

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

GPHY 370 – Special Topics in Human Geography: Geographies of a Changing Arctic



Contact Time	Two 1.5 hour sessions per week/combined lectures and active learning
Format	In-class lectures, discussions, group activities and assignments/submissions based on course readings and independent research
Class Assessment	Participation and collaborative engagement (25%) Creative research assignments (45%) Final assignment/independent research project (30%)

COURSE OVERVIEW This course examines contemporary issues in the Arctic with an eye to environmental, economic, and social change in the region. Particular attention will be paid to Inuit of Nunavut Territory and to the conditions and challenges that comprise day to day life in the Canadian Arctic. We will draw from academic and popular resources – especially film and documentary materials – to address subjects from both human and physical geography, including (but not limited to) climate change, Arctic sovereignty, Indigenous rights, food security, and mineral and petroleum extraction. We will also consider the nature of change – or presumptions of change – in northern regions, and how these influence popular debates about the Arctic's future. In completing the course, students will gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for the complexity and diversity of Arctic regions, and develop skills to incorporate this critical thinking into their research, perspectives, and arguments.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Develop an in-depth understanding of Arctic Canada and the people who live there;
- Identify and understand the historical context and underlying issues of contemporary changes in the region;
- Develop in-class collaborative and interdisciplinary research skills through applied learning activities;
- Enhance academic writing, critical thinking and research skills in relation to the study of the region.

COURSE TOPICS (subject to change each year) Topics include but are not limited to: climate change in the Arctic; Inuit society and culture; Arctic sovereignty; land claims and Indigenous rights; food security and food sovereignty; mineral and petroleum resource extraction; Environmental Impact Assessment; Arctic tourism.

COURSE READINGS (subject to change each year) Course materials will include of a mix of readings and audio/visual materials. Readings will include key works in northern scholarship, as well as popular writings and news and magazine articles. We will also make extensive use of the wide array of film and documentary materials available through the National Film Board and other online outlets.