consider having a small snack/drink handy. I know you have a long day. I have no problem with people needing to eat/drink to stay engaged.
- Allocate plenty of time to journal after class and to do your follow-up preparation for the next day.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXT, READINGS and RESOURCES:

Oberhauser, A.M., Fluri, J.L., Whitson, R. and Mollett, S. (2018). *Feminist Spaces: Gender and Geography in a Global Context*. London and New York: Routledge. This is our text. It should be available in the Bookstore or of course via other sellers. I was excited to see it when it came out because there has been nothing new for a long time and it includes a Canadian geographer among the authors. The work promised to embrace the new trends in feminist geography in the discipline (for example, going beyond conventional feminist critiques and moving towards non-binary discussions).

Many of the other readings we will explore in this course will be from *Gender, Place and Culture: a journal of feminist geography*, which is available online from the library. ISSN 0966-369X (Print); ISSN 1360-0524 (Online). Call number is GF1.G44. Note: Please do not be put off by the subtitle of this journal. It does not just address feminist geography topics.

Other readings or resources will be posted regularly in Brightspace, along with the class outlines as course facilitators share their interests and teaching plans with us.

COURSE COMPONENTS

The course is designed to achieve the learning goals and outcomes stated above. All aspects of the course may be assessed on exams. The requirements for each component will be further discussed in class.

Class Meetings and Participation—We will all meet together four times a week (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays). Classes may include mini-lectures, activities, film clips, presentations, student lead segments and discussion of materials. I may bring visitors to class occasionally when their research work is relevant to our learning and I think you might enjoy meeting them and hearing about the kinds of geography they do. Your authentic presence grade will reflect your willingness to engage in both your own questions and reflections in class, as well as those of your colleagues.

Student facilitation segments—In the second half of the term, each student (or pair of students) will pick one class where they will prepare and lead a full class teaching segment on a topic of their choosing. I will meet with the facilitator(s) ahead of the class to help them prepare a class outline, develop key questions for us all to think about,

and communicate the pre-activities and/or reading(s) to everyone. The presenter(s) will identify and explain the main concepts required for learning, and then generate an applicable plan for class activities based on the questions identified. Pre-activities need not be articles but where they are then articles should be chosen from *Gender, Place and Culture* (accessed via the library) OR from another journal relevant to your interests (please check with me first). Please make sure they are accessible (or direct us to a portion of the whole) and also be conscious of triggering. We all have areas of extreme sensitivity. If you choose a reading that has very challenging content, in whatever way, please take a moment to warn the class ahead of time, so everyone is prepared and can make their own informed choices and decisions around personal safety.

Activity space journaling—Choose one activity space you will be in every day (outside is particularly nice in the Summer) and commit to reflecting (free writing) on the application of concepts learned from class to that space for 15-20 minutes in your journal after each class. What application might concepts from class have in your activity space? What connections does thinking about these concepts help you make as you navigate your daily life? Does your learning change your behaviour or your experience in any way? Sometimes you might make profound connections; other times not. Don't worry, just keep writing and I anticipate you will be surprised at what emerges. You may create your journal in Word or similar OR hand write it in a real journal. Just keep in mind you will need to submit it in a way it can be easily read.

Creative Representation—Our identity(ies) and understanding of same are often hard to express in words. By the end of the course I will ask you to submit a creative piece that represents (re)claiming identity(ies). This need not be explicit. It can reveal as much or as little as you wish (that is safe for you). You also do not have to be a skilled artist. It could be a photo, a graphic, a craft application, a ceramic tile, as well as a drawing, sketch or painting, piece of music, etc. The choice is yours. We will share and reflect on our creations in the last class of the term before the final.

Acknowledging our presence on the land

UVic's Territory Acknowledgement reads as the following. "We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day." I hope each of us, whether originally from here or far away in lands with other colonial histories, will think about how we can make real meaning from this statement in our own contexts and lives. This is a theme we will return to often in this course.

NOTE: Please kindly do not record (audio or video), or take photos of, any aspects of the course without first having written permission from me. Privacy and Intellectual Property laws require we must ask everyone first.

GRADE ALLOCATION

	Marks	Important Dates/deadlines
Authentic presence	15%	Contributing each class and supporting colleagues (as applicable)
Facilitation segment	20%	As applicable (select your choice and partner)
Journaling reflections	20%	Journal check-in May 18th ; final journal due noon Wed June 5th
Midterm	15%	Thursday May 23rd (in class) .
Creative representation	10%	Presented last class before final exam (Monday June 3rd)
Final Exam	20%	In-class last class (Tuesday June 4th)
TOTAL	100%	

Important notes regarding overall grades:

- All students are required to provide ID when taking an exam in this course.
- **You must take both exams (midterm and the final), participate in the creative representation celebration and submit all assignments to pass the course.** Even if you are too late to get a grade for an assignment, you must still submit it to pass. The reason for this is that the assignments build your leaning in the course.
- **Even if you miss a class, you are still expected to catch up with ALL the assignments and class materials.**
- If at any time for any reason you are not able to fulfill your obligations to our class in a timely manner you must email me to let me know immediately. Failure to do this can negatively impact the grades of other students and hence your own.

Rules regarding late assignments:

In order to be fair to students who meet the deadlines, if you submit an assignment late you will lose marks in the following way. The late penalty is 25% per day. All assignments must be submitted but after 3 days you will receive a zero grade.

Undergraduate Grading Standards (per the Academic Calendar)

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) as soon as possible. The sooner you let me know your needs the quicker I can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course. Please do not worry. I am fully able to implement CAL recommendations regarding accommodations such as differences in length of timed exams.

Making sure you retain your academic integrity in this course

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity, including policies on cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission, and aiding others to cheat. According to the University of Victoria's Calendar "Academic integrity requires commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. It is expected that students, faculty members and staff at the University of Victoria, as members of an intellectual community, will adhere to these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Thus, any action that you take that contravenes this standard, including misrepresentation, falsification or deception, undermines the intention and worth of your scholarly work and violates the fundamental academic rights of members of our community." In plain language, usually problems arise if you try to submit work that you did not create, if you copy someone else's answers or if you use someone else's words without using quotation marks and giving proper credit to the person who wrote them. If in doubt please always ask! **Policy on Academic Integrity:** web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

Providing feedback via the Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. At the end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience in this course (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the Department of Geography improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via ces.uvic.ca and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. Please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR SUCCESS

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members. Remember to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many resources available to support your success, so make sure you know where to go when you need help. The following are some examples:

Academic Advising <http://www.uvic.ca/services/advising/>

Centre for Academic Communication (the Writing Centre) <https://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/>

Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL)

The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>. Please note I am able to implement their recommendations regarding accommodations such as differences in length of timed exams using the online system.

Coop and Career Services <https://www.uvic.ca/coopandcareer/>

Counselling Services offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students <https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/>

Elders' Voices The Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php

Geography Department <https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/>

- Undergraduate advising and registration geogadvising@uvic.ca.
- <https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/undergraduate/advising/index.php>

Health Services - University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. <https://www.uvic.ca/services/health/>

International Commons and UVic Global Community

- <https://www.uvic.ca/international/home/international-commons/index.php>
- <https://www.uvic.ca/international/home/global-community/index.php>

MacPherson Library <http://www.uvic.ca/library/>

Math and Stats Assistance Centre

<https://www.uvic.ca/science/math-statistics/current-students/undergraduate/msac/index.php>

Positivity and Safety

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

Sexualized violence resource office, EQHR; Sedgewick C119, <https://uvic.ca/svp>

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, contact: 250.721.8021, svpcoordinator@uvic.ca

University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. <http://uvic.ca/services/health/>

UVic Academic Calendar for all important academic dates <https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/dates/>