

GEOG 4800 – Geography Capstone
TuTh 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
ENV 360
Spring 2023

Instructor

Dr. Paul F. Hudak, ENV 310H, hudak@unt.edu

Office Hours

TuTh 3:30-5:00 p.m.

About Me

Hi! I am a professor in the Department of Geography and the Environment at UNT. Originally, I am from northern California, but have also lived in southern California, Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and of course Texas. Prior to coming to UNT in 1992, I received a B.S. in geology from Allegheny College, M.S. in geology from Wright State University, and Ph.D. in geography, emphasis in water resources, from the University of California at Santa Barbara. At UNT, I teach various courses in geology, water resources, and research methods, as well as supervise graduate students. My research interests include groundwater monitoring and remediation, wetlands, and environmental geology.

Description

This is the synthesizing capstone course designed for geography seniors. The majority of the course will focus on developing and writing a research proposal (prospectus); however, the skills involved in this endeavor are transferable to any career path. As such, this course can be seen as a professional development class.

Through researching the literature, students will develop an area of research interest, choose a specific topic, and formulate research question(s). The course culminates in the development of a research prospectus. The goal of this course is to provide a transitional window between undergraduate classroom learning to independent research necessary for success in geography-related careers and graduate programs.

Objectives

Students will be able to: identify relevant geographic research problems; find and evaluate relevant literature sources; create a research prospectus; and develop writing and presentation skills.

Notes

Download the “course notes” in Canvas. That document also contains links to other useful material. The notes are meant to guide you toward attaining the learning objectives outlined above.

Meeting Times and Topics

This class meets as noted above, but I can also meet with you individually, in person or remotely, to provide feedback and guidance. When possible, please contact me a few days in advance to arrange an appropriate meeting time if you’d like to meet outside of office hours.

Tentative topics for weeks beginning (Tuesday):

January 17	Syllabus and Course Structure
January 24	Research Fundamentals
January 31	Examples
February 7	Asking Questions, Finding Answers
February 14	Making Good Arguments
February 21	Drafting and Methods
February 28	Ethics

March 7	Tips for Presentations
March 14	Spring Break
March 21	Presentations
March 28	Presentations
April 4	Presentations
April 11	Presentations
April 18	Presentations
April 25	Presentations
May 2	Wrap-Up

Grading and Due Dates

Brief discussion of topic/methods	January 26	2 pts
Brief presentation of topic/methods (5 min each)	February 2, 7	4 pts
Exam 1	February 9	8 pts
Exercise 1 – Written problem statement/methods outline	February 14	10 pts
Exam 2	February 21	8 pts
Exercise 2 – Reference list	February 28	10 pts
Exam 3	March 7	8 pts
PowerPoint presentation of proposal (20 min each)	TBA	15 pts
Prospectus	May 4	35 pts

Upload the exercises and prospectus to Canvas as Word or pdf files by 11:59 p.m. of the due date. Other items take place in class. Exams are non-cumulative and closed book/notes. A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, and F=less than 60 points.

Extra Credit

The Department of Geography does not allow extra credit assignments (work not specified on a course syllabus).

Academic Integrity Policy

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the university.

Students who cheat or plagiarize will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: (a) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (b) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (c) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; (d) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or (e) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Altering a returned test and claiming a grader or scanning machine made an error is also considered cheating. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new

letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy

UNT prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The university takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct \(https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct\)](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.