

GEOG 498: Geography Capstone Seminar
Spring 2021
Thursday 9:25-11:55 am
Cedar 102 (in-person and online)

Instructor: Dr. Kurt Waldman
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to synthesize your learning over your undergraduate career and put it to use in the world. There are three complimentary goals for the course: to reflect on your undergraduate experience, to complete a capstone project that utilizes the skills you developed in your geography education, and to start taking the next step in your professional development. This course will discuss readings and examples of geography in action, help you articulate your professional goals and a plan for achieving them, and practice professionalization / work on the 'soft skills' to help you navigate life after graduation. We will also be working in teams to deliver real world project results to partners – this can be research, practice, or a combination of the two. You will commit to a capstone project in the first week of the course. You will be required to present your Capstone project to the whole department at the end of the term, as well as to your community partner on a time schedule you mutually agree upon.

Learning Outcomes

- Create a finished report that meets the needs of a community partner or research community.
- Produce a critical analysis of that work that contributes to geographic knowledge and public discourse.
- Refine skills for critical reading and thinking, team work, research, and writing.
- Demonstrate professional skills for achieving your goals after graduation.
- Articulate the value of a geography education and geographic analysis.

Course Format

Welcome to a seminar! This course format may be a little different than you are used to. In a seminar, the instructor's role is that of a facilitator. I am here to offer resources and facilitate a process where we are all learning together. In this format, it is of the utmost importance that you come to class prepared for discussion, activities and to work with your team. Participation and attendance is a significant part of your grade and crucial to the success of your project and we will give weekly checkins at the beginning of class to keep us all on track. Readings and course materials will be made available in pdf in each week's module on Canvas. Readings are subject to change based on the skills and needs of the class. Mark-ups of the readings are due in class, and make up part of your participation grade.

Each class will be divided in two parts – one on professionalization in Geography, and the other on your capstone project. Every class will include time for you to meet with your team, to ask questions and get feedback from the instructor and troubleshoot project issues. Be prepared to show progress on the project. Every. Single. Week.

Course Schedule

This is a dynamic, approximate schedule so that you know generally what to expect. Readings, themes and assignments will change based on our class’s collective interest, needs and progress. Check Canvas modules each week for pdfs of all readings and the most up to date schedule.

	Date	Topics	Assignments
1	1/21	Course Introduction	Capstone project introduction, Skills and needs inventory, project mapping, Groups formed, break projects into steps, get started
2	1/28	Capstone Project Launch	Due: Timeline for Capstone Project, Background readings on projects
3	2/4	Capstone Project Launch	Mapping out the steps, dividing up tasks, background readings on project topics
4	2/11	Skill assessment	Readings on successful interviews and follow-up questions, in-class interview practice. Independent research on project topics.
5	2/18	Intro to qualitative interviews	Workshop interview protocols in class – everyone practices
6	2/25	What it means to be a geographer after graduation	Food studies: https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/career-options-after-food-studies-1 Geography: Skills in Professional Geography article
7	3/4	Policy Analysis 101	Weimar and Vining Example topical briefs (Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies and GFC Food Infrastructure)
8	3/11	QGIS Basics	QGIS Workshop with Teresa Quill/ Jordan Blekking
9	3/18	Midterm self-evaluation	Midterm self-Evaluation
10	3/25	Writing for the public	Topical readings in popular press – workshop and reverse outline in class
11	4/1	FIRST DRAFT CAPSTONE PROJECTS DUE	In class workshop of drafts and evaluation of to-do lists
12	4/8	Effective public speaking	Readings: http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/2017/01/11/scientific-presentations-a-cheat-sheet/ Union of Concerned Scientists https://hbr.org/2020/01/what-it-takes-to-give-a-great-presentation?utm_source=pocket-newtab https://hbr.org/2019/10/how-to-look-and-sound-confident-during-a-presentation
13	4/15	Effective public speaking	In class workshop of final presentations. Effective maps and visuals.
14	4/22	Wellness day- No class.	
	4/23	3:30 pm Geography Colloquium	CAPSTONE PRESENTATIONS – INVITE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

15	4/29	FINAL PROJECTS	FINAL PROJECTS DUE
	5/4	PEER AND SELF EVALUATIONS	PEER AND SELF EVALUATIONS DUE

Course Assessment and Assignments

You cannot pass this class if you do not show up regularly, do the readings, speak up, engage in team work and be a good colleague. Peer reviews from your team make up part of my evaluation of your final capstone product.

Participation & Attendance	45%
Daily Progress Checkins	15%
Capstone Report/Project	30%
Final Capstone Presentation	10%

Grade Distribution:

99-100 A+	82-87 B	72-70 C-
93-98 A	80-82 B-	70-68 D+
90-92 A-	78-80 C+	62-67 D
88-90 B+	72-78 C	60-62 D-

IU Policies

Respectful Dialogue: As scholars we use theory, method and evidence to establish and support claims: we will do the same in the classroom. Maintaining a respectful classroom environment to all is required. Regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, political affiliation, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and/or ability, you will be treated and respected while in this class. In keeping with the IU Code of Conduct, disrespectful remarks and comments that undermine the rights and dignity of others are unacceptable. Please refer to Indiana University-Bloomington IU Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct for details regarding expected behaviors in the classroom and disciplinary sanctions for violation of the student code of conduct. Office of Student Ethics: <http://studentcode.iu.edu/responsibilities/index.html>

Distraction and Screens: When you come to class, be present. If you are mentally elsewhere (phone, online distractions), I will mark you absent and ask you to physically leave. Taking notes by hand improves our brain's ability to synthesize and retain information. See: Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014. The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking. *Psychological Science*. 25(6):1159-1168.

Email: The best way to contact me is via Canvas/email. I will respond within 24 hours during the week. I do not reliably respond to emails over the weekend. If you need clarification regarding

class readings, assignments and course related matters, come to my office hours or make an appointment to see me.

Accommodation: If you require assistance or academic accommodation for a disability, please contact me after class, during office hours or by email for an appointment. You must have established your eligibility support services through the Office for Disability Services for Students.

Academic Support: The Academic Support Centers are here for your use – contact them for tutoring, advising, workshops, and other services at 855-7016. For writing help, you may contact Campus Writing Services or Writing Tutorial Services at 855-6738. IU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) - 855-5711 <http://www.indiana.edu/~health/counseling/index.shtml>

Sexual Harassment: As your instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. Title IX and our own Sexual Misconduct policy prohibit sexual misconduct. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, the University can help. I encourage you to visit <http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/> to learn more. If you are seeking help and would like to speak to someone confidentially, you can make an appointment with a Mental Health Counselor on campus (contact information available at <http://stopsexualviolence.iu.edu/employee/confidential.html>). It is also important that you know that federal regulations and University policy require me to promptly convey an information about potential sexual misconduct known to me to our Deputy Title IX Coordinator or IU's Title IX Coordinator. In that event, they will work with a small number of others on campus to ensure that appropriate measures are taken and resources are made available to the student who may have been harmed. Protecting a student's privacy is of utmost concern, and all involved will only share information with those that need to know to ensure the University can respond and assist.

Academic Integrity: As a student at IU, you are expected to adhere to the standards detailed in the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct. Academic misconduct is defined as any activity that tends to undermine the academic integrity of the institution. Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, interference, violation of course rules, and facilitating academic dishonesty. When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you are signifying that the work contained therein is yours, unless otherwise cited or referenced. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. All suspected violations of the Code will be reported to the Dean of Students and handled according to University policies. Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment, reduction in your final course grade, and a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor in advance.

Note Selling: Several commercial services have approached students regarding selling class notes/study guides to their classmates. Selling the instructor's notes/study guides in this course is not permitted. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Dean of Students as academic

misconduct (violation of course rules). Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment for which the notes/study guides are being sold, a reduction in your final course grade, or a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities. Additionally, you should know that selling a faculty member's notes/study guides individually or on behalf of one of these services using IU email, or via Canvas may also constitute a violation of IU information technology and IU intellectual property policies; additional consequences may result.