

School of Social Sciences and Humanities



GEOG 220
The Circumpolar North
Winter 2026
3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Alison Perrin	OFFICE HOURS	M/W 2:30-4:00 pm; by appt.
OFFICE	A2208	CLASSROOM	A2101
E-MAIL	aperrin@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	Mon/Wed 9:00 – 10:20 am
TELEPHONE	867-332-7136	CRN	20271
Social Sciences Humanities office: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, liberalarts@yukonu.ca, 867-668-8770			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course looks at selected topics in human, natural, and physical geography of the world's northern circumpolar region, including eight arctic countries: Russia, Canada, Denmark, the USA (Alaska), Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. Topics will include the natural landscape, settlement patterns, natural resources, the economy, and the economic infrastructure, transportation networks, social issues, and government structures. Emphasis is placed on Canada's northern regions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course assumes you have some post-secondary experience; second-year standing is recommended.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

This information refers to the current course and is taken from the BC Transfer Guide. Please consult bctransferguide.ca for the complete list of transferability that includes older versions of this course. This course is accepted for transfer by other institutions on a case-by-case basis.

Receiving Institution	Transfer Credit
SFU	SFU GEOG 2XX (3)
TRU	TRU GEOG 2XXX (3)
TWU	TWU GEOG 2XX (3)
UBCV	UBCV GEOG_V 1st (3)
UFV	UFV GEOG 233 (3)
UNBC	UNBC GEOG 2XX (3)
UVIC	UVIC GEOG 1XX (1.5)

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as

an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Overview and contrast the major physical, natural, and human geographical elements of the eight northern circumpolar countries.
- Identify and discuss selected topical issues affecting the future geographical development of the northern circumpolar region
- Identify and review some of the major sources of geographic information on the northern circumpolar region.

COURSE FORMAT

Delivery format

This course is delivered in person on the Ayamdigut campus twice a week, with some online or flex classes as may be required. Students are expected to attend class and may be required to complete assignments and/or activities in groups or individually. The course will include a combination of lectures, class discussions, student presentations, required readings, and written assignments. Guest lectures will be used for selected topics.

Workload

It is expected that this course will require 3 hours/week of instructional time including online learning and classroom activities, and approximately 2-4 hours/week of homework and additional reading. It is important to note that the time required for successful course completion will vary by individual.

EVALUATION

Class discussion & participation	10%
Case study	15%
Term paper	30%
Presentation	15%
Mid-term quiz	10%
Final exam	20%
Total	100%

Assignments:

- Group discussions & class participation (10%) – students will be marked on a combination of attendance and participation in class activities and discussions.
- Case study (15%) – students will develop and submit a written case study focused on a specific circumpolar region and topic.
- Term paper (30%) – students will submit a term paper on a northern circumpolar geographic issue, further developing their case study into a research paper. A list of suggested topics will be provided, or students may select their own topic with instructor approval.
- Presentation (15%) – students will present their term paper findings to the class.

Exams:

- A. Mid-term quiz (10%) – a short mid-term exam will evaluate comprehension of the first half of course materials.
- B. Final exam (20%) – a final exam will evaluate comprehension of the overall course materials.

*Note on submitting assignments and late assignments:

Assignments are due by 11:59 pm of the due dates provided in class and on the Moodle course site. Submissions must be uploaded to Moodle. Be certain to click the submit button and accept the submission statement. After the due date, assignments will be considered late and will be deducted 5% daily. An extension to the deadline may be negotiated if necessary but must be done before the existing due date, not after.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact Accessibility Services for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE

The following is a list of topics for class and assignments. Readings and assignments will be posted on Moodle. Unforeseen circumstances may cause changes to the schedule, but students will be notified of changes.

Week	Topic	Readings
1 – Jan 7	Introduction to the Circumpolar North	
Northern landscapes		
2 – Jan 12 & 14	The Arctic regions & regional comparisons	Arctic Human Development Report (AHDR), 2014
3 – Jan 19 & 21	Physical geography	Course handout; Bone Chapter 2
4 – Jan 26 & 28	Northern environments	Lemieux et al., 2025; CAFF <i>State of the Arctic</i> videos
Northern identities		
5 – Feb 2 & 4	Northern peoples & languages	TBD
6 – Feb 9 & 11	Circumpolar cultural geographies <i>* Mid-term quiz February 11th</i>	AHDR, 2014 Chapter 3
7 – Feb 16 & 18	Governance & Arctic security	TBD
8 – Feb 23 & 25	Northern economies <i>*Case study due February 25th</i>	The Economy of the North – ECONOR 2025 (Chapter 2); AHDR Chapter 4
Current geographical issues		
9 – Mar 2 & 4	Climate change	AMAP Arctic Climate Change Update
10 – Mar 6 – 16	READING WEEK	
11 – Mar 18	Climate impacts (no class March 16 th)	Yukon Climate Change Indicators & Key Findings
12 – Mar 23 & 25	Food, energy & water security	Arctic Water Energy Food Nexus Portal; Unc et al., 2025
13 – Mar 30 & Apr 1	Sustainable development	UN SDG indicators
14 – Apr 8	Presentations (no class Monday Apr 6 th) <i>* Presentation due Apr 8th</i>	
15 – Apr 13 & 15	Presentations & review <i>* Term paper due Apr 15th</i>	
TBD	<i>* Final exam</i>	