



GEO 772: Individual Research Paper - Fall 2026

Course Instructor: Dr. K. Wayne Forsythe
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www.geography.ryerson.ca/wayne/GEO772-F2026

Office Hour: by appointment W 2:00pm-3:00pm, via Zoom
Lectures: W 3:10pm-6:00pm (VIC304)
Pre-requisites: none

*****Faculty Course Surveys will be conducted online in November 2026*****

Email Policy: In accordance with [Policy 157](#) on Student E-mail Accounts, Toronto Metropolitan University requires that any electronic communication by students to faculty be sent from their official university email account. Responses to e-mails will ONLY occur if the course code (Geo772) is in the subject line and you utilize your university email account. *Normally*, you can expect a response within 24 hours on weekdays. Emails sent on a Friday will normally not be responded to until the following Monday.

Technology Requirements: For the Individual Research Paper, Microsoft Office will be utilized. It is available free for all Toronto Metropolitan University students. For more information please visit the [Microsoft software page](#) on the Computing and Communications Services website. D2L Brightspace resources are available at: <https://www.torontomu.ca/courses/students/>.

Course Description: The Individual Research Paper provides the student with the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in an area of applied geographic specialization through the design and execution of an original, independent and academically-based research project.

Teaching Methods: This is largely an independent class. Students will have to design and implement a project and write up its results. The class period on Wednesdays will be used to provide information on the process of conducting and reporting research. This will be accomplished through lecture and discussion. Class time will be used to have virtual discussions (both individually and as a group) about research ideas. Additionally, students will collaborate with a faculty advisor during the semester on their research.

Notes: Dr. Forsythe holds the copyright in the works of all original materials used in this course and students registered in this course can use the materials for the purposes of this course but no other use is permitted, and there can be no sale or transfer or use of the work for any other purpose without explicit permission of Dr. Forsythe.

- Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the course, students will:
1. Have experience conducting a research project that they designed and implemented.
 2. Developed communication skills (i.e., how to present research, both written and oral).
 3. Reinforced technical skills related to geographic analysis.
- Class Zoom Link:** Information (if applicable) will be available on the course D2L page.
- Required Text:** There is no required textbook. Readings will be assigned as appropriate. Students will be directed to other resources when necessary.
- Teaching Method:** Lecture/Discussion
- Posting of Grades:** Grades will normally not be posted. Feedback will usually be provided via D2L.
- Course Evaluation:** There are five assessments in this course that help design, conduct, and present the Independent Research Paper.
- Research Proposal (maximum 250 words):** a short, one-page outline of the topic you are exploring in the course. This will cover key background/context and justification for the project key research questions, and potential data sources and methods. The research that you do **MUST** involve data analysis.
- Research Proposal Presentation:** a two-minute presentation (three slides maximum) on your research proposal topic
- Literature Review:** the collection and analysis of literature relevant to your independent research topic. The literature review will be in a proper style and format and include at least 20 articles.
- Research Paper Presentation:** a 10-minute presentation on your research, in academic conference format, highlighting the background, research questions, data and methods, as well as key findings and discussion.
- Research Paper:** the final paper will be the culmination of the research and work that you did throughout the semester. It will be in a proper academic format, properly cited, and be a maximum of 5000 words in length (word count **MUST** be included on the first page). Figures, maps, tables, and other relevant material must be included. See example paper on the course website.

Course Component	Weight	Date/Due Date
Research Proposal	10%	September 23 (by 9:00pm via D2L)
Research Proposal Presentation	10%	September 23
Literature Review	20%	October 21 (by 9:00pm via D2L)
Research Paper	40%	November 25 (by 9:00pm via D2L)
Research Paper Presentation	20%	November 25

The first graded assignment that will be returned/reported is the Research Proposal on September 30.

Course Schedule:

Date	Topic	Readings/Resources
September 9	Introduction to the course (VIC304)	made available as appropriate
September 16	Research Proposal and Presentation consultation (VIC304) AIO Presentation 3:10pm	"
September 23	Research Proposal Presentations (VIC304) Research Proposal due (via D2L) Library Resources Presentation @ 4:00pm	"
September 30	Literature Review development	"
October 7	Literature Review development consultation	"
October 14	Reading/Study Week	---
October 21	Research Methodology and Analysis (VIC304) Literature review due (via D2L)	made available as appropriate
October 28	Research Paper Methodology consultation	"
November 4	Research Paper Analysis consultation	"
November 11	Research Paper Discussion and Conclusion consultation	"
November 18	Research Paper individual consultation	"
November 25	Research Paper Presentations (VIC304) Research Paper due (via D2L)	---
December 2	Course Wrap-up	---

The course will be taught as close to the listed schedule as possible, however deviations from the outline may be required as the term progresses.

Course Policies

The Research Proposal, Literature Review, and Research Paper **MUST** be uploaded to D2L by 9:00pm on the respective due dates.

NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, all work must be done individually. Late penalty on all required course material: **50% per day** (not accepted if more than **one (1) school day late unless a medical certificate is**

submitted or other acceptable arrangements have been made and confirmed via email prior to the due date.

Electronics in Class

The use of computers is allowed.

Department Late Policy

The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies has a late assignment policy which specifies a minimum penalty of 20% per calendar day. Note the **50% per day** policy for this course noted above.

Course Management Policy

Please note that as per the new Course Management Policy (Policy 166) effective Fall 2019, all University Senate policy information will be available to students through the online learning management system (D2L). Going forward, policy information will be maintained by the Senate Office and is available from: <https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/course-management-policy-166/>.

Missed Classes and/or Evaluations

Students are required to inform their instructors of any situation which arises during the semester which may have an adverse effect upon their academic performance, and must request any considerations and accommodations according to the relevant policies and well in advance. Failure to do so will jeopardize any academic appeals.

Teaching will be delivered in variable formats that may include the following: synchronous and pre-recorded lectures, break-out discussion groups, Q and A sessions, online discussions and chats, shared slides and course notes, and more. Students are responsible for checking D2L and the course website frequently, keeping up with assigned readings and supplied lecture material, and submitting assignments on designated dates.

Missed Classes and/or Evaluations

Students are required to inform their instructors of any situation which arises during the semester which may have an adverse effect upon their academic performance, and must request any considerations and accommodations according to the relevant policies and well in advance. Failure to do so will jeopardize any academic appeals.

Undergraduate students **must** submit their requests for **academic consideration online**.

A link to the online request form and instructions for submission are available here:

<https://prod.apps.ccs.torontomu.ca/senateapps/>

You **must** submit the online request within three (3) days of the missed work (e.g., test, assignment deadline, lab, etc.) When circumstances do not permit this, you must submit the request as soon as reasonably possible. Your instructor(s) will be notified automatically, and you will have an electronic record to verify when your requests were submitted and approved. The entire system is linked to MyServiceHub, which makes it faster and less prone to error.

You should include supporting documentation, you can upload this to the system.

If the reason is **medical**, get your doctor to complete a Health Certificate form and upload this with your Academic Consideration Request.

<https://www.torontomu.ca/content/dam/student-wellbeing/medical-centre/documents/medical-certificate.pdf>

- *Religious observance* – If a student needs accommodation because of religious observance, he or she must submit a Request for Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance AND an Academic Consideration form within the first two weeks of the class or, for a final examination, within two weeks of the posting of the examination schedule. If the required absence occurs within the first two weeks of classes, or the dates are not known well in advance as they are linked to other conditions, these forms should be submitted with as much lead time as possible in advance of the required absence. Both documents are available at <http://www.torontomu.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf>. **If you are a full-time or part-time degree student, then you submit the forms to your own program department or school. If you are a certificate or non-certificate student, then you submit the forms to the staff at the front desk of the Chang School.**
- *Students with disabilities* – In order to facilitate the academic success and access of students with disabilities, they should register with the Student Learning Support Centre <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-life-and-learning/learning-support/>. Before the first graded work is due or test occurs, students should inform their instructor by sending electronic accommodation letters via the online system (see <https://clockwork.torontomu.ca/ClockWork/custom/misc/home.aspx>) that they are registered with the Student Learning Support.

Student Well Being

All students should be aware of the supports the university provides, and communicate early if you are facing challenges. The program directors, program assistants, and department chair are available to support students. See <https://www.torontomu.ca/student-wellbeing/> for further information.

Originality Detection, Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic Integrity (AI) is a fundamental component of any university course. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the completion of any graded component of this course is not permitted. University Policy 60 (the *Student Code of Academic Conduct*) applies to all students at the University. The policy and its procedures are triggered in the event that there is a suspicion that a student has engaged in a form of academic misconduct.

Use of Generative AI (eg. ChatGPT, Grammarly, Perplexity, DeepL Translator) to develop or assist with any ideas or material submitted for coursework is expressly prohibited in this course. Use of Generative AI in this manner will be considered a breach of Policy 60.

Forms of academic misconduct include plagiarism, cheating, supplying false information to the University, and other acts. The most common form of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and penalties can be severe. In any academic exercise, plagiarism occurs when one offers as one's own work the words, data, ideas, arguments, calculations, designs or productions of another without appropriate attribution or when one allows one's work to be copied.

All academic work must be submitted using the citation style determined/approved by the instructor.

It is assumed that all examinations and work submitted for evaluation and course credit will be the product of individual effort, except in the case of group projects arranged for and approved by the course instructor. Submitting the same work to more than one course, without instructor approval, is also considered a form of plagiarism.

Students are advised that suspicions of academic misconduct may be referred to the Academic Integrity Office (AIO). Students who are charged with academic misconduct will have a Disciplinary Notation (DN) placed on their academic record (not on their transcript) and will be assigned one or more of the following penalties:

- A grade reduction for the plagiarized work
- A zero for the plagiarized work
- An F in the course
- More serious penalties up to and including expulsion from the University

For more detailed information on these issues, please refer to the full online text for the *Student Code of Academic Conduct* at <https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/academic-integrity-policy-60/> and the Academic Integrity Website at <https://www.torontomu.ca/academicintegrity/>.

Plagiarism Detection Service

Turnitin will not be used.

Class Participation and Attendance

Students are expected to attend class, there are no grades for attendance or class participation.

Student Email Policy

Students are required to use their university email address for communication with the instructor. It is the responsibility of students to check their university email and the course website regularly. See: <https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/policies/establishment-and-use-of-toronto-metropolitan-student-e-mail-accounts-for-official-university-communication-policy-157/>

Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the [Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#) and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with generally accepted standards of behaviour, University regulations and policies.

Course Outline Related Policies can be found at:

<https://www.torontomu.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/>

Important Resources Available at Toronto Metropolitan University

- [The Library](#) provides research workshops and individual assistance. Inquire at the Reference Desk on the second floor of the library, or go to <https://library.torontomu.ca/workshops/>
- [Student Learning Support](#) offers group-based and individual help with writing, math, study skills and transition support.

The copyright to this original work is held by Dr. Forsythe and students registered in course Geo772 can use this material for the purposes of this course but no other use is permitted, and there can be no sale or transfer or use of the work for any other purpose without explicit permission of Dr. Forsythe.