

GEO 401: Focus on Geography - Capstone (Fall 2019) – 1 credit

Instructor

Dr. Gargi Chaudhuri

Phone

608-785-8338

Email

gchaudhuri@uwlax.edu

Office Location

2022 Cowley Hall

Office Hours

Mon. and Wed.– 3– 4:30PM

Fri. – 10 – 11AM

Or, scheduled upon request
via email

Course Format

This is a face-to-face course, **Fridays from 12:05 to 1:00 in Cowley 217**. You may be asked to reference materials or participate online through the learning management system, Canvas. You will need your UWL NetID to login to the course from the Canvas homepage (<https://www.uwlax.edu/canvas/>).

Course Description

This course is a seminar style class designed to prepare you, as a graduating geography major, for a future career in the field of geography, whether you are going to graduate school or intend to look for employment related to your geography skills and intellect. There are three main components to this course: (1) a portfolio; (2) geographic themes and opportunities; and (3) assessment.

Course Prerequisites

Students enrolled in the class must be of senior standing. All students must pass the course to graduate with a degree in geography from UWL.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students will -

- Have a portfolio that demonstrates examples of the knowledge and skills acquired as a UWL geography major.
- Be able to give a concise and perfected personal statement to a perspective employer.
- Have a better understanding of the career and graduate opportunities available following graduation from UWL.
- Have an understanding of what is required to obtain employment or be accepted to graduate school following graduation from UWL.
- Be able to respond to questions asked during a job interview.

Course Materials

- No textbook required. Readings and assignments will be posted on the course's Canvas site.
- Canvas will be used to post materials that are relevant to students pursuing a career in a geography-related field or graduate school. I highly recommend exploring these resources throughout the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Any changes to the course schedule will be informed in class and/or posted on Canvas.

Week	Date	Subject	Tasks
Week 1	Sept. 6	Course introduction	Form groups of 2 students and inform instructor
Week 2	Sept. 13	Portfolios and the “ideal” geography graduate	
Week 3	Sept. 20	Graduate School Discussion	
Week 4	Sept. 27	Job seeking and interview	#1: Job Advertisement or Graduate Program Description you like to pursue Due: Sept. 27 @ 5PM. #2: Check Enrika’s resume and submit one question. Due: Oct 2 @ 5PM
Week 5	Oct. 4	Guest Speaker - Enrika Hlavacek, UMESC	
Week 6	Oct. 11	Guest Speaker – Amanda Blair (Career Advisor - CSH) - Resumes/Cover Letters	#3: Goal setting and career vision Due: Oct 11 @ 5PM
Week 7	Oct. 18	Guest Speaker - Amanda Blair (Career Advisor - CSH) - Job Searching/Interviewing	#4: Resume and Cover Letter draft Due: Oct 18 @ 5PM
Week 8	Oct. 25	Guest Speaker – Miranda Panzer on Fulbright Scholarship	#3PR: Peer-review of Goal setting and career vision. Due: Oct 25 @ 5PM #5: Set-up appointments with Amanda Blair and submit confirmation email. Due: Oct 25 @ 5PM
Week 9	Nov. 1	Guest Speakers – - Emily Johansen, Land Use Specialist, La Crosse County - Nicholas Treankler, GIS / CAD Specialist, SGM	#6: Check Emily’s and Nick’s resume and submit one question. Due: Oct 30 @ 5PM
Week 10	Nov. 8	Guest Speaker – Katie Aspenson, Onalaska City Planner	#7: Check Katie’s resume and submit one question. Due: Nov 6 @ 5PM #8: Interview Stream mock interview. Due: Nov. 8 @ 5PM
Week 11	Nov. 15	<i>Out of town – No class</i>	#8PR: Peer-review of the mock interview. Due: Nov 15 @ 5PM #9: Map and graph submission. Due: Nov. 15 @ 5PM
Week 12	Nov. 22	#10: 1 minute elevator pitch	
Week 13	Nov. 27 (Wed.)	#10: 1 minute elevator pitch	
Week 14	Dec. 6	#12: Geography Assessment exercise and final wrap up	#11: Critically evaluate 1 poster and sign-in at GIS Poster competition attendance. Due: Dec. 11 @ 5PM
Week 15	Dec. 18 (Wed.)	#13: Submit Final portfolio includes revised resume, cover letter, map and reflective essay in single PDF document. Due – Dec. 18 @ 5PM	

Brief Description of Tasks (more details will be posted on Canvas):

- **#1: Job Advertisement:** Each student will submit a current job posting or graduate program description that will be the basis of the resume and cover letter or letter of intent found in the portfolio.
- **#2, 6, 7: Professional guest speakers questions:** Student groups should submit at least one question after reviewing the guest speaker's portfolio.
- **#3, 3PR: Goal setting and career vision:** Each student will submit a write-up about their 5yr and 10yr career goals and vision. The document will be reviewed by the partner and comments will be shared.
- **#4: Resume and Cover letter draft:** Each student will develop the first draft of the resumes and cover letter after reading materials and attending a presentation on developing cover letters and resumes that you would like to discuss with Amanda Blair in Career services, when you meet her.
- **#5: Career Services Meeting:** Each student will meet with Amanda Blair in Career Services and discuss about your draft cover letters and resumes. Based on her feedback improvise both the documents which you will submit in your final portfolio.
- **#8: Mock Interview:** Each student will participate in a mock interview using the Interview Stream software. Upon completion of the interview each student will complete a self-assessment. Students will also assess the interviews recorded by one of their classmates.
- **#9: Map and graph:** Each student will submit a map and a graph developed by them analyzing primary or secondary data. One may use a map and graph developed by them for their course work or research projects, if that was created by them and not their partners in the project.
- **#10: 1 Minute Pitch:** Each student will develop, practice, and present a one-minute elevator pitch to the class.
- **#11: Critically evaluation of a GIS poster or map:** Each student will submit a 250-word write-up critically evaluating one of the posters or maps presented at the GIS Poster Competition on Dec 6.
- **#12: Assessments:** Each student will complete an assessment of departmental learning outcomes and an assessment of the geography/earth science program. The University and the Department are interested in understanding how well the program met specific learning outcomes, and thus assess majors' geographic skills and knowledge. The Department is also committed to making changes that will improve and enhance future curricula and your input is important, so you will have the opportunity to evaluate the program through a confidential survey.
- **#13: Portfolio:** At the end of the semester each student will submit a portfolio that includes:
 - i. Cover page
 - ii. Table of contents
 - iii. Resume
 - iv. Cover letter for a job application or a letter of intent for a graduate program
 - v. A map analyzing primary or secondary data
 - vi. A reflection paper on your academic journey and future career goals,
 The cover letter or letter of intent and resume must be tailored to the position or graduate program you submitted at the start of the semester.

Task submission: Tasks are due by the dates listed in the syllabus or on Canvas. Late assignments will not be accepted. Students are expected to submit high-quality work for all assignments.

Expectations for graded work: I provide students feedback and/or scores on assignments that require individualized grading before a further assignment of a similar format is due. Generally, I return work that requires individual feedback within 21 days from the date the work was due. I will notify you if I am unable to grade the work within the 21-day timeframe, and will identify a revised return date. If you submit work after the due date, it may not be returned within 21 days. The grades for any work that is graded electronically, such as scanned examinations, will be accessible to you within 21 days of the due date for the work. If you submit electronically graded work after the due date, it may not be accessible within 21 days. Your graded coursework will be returned in compliance with FERPA regulations, such as in class, during my office hours, or via the course management system through which only you will have access to your grades.

Grade Distribution

Task	Weight
Job Advertisement (for delivering it)	5
Goal setting and career vision (for showing reasonable effort and delivering it)	5
Goal setting and career vision (for showing effort in peer-review)	3
Cover letter and resume draft (for showing reasonable effort and delivering it)	5
Career Services Meeting (for doing it)	2
Mock Interview (for showing reasonable effort in interview)	10
Mock Interview (for showing reasonable effort in peer- and self-review)	3
Map and graph draft (for showing reasonable effort and delivering it)	5
1 Minute Pitch (for showing reasonable effort)	10
Assessment quizzes (for doing them)	2
Assessment quizzes (actual scores)	10
GIS Poster/map competition critical evaluation	3
Peer review of cover letter and resume draft (for showing reasonable effort)	5
Final portfolio: Reflection essay (for showing reasonable effort)	10
Final portfolio: Cover letter and resume (for showing effort toward improvement since draft)	5
Final portfolio: Map and graph (for showing effort toward improvement since draft)	5
Final portfolio: Table of contents (for including it)	2
Professional Guest Speaker Questions submissions (for showing reasonable effort and delivering it)	4
Attendance	6

Grading Scale: A: 93 – 100; AB: 88 – 92; B: 83 – 87; BC: 78 – 82; C: 70 – 77; D: 60 – 69; F: 59 & below

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is compulsory and is critical to your success. Students are required to sign in the attendance sheet at the end of each session. For each session you will receive 1 point. Material covered in class, including lecture topics, concepts, readings, internet material, and additional tips, all of which should be noted in your notebook. You should enter class on exact time. In case of late entrance to the lecture, you are solely responsible to take care of the missing part of the lecture or lab. If you plan to miss a class, you need to inform the instructor 2 hours before the class starts and in that case you will receive 0 point. But if you do not inform the instructor and miss the lecture, -1 will be deducted for each session missed. All these grades will be added to your final grades. Portions missed by you due to your late entrance or absence will not be repeated. In cases where you have a scheduling conflict for a university-approved event, and you need to miss a class, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor at least a week before that day. In case of sudden sickness or emergency please provide a proof for your absence on the next day you attend the lecture.

Academic Integrity & Misconduct: Academic misconduct is a violation of the UWL Student Honor Code and is unacceptable. I expect you to submit your own original work and participate in the course with integrity and high standards of academic honesty. When appropriate, cite original sources, following the style rules of our discipline. Plagiarism or cheating in any form may result in failure of the assignment or the entire course, and may include harsher sanctions. Refer to the Student Handbook for a detailed definition of academic misconduct. For helpful information on how to avoid plagiarism, go to “Avoiding Plagiarism” on the Murphy Library website. You may also visit the Office of Student Life if you have questions about plagiarism or cheating incidents. Failure to understand what constitutes plagiarism or cheating is not a valid excuse for engaging in academic misconduct. For a light-hearted tutorial on avoiding plagiarism I encourage you to review a ten-minute interactive tutorial from Acadia University: <http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>.

Concerns or Complaints: If you have a concern or a complaint about the course, or me, I encourage you to bring that to my attention. My hope would be that by communicating your concern we would be able to come to a resolution. If you are uncomfortable speaking with me, or you feel your concern hasn't been resolved after

bringing it to my attention, you can contact my department chair or the Office of Student Life (<http://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/>). The Student Academic Non-Grade Appeals process can be found in the Student Handbook. For academic appeals you can review the appeals and petitions for academic matters section of the UWL Catalog.

Sexual Harassment: As an employee of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, I am a mandated reporter of sexual harassment and sexual violence that takes place on campus or otherwise affects the campus community. This means that if I receive detailed or specific information about an incident such as the date, time, location, or identity of the people involved, I am obligated to share this with UWL's Title IX Coordinator <https://www.uwlax.edu/equity/> in order to enable the university to take appropriate action to ensure the safety and rights of all involved. For students not wishing to make an official report, there are confidential resources available to provide support and discuss the available options. The contact in Student Life is Ingrid Peterson, Violence Prevention Specialist, (608) 785-8062, ipeterson@uwlax.edu. Please see <http://www.uwlax.edu/sexual-misconduct> for more resources or to file a report.

Religious Accommodations: Per the UWL Graduate Catalog <http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/aboutuwlax/#religious-beliefs> "any student with a conflict between an academic requirement and any religious observance must be given an alternative means of meeting the academic requirement. The student must notify the instructor within the first three weeks of class (within the first week of summer session and short courses) of specific days/dates for which the student will request an accommodation. Instructors may schedule a make-up examination or other academic requirement before or after the regularly scheduled examination or other academic requirement."

Eagle Alert System/Student Success Policy: Because the GPA requirements for good standing in graduate programs are higher than for undergraduate programs (see the policy here), expect me to contact you to discuss any grade you earn in this course below a [B]. This class will be participating in the Eagle Alert System <https://www.uwlax.edu/academic-advising-center/eagle-alert/student-resources/> through WINGS. The system is designed to promote student success. If I notice that you are experiencing difficulties early in the semester (e.g., low assignment scores or limited participation), I may note this information and you will receive an email indicating that I have entered feedback. I may also enter positive feedback encouraging you to consider additional learning opportunities. The link in the email will take you to WINGS where you can login to see the feedback. I encourage you to meet with me and/or refer to the helpful campus resources listed below under Academic Services and Resources and on UWL's Student Success page <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/student-success/>.

Inclusive Excellence: UWL's core values include "Diversity, equity, and the inclusion and engagement of all people in a safe campus climate that embraces and respects the innumerable different perspectives found within an increasingly integrated and culturally diverse global community" (<https://www.uwlax.edu/chancellor/mission/>). If you are not experiencing my class in this manner, please come talk to me about your experiences so I can try to adjust the course if possible.

Name/Pronouns: I will do my best to address you by a preferred name or gender pronoun that you have identified. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Information on UWL's preferred name policy is available here <https://www.uwlax.edu/records/preferred-name/> and UWL's Pride Center is available for additional assistance.

Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI): UWL conducts student evaluations electronically. Approximately 2 weeks prior to the conclusion of a course, you will receive an email at your UWL email address directing you to complete an evaluation for each of your courses. In-class time will be provided for students to complete the evaluation in class. Electronic reminders will be sent if you do not complete the evaluation. The evaluation will include numerical ratings and, depending on the department, may provide options for comments. The university takes student feedback very seriously and the information gathered from student evaluations is more valuable

when a larger percentage of students complete the evaluation. Please be especially mindful to complete the surveys.

Students with disabilities: Any student with a documented disability (e.g. ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Acquired Brain Injury, PTSD, Physical, Sensory, Psychological, or Learning Disability) who needs to arrange academic accommodations must contact The ACCESS Center (165 Murphy Library, 608-785-6900, ACCESSCenter@uwlax.edu) and meet with an advisor to register and develop an accommodation plan. In addition to registering with The ACCESS Center, it is the student's responsibility to discuss their academic needs with their instructors. Students are ultimately responsible to communicate their needs with the instructor in a timely manner. Review the ACCESS Center website at: <http://www.uwlax.edu/access-center/> Desire2Learn also provides information about their Accessibility resources, at: <https://documentation.desire2learn.com/en/Accessibility>

Veterans and active military personnel: Veterans and active military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to me. For additional information and assistance, contact the Veterans Services Office. <http://www.uwlax.edu/veteran-services/>. Students who need to withdraw from class or from the university due to military orders should be aware of the military duty withdrawal policy <http://catalog.uwlax.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/withdrawal/#military-duty-withdrawal-university>.

Academic Services and Resources at UWL: Below are several student services available to students taking online courses:

- Academic Advising Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/advising/>
- ACCESS Center (formerly Disability Resources): <http://www.uwlax.edu/access-center/>
- Career Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/careerservices/>
- Counseling and Testing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/counseling/>
- Financial Information: Financial Aid Office <https://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/> and It Makes Cents <https://www.uwlax.edu/it-makes-cents/>
- Murphy Learning Center (Walk-in tutoring): <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/>
- Murphy Library: <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/>
- Multicultural Student Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mss/>
- Public Speaking Center: <https://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/subject/public-speaking-center/>
- Records and Registration: <http://www.uwlax.edu/records/>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/>
- Student Support Services: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-support-services/>
- Veteran Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/veteran-services/>
- Writing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/writingcenter/>

Technical Support: For tips and information about Canvas visit the Canvas Guide Using Help - Student: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>. Check here to make sure your preferred browser is supported: Canvas Guide - Supported Browsers: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10720-67952720329>. You can also contact the ITS Support Center at (608) 785-8774 or email them at helpdesk@uwlax.edu for questions about Canvas or any other technological difficulties. The hours for ITS are Monday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, and Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Central Time.