

GEOGRAPHY 4101

Undergraduate Research and Professionalization Seminar

AU 2020 / #15660 / 3 credits

Instructor: Dr. Kendra McSweeney

E-mail: mcsweeney.14@osu.edu

Office hours: Virtual office hours: Tuesdays, 10 am - 12 pm or by appointment

Class: M OR W 11:10-12:30, Campbell Hall 200

Disability Services

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's **request process**, managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Overview

This course has two complementary foci:

- 1) to encourage you to reflect on your undergraduate experience, particularly in terms of content and skills developed. In this respect, the course should be equally useful to geography majors and minors, regardless of specialty;
- 2) to help you marshal that experience as you embark on the process of developing a career, in whatever field you chose.

In both respects, the course demands introspection: you will be asked to systematically think through your learning and skill development to date, articulate professional aspirations and the path required to achieve them. This applies to all students, whatever your plans are after graduation.

In our weekly classroom meetings, the focus will be on reviewing and understanding the required readings, and on engaging with each other and with (virtual) guests. Outside the classroom, the course asks you to explore the career resources in and around Ohio State, build your networks, and engage career-related concerns such as salary negotiation and ethical issues. Built into the course throughout are multiple moments to think about research, writing, spatial thinking, and other skills that will benefit you no matter what you plan for your future.

Course Format

This seminar will meet once a week. Most meetings are on Wednesdays, but there are two weeks when we will meet on Monday instead (Nov. 9 and Nov. 23). Success in the course relies on coming to class and engaging in class discussion (as much as social distancing and other health precautions allow), and completing the online modules, which must be completed by midnight the night before our in-class meetings. This allows me to read your responses before we meet.

In the event that the pandemic requires classes to go fully online, expect to meet synchronously on the days/times that we would have met in-person.

Readings

There is no textbook. All required readings and other materials can be found in Carmen.

Policies

Instructor availability

I have set aside Tuesdays from 10-12 pm for (virtual) meetings with students. Please email me to set up a time to meet. If you cannot make that time slot, we can arrange another time. **PLAN TO MEET WITH ME AT LEAST ONCE THIS SEMESTER. MEETING WITH ME IS REQUIRED IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO ASK ME FOR A RECOMMENDATION OR JOB REFERENCE.**

Teaching is only one of my job duties. The majority of my time is spent on research and writing. I can usually respond to student emails within 24 hours.

Due dates

Due dates for assigned work are noted in Canvas. Modules are due by midnight before our in-class meeting and will not be available after that time. Other assignments are due by midnight on the due date. If you require more time for an assignment, please contact me at least a week in advance of the due date to organize an alternative schedule.

Classroom etiquette

Success in this course requires discussion of topics that are occasionally sensitive, and will require that you reflect on, and talk about, personal experiences and aspirations. Respect for others' ideas is essential to generative classroom discussions.

Keep personal screens off during class except for note-taking or review of readings. If you are consistently distracted by your phone or laptop this will be reflected in your participation grade.

Misconduct

Any academic misconduct, such as plagiarizing, will be immediately reported, as required, to the [Committee on Academic Misconduct](#).

Health & Safety Requirements (COVID-19 policies)

All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>), which includes wearing a face mask in any indoor space and maintaining a safe physical distance at all times. Non-compliance will be warned first and disciplinary actions will be taken for repeated offenses.

A more detailed description of expectations and accountability measures can be found here:

https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu/sites/default/files/2020/07/safe_and_healthy_campus_expectations_accountability_measures_7.24.2020_website.pdf

Repeated or persistent failure to wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose to an in-person class will be reflected in your grade for this course.

Evaluation

	GRADE %	DUE DATE
Class participation (10)	10	-
Modules	40	Before each class meeting
Resume and rec letter request	5	M Sept 14
Post-graduate training comparison	5	M Sept 28
LinkedIn profile (5) & peer review (5)	10	M Oct 12
Informational interview	15	M Nov 2
Self-evaluation: plan (5); report (10)	15	Plan: Nov. 18 Report: Dec 7

There are no exams. Instead, evaluation is spread out quite evenly over the semester. Most assignments are due on Mondays. PLEASE BE SURE TO PUT ALL DUE DATES IN YOUR CALENDAR.

Participation (10%)

This is a seminar: participation in class discussion is required. If you are unable to attend a class in person (or online, synchronously, if the campus is closed), for any reason, please email me prior to class. Doctor's notes and/or details of your other appointments are required. Excused absences will result in your participation grade being weighted accordingly.

The participation grade is based on my subjective assessment of your participation over the semester. If for any reason you do not expect to be able to participate fully in class discussion even when you are present, please let me know early in the semester and I'd be happy to find ways to accommodate you.

Modules (40%)

The course has 12 modules, which primarily comprise reading/discussion sets, with some case studies, videos, and related surveys (each worth 2-5% of your grade). The materials combine academic

and non-academic articles, news reports and other sources. The modules must be completed by MIDNIGHT prior to the day of class. It will not be possible to complete the modules after that time; I have to be able to review your responses in order to tailor our in-class time.

Resume and reference/rec letter request (5%)

It's never too early to start preparing and polishing your resume, which you will do following OSU-Career Center best practices (3%). You will also script a text asking a faculty member to act as a reference for you OR to write a letter of recommendation for you (2%). Many students underestimate the importance of having faculty vouch/advocate for them after graduation. Now is the time to start practicing how to best request that help.

Post-graduate education/training Comparison (5%)

Many students pursue formal education and/or training after their Bachelor's degree. This assignment is your chance to look into a training program/certification/master's/license/language that you think you'd like to explore within 5 years of graduating. Compare two programs by requirements, cost, schedule, and more and produce a brief summary of what you found.

Linked-In Profile & Peer Review (10%)

Networking is essential no matter what your post-graduate plans are. 5% of your grade is based on you setting up (or updating/maintaining) a LinkedIn profile with substantive information about yourself, your skills, and your interests. Please 'Link' to my account by the due date. The remaining 5% will be earned by your constructive critique of a colleague's LinkedIn profile, sent to them and to me.

Informational Interview (15%)

As a group, we will practice 'interviewing' various guests. Through your networks, LinkedIn, and in discussion with the Instructor, you will identify and describe FIVE people currently working in a field that you are considering for your career; they must span at least three different market sectors (5%). You will then set up and conduct a Zoom-based informational interview with ONE of those people to learn more about them, their career trajectory, and the demands of the job. You'll record/transcribe it and write up your experience (10%).

Self-Evaluation Assignment (15% total)

This course is designed, in part, to help you prepare for the next professional stages of your life. But we can't cover everything, or go into the depth that you may want on some topics. This assignment gives you a chance to (1) identify a career-oriented activity you'd like to complete before the end of the semester; (2) pitch that activity (and its assessment) to the instructor as a plan that you'll execute before the end of the semester (5%), and (3) following feedback, execute that plan, and submit a report (10%). The assignment is built to be flexible with regard to reporting and evaluation.

Extra Credit

A maximum of 5 points (5%) of extra credit is available to students who actively pursue on- and off-campus opportunities for career exploration during AU20 and report briefly on their experiences to the class. Other opportunities come up throughout the semester. You may also get extra credit for completing an [appointment with a Career Connection/OSL Career Counseling & Support Services councilor](#) at the Younkin Success Center for a Career Assessment or an ASC Career Services "career prep advisor." Should you choose one of the latter, book your meeting ASAP, as advisors get busier as the semester progresses. You must describe your experience to the class to get credit for it.

Grading Scale

93 - 100 (A); 90 - 92.9 (A-); 87 - 89.9 (B+); 83 - 86.9 (B); 80 - 82.9 (B-); 77 - 79.9 (C+); 73 - 76.9 (C); 70 - 72.9 (C-); 67 - 69.9 (D+); 60 - 66.9 (D); Below 60 (E).

If you are taking this course as a requirement for your major, you must achieve a C- or higher. Every year, some students fail the class because they do not complete the required modules and assignments in time. Please put due dates on your calendar, because much of the work cannot be 'caught up' later.

COURSE SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

WEEK, Date	Topic/Module* Day of Class	Assignments due
1, 8/23-	Intro to course (no prep required) Class on WED	
2, 8/31	What is Geography again? Class on WED	
3, 9/7-	What have I learned in College? Class on WED	
4, 9/14-	Professional Networking Class on WED	Resume & Rec letter request due 9/14
5, 9/21-	Research: How & Why Class on WED	
6, 9/28-	Grad School: How & Why Class on WED	Post-graduate training comparison due 9/28
7, 10/5-	Informational Interviewing Class on WED	
8, 10/12-	Alternative Routes after Graduation Class on WED	LinkedIn Profile & peer review due 10/12
9, 10/19-	Going Public: Careers in Government Class on WED	
10, 10/26-	Private Sector & Self-Employment Class on WED	
11, 11/2-	World of Non-Profits & Advocacy Work Class on WED	Informational Interview due 11/2
12, 11/9-	The Ethical Geographer Class on MON	
13, 11/16-	Writing through Life: How & Why Class on WED	Self-evaluation plan done in-class 11/18
14, 11/23-	Course Wrap-Up (LAST) CLASS on MON	
		Self-Evaluation Report due 12/7

* Modules must be complete by midnight before the day of the class meeting